Turbulence, dilemmas and leadership: A case study of an English School after academisation

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I dedicate this work to my family; in particular my wife, Fiona, and two daughters, Saoirse and Seren. It is the need to be a role model to my daughters, and not give in, that has brought me to the point where I have completed my thesis.

Abstract

This thesis uses critical incident technique (CIT) (Chell, 2004) in a qualitative case study to show the responses of leaders in an English secondary school when faced with dilemmas arising from a transition into a multi-academy trust (MAT). The use of CIT interviews allowed for school leaders self-identification of dilemmas they had encountered.

The case study school was transferred from local authority control to a local MAT because of a falling student roll and not because of a failed OfSTED inspection.

The study addresses how leaders in a mainstream school adapt to UK Government policy (The Academies Act, 2010) on academisation and the subsequent dilemmas this process creates. The aim is to identify the impact on school leaders of change into a school within a MAT. The study includes an analysis of school leaders as street-level bureaucrats and their use of discretion (Lipsky, 2010) to navigate leadership dilemmas.

The study addresses three research questions:

1. How do school leaders respond to turbulence and any subsequent dilemmas in the context of academisation?

2. To what extent are school leaders able to use discretion when dealing with dilemmas?

3. What patterns of school leadership are associated with school leaders' responses to dilemmas?

This thesis reveals how an apparent consensus of organisational priorities (improving results through emphasis on teaching and learning) can mask an

underlying 'blindness' to the perceived realities of groups and of the individuals within them who function as street-level bureaucrats (Lipsky, 2010). Thus, the normal and expected turbulence of a major transition may be exacerbated, rather than mitigated, by decisions taken by leaders, unaware of the at times restrictive impact on the discretional freedom of their subordinates. This has the inadvertent outcome of cascading turbulence and undermining the ethos of distributed leadership (DL). The result is that often leaders are functioning as managers operationalising the head teachers' diktats rather than leaders demonstrating leadership.

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Chapter 1 – Introduction

1.1 Focus of the study

In recent decades, the role of the school leader has changed considerably in the UK, the European mainland, North America and Australasia due to increased accountability (Earley, 2016). This has been particularly pronounced for head teachers as they adjust to the standards-based agenda and national policy in each country (Cranston, 2013). Shapiro and Gross (2013) looked at the impact of policy directives, at both state and educational board level, upon school administrators in the United States of America. In their study, those policies were creating 'turbulence' for the leader of the school. Earley (2016) also notes that educational policy changes have been felt at all levels of leadership in schools.

Here in the UK, there is a view amongst policy makers at national level that increasing institutional autonomy and devolving decision-making will improve the quality of student outcomes and encourage innovation in the education system (Earley, 2016). However, increasing autonomy enlarges areas of decision-making for leaders, which presents them with more dilemmas, as indicated in the ASCL Report (2019) 'Navigating the moral maze'.

The Conservative and Liberal Democrat Coalition Government introduced legislation (The Academies Act, 2010) which encouraged and facilitated mainstream schools to become academies. These schools were given further autonomy from local authorities. This was a development of the previous Labour Government's academy school programme introduced in 2000 (Gunter

and McGinity, 2014). The Academies Act (2010) is national legislation, but applies only to England, as the other three nations in the United Kingdom have devolved responsibility for education. The first wave of academies under this legislation encompassed schools deemed to be 'outstanding'. After 2010, academy schools could take over (sponsor) failing schools (Ainscow, 2017) or in Woodhouse School's (pseudonym) case causing concern because of falling student intake.

School leaders work in a high stakes accountability system (Bush, 2013 and Stobart, 2008), and changes to school structure – alongside ongoing policy updates driven by central Government (Burstow, 2014) – present considerable extended challenges. For head teachers, a move towards working in a system in which a poorly performing school can be taken over by another school, or Multi-Academy Trust, further raises those stakes.

The study is set in Woodhouse School (pseudonym), which has been incorporated into a Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) – Charhill (pseudonym), providing a case by which leaders – and patterns of leadership – in schools can be studied. It shows how school leaders are impacted by sudden change and how the resulting turbulence adds to existing challenges of working in schools. This study aims to develop an understanding of how leaders respond to competing demands placed upon them.

The focus for this work came from my professional life as a schoolteacher, and now lecturer in a university, as well as my previous political role as a deputy leader of a local authority in London. In each of these roles, I have experienced turbulent change and numerous dilemmas as I balanced the organisation's

requirements with the needs of clients. In my political role, I was leading a failing organisation that needed to improve outcomes for residents (clients) and adapt to new national policy directives with a reduced financial settlement that was putting pressure on the council's ability to deliver services. In my university role, training school leaders, the impact of turbulence created by academisation has been an issue brought to my lectures on school leadership by students. By conducting this study of leadership dilemmas, my aim was to provide insight on the kinds of challenges faced by leaders subjected to turbulence arising from major transitions.

The study began in the first term of academisation, as Woodhouse School the case study school was undergoing significant turbulence (Gross, 2004 and Shapiro and Gross, 2013) as it joined an academy trust. Many schools in England were (and still are) adapting to turbulence in their environment by making internal changes, such as new policies, new leadership structures and/or staff changes. A key factor for this research is how leaders respond to simultaneous external and internal pressures. I looked at how rapid change created challenging issues for leaders, whose responses could sometimes create problems further down the chain of command. This study focuses, in particular, on discretion, and how much leaders at Woodhouse school were, or were not, at liberty to exercise it.

1.2 Theoretical Framework

In this thesis, the theoretical framework (Grant and Osanloo, 2014) combines the concepts of 'discretion' (Lipsky, 2010) and 'turbulence' (Gross, 2004).

Discretion is a central theme in the work of Lipsky (2010) and others, such as Evans (2016), Gilson (2015) and Loyens and Maesschalck (2010), who make use of Lipsky's work to identify how client-facing workers, and the leaders in client-facing organisations, address the challenges they meet. Gross (2004) and Shapiro and Gross (2013) describe the challenges as a form of turbulence. Gross (2004) applies the term 'turbulence', as experienced by pilots, to schools. For Gross (2004) and Shapiro and Gross (2013) there are levels of increasing turbulence which present challenges that school leaders need to address.

Street-level bureaucrat theory is taken from Lipsky's (1980) seminal work on front-line public services workers. Hupe *et al.* (2016) describe Lipsky's (2010) definition of a street-level bureaucrat (SLB) as being a public servant that citizens interact with – such as a teacher, a police officer or a social worker. Lipsky's (1980 and 2010) work is important because it focuses attention on what SLBs do in the workplace as they juggle the sometimes-conflicting needs of the organisation and the client. Brodkin (2016) identifies a key point, in Lipsky's (2010) that 'problematic practices lie not entirely with the bureaucrats themselves, but the structural conditions they faced' (Brodkin, 2016: 28). These structural conditions include, for Lipsky (2010), being accountable to managers.

My study develops Lipsky's (2010) work by tackling the under-examined area of discretion and how it is used by leaders and managers. As Evans (2016) argues, we need to avoid seeing leaders as 'bad', and front-line staff as completely altruistic, (*ibid:* 293). The simplistic, binary position of, on one hand,

leaders and managers only using discretion in how to implement policy and the other, front-line workers using discretion to address client needs, is 'sweeping and crude' (Evans, 2016: 293). This work will address the gap, identified by Evans (2016), between those in exclusively leadership roles and those in front-line roles, by considering the issues faced by leaders in schools as they deliver services to clients in during periods of turbulence.

Turbulence is used by Shapiro and Gross (2013) as one of the two concepts within their theoretical framework to describe disruption experienced by schools. In this study, turbulence is defined as 'the perception of forces in an organisational environment with the potential to disrupt current modes of operation' (Beabout, 2012:15). In this thesis, turbulence affects leaders in Woodhouse School by creating dilemmas. Turbulence may be external (Gross, 2004) or internal (Beabout, 2012). External turbulence originates outside the school and can include factors such as new policy at national and local level, or financial constraints. Internal turbulence originates from human interrelations as staff respond to dilemmas. Beabout (2012) introduces 'perturbance', which describes school leaders collaborating to address turbulence and problematic dilemmas. In school leadership literature, distributed leadership (DL) is identified as a pattern of leadership that is built around leaders working together.

1.3 The Case Study School

The case study school, Woodhouse, became part of a Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) in Jan 2015. Woodhouse was a secondary school with the capacity for 1,000 students but had fewer than 500 at the time of the study. The head teacher had been on the Governing Body of Woodhouse School from September 2014 as part of the gradual takeover by Charhill Multi-Academy Trust. Woodhouse School was identified by the local authority as being under threat of closure due to a decline in pupil results and a subsequent lack of pupils. Local parents were choosing to send their children to schools in the local area that achieved better GCSE results. The authority had tried and failed to get local academies, MATs and high performing schools to take over Woodhouse School. The local authority then approached Charhill, a MAT in a neighbouring county.

1.4 Aim and Research Questions

The aim of this study is to identify the impact on school leaders of change into a school within a multi-academy trust (MAT).

The principal research questions lead to an understanding of how teachers and leaders deal with organisational dilemmas and how these impact upon patterns of leadership.

1. How do school leaders respond to turbulence and any subsequent dilemmas in the context of academisation?

2. To what extent are school leaders able to use discretion when dealing with dilemmas?

3. What patterns of school leadership are associated with school leaders' responses to dilemmas?

1.5 The structure of the thesis

In Chapter Two – the literature review – I discuss schools as street-level bureaucracies (SLBs) in a period of turbulence created by academisation. I look at the literature and research on school leadership and argue that distributed leadership (DL) is one way for schools to respond to turbulence and dilemmas. In a distributed system, leadership is shared, and this is the basis of Beabout's (2012) thinking on perturbance, which is collaboration – a 'social process of actors coming together' (*ibid:*15) to adjust practice as a response to turbulence.

I conclude my literature review by drawing the research and literature into a matrix for identifying how leaders in Woodhouse School respond to each dilemma. I have combined the work of Grint (2005) and Beabout (2012) and present my own typology of *linear*, *collaborative* and *urgent* responses.

In Chapter Three, I explain how and why I adopted an 'instrumental' case study (Stake, 1995). Two phases of semi-structured interviews were conducted. The first set of interviews established the context. The second provided details on the incidents and dilemmas faced by the leaders. The second set of interviews used critical incident technique (Chell, 2004), which incorporates questions, and probes for information.

The analytical approach adopted ensured that I was not looking at the work solely through the content within the literature review, but also looking at what

the data was indicating. This is similar to the approach outlined by Strauss (1987) and Ball (1998).

The research adheres to UEL regulations and ensures 'public confidentiality' (Hill, 2005:75). The most appropriate ethical approach in this study is 'Ethics of Care' (Israel and Hay, 2006) which urges the researcher to take into account 'care, compassion and interpersonal relationships' (Israel and Hay, 2003:22). This is in line with the British Educational Research Association's (BERA) 2018 guidelines for research.

In Chapter Four, I present the findings from the first and second set of interviews together. The first interview deals with the organisation and how teachers with leadership responsibility identify themselves. The second – a critical incident interview – presents the dilemmas, paradoxes and discretion used by teachers in various incidents. The findings indicate that leaders see themselves as both teachers *and* leaders,

In Chapter Five, I analyse the incidents under themes identified through my analytical approach. I discuss how a dilemma that starts at one level can move to other levels as the dilemma itself, and/or the response to it, impacts upon others. Also, I discuss and critique the impact of responses to dilemmas upon DL.

In Chapter Six – the conclusion, I show how decisions made in a 'command and control' manner, undermine, not just DL, but also opportunities for shared learning. In addition, I identify how discretion is used and constrained by individuals in more senior roles. It is the discretionary choice for senior leaders

whether to try to resolve a dilemma that may result in the dilemma cascading down to middle leaders. The most senior leaders, including the head teacher, can choose what accountability measures should be used and how they are applied, which can impact the discretion of others. However, within an academy chain, the head teacher is, in turn, subject to accountability and measures/decisions imposed by another leader – the CEO of the MAT. So, although discretion is evident when resolving dilemmas, there are, in some instances, boundaries or limitations placed upon the individuals within the school. The *response* to dilemmas can impact upon how those dilemmas affect others. It can also hinder or facilitate opportunities for shared learning, and emergence, and adaptation.

Chapter 2 – Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter I address turbulence in schools as a challenge for school leaders. From a discussion of leadership and distributed Leadership (DL) the unique nature of schools as organisations in which leaders are also in client-facing roles; something which differentiates school leaders from those in many other organisations, where there is a clearer demarcation in roles and responsibilities. This leads to a discussion of the importance of street-level bureaucrats (SLBs) theory. Lipsky's (2010) work on SLBs and discretion is considered as key to understanding how school leaders respond to the dilemmas. Finally, I discuss how leaders respond to dilemmas they are faced with in their roles.

2.2 Turbulence and schools

In this section, I use the word 'turbulence' to describe both an external pressure (Gross, 2004) on schools and an internal pressure created by leaders (Beabout, 2012). Gross (2004) conceived the idea of turbulence, as applied to organisations, from his understanding of planes in flight. Gross (2004) likens turbulence in organisations to planes at take-off. Too much turbulence makes flight impossible, just as does too little. However, Gross (2004) does not identify what constitutes a turbulence-ready school. His work with Shapiro (Shapiro and Gross, 2013) indicates that a school's resilience is based upon

the leaders' effective responses to turbulence. To illustrate, two schools can be very similar and face similar levels of turbulence, but because of the uniqueness of the individuals, one school could thrive or survive and another decline, which undermines a 'one-size fits all' approach. This means that similar schools will respond differently to turbulence because of the heterogeneousness of the individuals in the school's leadership and their differing perceptions of the context and the set of circumstances they face. Table 1 below, is taken from Gross and Shapiro (2004: 50) and represents the four levels of turbulence in Gross's (2004) work.

Table 1: Turbulence in schools (Gross and Shapiro, 2004)

Degree of Turbulence	General Definition	Applied to a school situation:
Light	Little or no disruption	Our leader is leaving but a clear plan is working well. We are not concerned.
Moderate	Widespread awareness of the issue	Our leader is leaving, there is a plan, and we need to be more involved in all stages of the process.
Severe	A sense of crisis	Our leader just walked out! Everyone is upset and no one knows what will happen next.
Extreme	Structural damage to reform	No one knows what to do, no one is speaking to us and we suspect the worst!

This model of turbulence (Gross and Shapiro, 2004) can be applied to all schools. In Gross and Shapiro's (2004) work it was applied to different individual leaders and groups in a single district in the USA. The identification by Gross and Shapiro (2004) of the different levels of turbulence impacting other leaders differently is useful. In this study, turbulence is seen as affecting

all leaders within Woodhouse School and not just the head teacher. Here, turbulence can affect the head teacher and be transmitted from the head teacher to others, or it can emanate from another leader, such as the designated Child Protection Officer. Turbulence can originate internally or from an external source. Although the experience of turbulence is different for everyone, Shapiro and Gross (2013) do not consider how it transmits from one individual to another within a school. Neither do they consider how turbulence can be created internally. They are primarily focused upon external turbulence, as experienced by the most senior leader, and do not acknowledge that leaders in schools can create their own turbulence.

The work of Gross (2004) is developed in the work of Beabout (2012) who identifies differing kinds of internal turbulence. *Intentional* turbulence is when leaders consciously unleash turbulence, while *unintentional* turbulence happens when a set of actions or plans bring about turbulence that was not expected. He also suggests that there is *opportunistic* turbulence, when leaders want to make changes, but wait for the right policy environment. The change from a mainstream school to an academy school within a MAT creates the option for leaders to use intentional turbulence to foster change (Kotter, 1996). Lastly, Beabout (2012) identifies self-turbulence, which is the creation of turbulence within an organisation brought about by internal processes and meetings. The latter type of turbulence is internal turbulence. But, even though Beabout (2012) addresses internal turbulence, his focus is on arguing for a collective response rather than addressing how the leaders respond to the dilemma created through turbulence.

For Beabout (2012), leaders need to collaborate to address turbulence. For him, the need for sudden change in a school may result from the realisation by leaders that present structures are not suitable, which creates dilemmas. This is the leader in a perturbed state (Nicholls, 2001). For Nicholls (2001), perturbance is the point of individual change, whereas, for Beabout (2012), it is the point where leaders come together to address turbulence and subsequent dilemmas. Thus, *collaboration* for Beabout (2012) is a response to perceived and real threats. However, it is entirely possible that the response to turbulence devised by leaders can, itself, create internal turbulence for others. The logic of Beabout's (2012) argument is that all actors would need to be involved in devising a response. However, involving all actors on a day-to-day basis may not be applicable or practical, due to the nature of the turbulence and dilemmas that leaders face. But the key point regarding 'perturbance', as defined by Beabout (2012), is that leaders and teachers need to be 'perturbed' (Nicholls, 2001) in that something needs to disrupt their present thinking in order to foster a *collaborative* response.

The work of Beabout (2012) sees challenge from turbulence that is managed and proportionate as a good thing when individuals come to terms with turbulence. This kind of response to turbulence can create a school that is more robust and able to respond positively, and cope with the new challenge. Individuals coming together would create 'emergence' (Morrison, 2002) and move the organisation from an inert state (Mason, 2008) to a newer, fit-for-purpose position. For Morrison (2002), leadership is key to facilitating this and he indicates shared leadership as a precursor to developing robust responses

to turbulence. Beabout (2012) sees *collaboration* – individuals working together – as a good way of adapting to turbulence.. Relying upon one leader could result in organisational rigidity and over-reliance on one 'hero' leader to process and respond to all turbulence.   However, Beabout's (2012) emphasis on *collaboration* as a means of addressing issues that perturb leaders (and would be insurmountable for one leader working alone) is useful in this work, because it is a pattern of leadership.

The work of Beabout (2012) extends turbulence from a purely external phenomena to one where internal turbulence is created internally often by leaders. Beabout (2012) considers internal turbulence as a factor to prompt change, but not in creating additional, or new dilemmas, for other leaders in a school. This study is different from Beabout's (2012) conceptualisation of internal turbulence, because it looks at how turbulence created by leaders' decisions impacts upon the experience of other leaders. The underlying concept of turbulence is useful in looking at how school leaders respond, or do not respond to internal and external pressure.

2.2.1 Turbulence and inertia in schools

The pressure from external and/or internal dynamics does not always lead to a change or response as Beabout (2012) argues. Morrison (2002) and Mason (2008a) contend that an organisation is not always changing and can, conversely, be in a state of inertia. An inert school does not adapt and emerge into a newer state, so the school could become out of tune with its

environment, leading to additional turbulence it must withstand. Morrison (2002) and Mason (2008a) argue that adaptation is always the better option, because, for them, schools able to adapt are flexible and responsive to internal and external forces and therefore more resilient to turbulence. Morrison (2002) suggests schools must have a suitable strategy to accommodate the need to adapt to the many internal and external pressures. However, the issue with a strategy is: who creates and defines it? It could be the work of one leader, which undermines the thrust of Morrison's (2002) thinking regarding adaptability and utilising other leaders. Or, it could be the work of a team of leaders.

In addition to the matter of who is the creator of the strategy, a further issue is identified in the work of Rumelt (2017). He argues that actions identified in a strategy have sometimes proven to be worse than no action or no strategy. Rumelt (2017) asserts that no strategy – and therefore no action and inertia – can be better than a bad strategy or bad actions. A strategy may be bad because the organisation's leaders responded to dilemmas and external dynamics through a lack of insight and evidence. Rumelt (2017) counters the view that change is always right, with the argument that some change can result in organisational failure. The failure of an organisation, for Morrison (2002), is because school leaders have not aligned the school to external demands and pressures. For Morrison (2002), a good strategy will ensure a school is able to adapt to internal and external turbulence.

Morrison's (2002) and Mason's (2008) thinking is that without leadership action a school would be incapable of responding effectively to internal and external

turbulence and remain in a state of inertia. However, the school might be seen as inert because the lens used to look for change within the school is unable to identify small changes that ripple out across the school. So, inertia might need to account for timeframes, and over a longer period, the change might be perceptible.

Even dramatic change might have started as a minor incident or action. In schools, this could, for example, be the requirement to ensure all adults are suitably cleared to work with children. Failure to check and have appropriate bureaucratic systems in place could lead to the school being categorised by Ofsted as failing.

A poor Ofsted result and a sudden change of leadership, or in fact, change of status into an academy. This would constitute a dramatic change that creates turbulence. Most individuals in an organisation will feel the effects of a major event. This then leads to individual (and possibly collective) responses to the effects, which often quickly become perceived as threats (Staber, 2013; Morrison, 2002; Mason, 2008a; and Davis and Sumara, 2006) and turbulence.

2.2.2 Academisation creating turbulence

Schools in England have been under pressure to form into academy clusters or chains since the Coalition Government of 2010. This is a significant external pressure upon schools and creates 'high stakes' (Stobart, 2008) where poor inspection results and/or exams can mean a school is forced into academisation within a wider group of academies in a MAT. Burstow (2014)

argues that schools have been bombarded by successive governments changing the policy goal posts. Burstow (2014) highlights the number of policies aimed at schools to illustrate the point that school leaders are contending with constant external dynamics through policy change.

Figure 1: Items of school focussed legislation Burstow 1940 to 2013

Items of School Focussed Legislation from 1940 to 2013
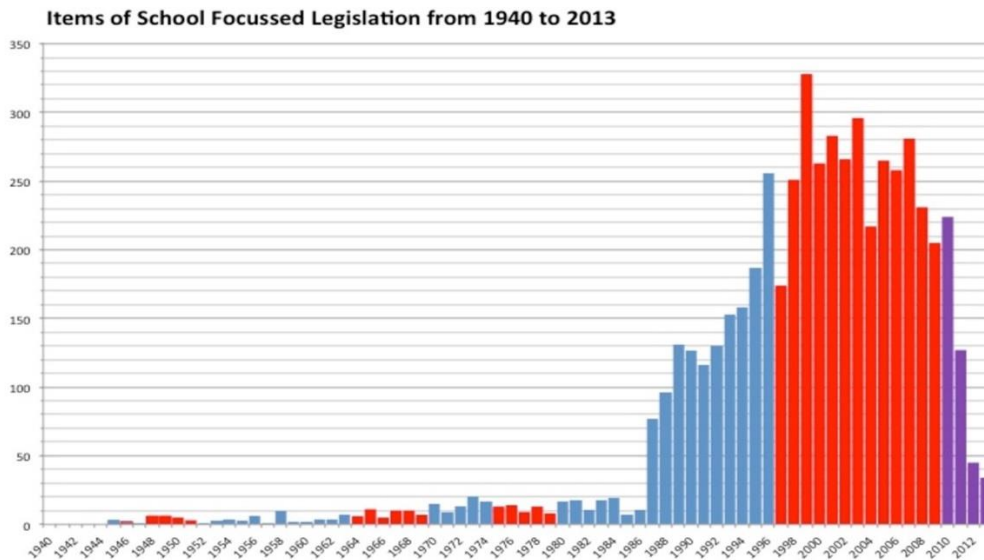
As indicated in Figure 1, the number of policies to be implemented by school leaders has diminished from a peak 'in 1999 with 328 separate items – too much for any school to react to effectively' (Burstow, 2014). This is a significant number when schools are open for 195 days per year, meaning that in some years, there were more directives than teaching days. Although, according to Burstow (2014), the number of policies has reduced since the end of the Labour administration. However, this is not the same as reduced impact upon schools. Some policies will impact massively and some to a minor extent. This variance in impact might be because one school is already working to a new agenda or the school has begun to adapt early in anticipation of a policy change. However, the number of new laws and the impact of numerous pieces

of legislation does create turbulence (Gross, 2004) for schools as leaders adjust their policies and resources to meet new requirements. There will be a difference in how prepared some schools are and how easily they can adapt to the turbulence. This means the effect of constant legislation change will be experienced differently across schools.

A key policy affecting schools across England is the expansion of the academies programme under the Coalition Government of 2010–2015. The present academy programme took forward the previous Labour Government programme, launched in 2000 (Gunter and McGinity, 2014), that was superseded by the Coalition Government's Academies Act 2010. Under this Act, all schools passing a threshold of Outstanding or Good can apply to become academies. The incentive was greater control over finance, and freedom from local authority control under the Academies Act, (2010) leading to a speeding up of schools becoming academies. The increase in the number of academy schools was also pushed higher as underperforming schools were encouraged to become part of a successful Multi-Academy Trust (MAT).

Andrews (2016) provides a breakdown of the academy schools in England to illustrate the proliferation of MATs.

> 'By March 2016 around two-thirds of all academies (including free schools, UTCs, and studio schools) were operating within a multi-academy trust. There was a total of 973 multi-academy trusts in England. The vast majority of multi-academy trusts are small in size; 681 have three academies or fewer and 252 have only one' (Andrews, 2016: 9).

The work of Andrews (2016) shows how schools are either combining together or being subsumed into MATs. Andrews (2016) is suggesting that head teacher freedoms can be curtailed as they become part of a MAT. However, what Andrews (2016) does not address, is whether a head teacher within a multi-academy trust has the same level of discretion as the head of an academy school not within a MAT or a head teacher of a local authority school. I raise the point here, which I address later, because the head teacher of Woodhouse School is within a MAT and reports to a CEO. What is interesting from Andrews' (2016) work is the performance of schools according to their structures. He notes 'What this analysis shows is that the variation between local authorities is just as great as that seen between multi-academy trusts.' (Andrews, 2016: 33). Wilkins (2015) argues that the diversification of school structures in England creates opportunities for 'new autonomous' spaces (*ibid*: 1143), which must be earned through adherence to performativity. Wilkins (2015) is identifying the greater autonomy afforded schools judged as outstanding by Ofsted. However, increased school autonomy may not translate to individual teacher autonomy. A school leader may have greater latitude in some decisions but that does not mean all leaders and teachers in that school will be afforded the same levels of freedom in choosing how to carry out their roles.

Wilkins' (2015) argument would imply poor performing schools are given less autonomy. To a very large extent, freedom and autonomy within the school is dependent upon the leadership and management structure and processes within the school. A head teacher who micro-manages and enforces increased

accountability measures will grant less freedom to other leaders. But, Lipsky (2010) argues space is always available for individual autonomy in applying policy, which he terms discretion. This can be seen in classrooms where teachers juggle the competing demands of behaviour policies that require all students are treated the same and an inclusion policy that requires each student is treated according to their needs. In Lipsky's (2010) view, due to the complex nature of client-facing work in schools, involving leaders implementing contradictory policy, discretion will always be available and is required in order for workers to carry out their client-facing role. This is true for leaders who have discretion and are working in a complex setting in a wide number of situations. However, the discretion each leader has may be constrained by the actions and decisions of other leaders in more senior positions.

The Coalition Government introduced Free Schools (Free Schools Policy, 2010), which are schools that local parents, community groups or schools can set up. The Coalition Government changed the number of schools eligible to become academies as a move towards a further decentralisation of school provision. By contrast, Wilkins (2017) suggests these changes actually create new forms of centralisation and bureaucracy, which is an unintended outcome of government policy. For Wilkins (2017) increased bureaucracy and centralisation happens because academy chains need to provide support and consistency of practice across the schools in their MAT. New academies are either part of a chain, such as Harris Academy Trust, or become stand-alone academies. The more recent changes since 2010 and those brought about

since 1988 (Middlewood, 1998) were intended to give greater flexibility in decision-making and finances for head teachers, and academisation is an extension of creating greater autonomy. The devolving of finances and decision-making to school leaders and governors (Middlewood, 1998) instead of upon local authorities places greater emphasis on school leaders and their leadership. This, in turn, has led to the interplay between the 'school autonomy and accountability' (Mertkan; 2011: 156). So, an increase in autonomy leads to an increase in accountability for school leaders. The push and pull from each interplay, so that head teachers, in particular, have a greater sphere of responsibility that they must account for Mertkan (2011) is claiming that as accountability in schools increases, autonomy decreases because of increased scrutiny and accountability. Mertkan (2011) also argues the interplay between autonomy and accountability has facilitated greater central control, which supports Wilkins' (2017) assertion of greater centralisation.

The impact of internal and external forces occurring simultaneously can lead to seemingly incoherent leadership responses. Ball (1998), in 'Good School/Bad school' explains that 'Schools are complex, contradictory, sometimes incoherent organisations, like many others' (*ibid*: 317), because in his view schools are always adapting to internal and external influences. Ball (1998) assumes that leaders in schools are completely aware of the impact of internal and external influences and how to respond to them, without producing evidence to support his assertion. But what is clear is a school does not simply

absorb external and internal turbulence, leaving no trace. Turbulence has a discernible impact upon school leaders.

2.3 School leadership

The Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), (2008) defines school leadership in terms of an individual using their influence intentionally. This arises from Yukl's (2002) work, which Abra *et al. (*2003) identify as a key reading from the business world that school leaders should engage with. The OECD (2008) report 'Improving School Leadership' covers global practices and therefore adopts a definition of leadership that reflects differing interpretations of it around the world. This is an aspirational view from the OECD as it only investigated 22 countries, with three of the countries coming from the United Kingdom; England, Scotland and N. Ireland. A further two education systems were from Belgium. The report only contained five non-European countries, which distorts the results to reflect the European experience. The OECD (2008) combines intentional influence across three levels of activity: leadership, management and administration.

For Bush and Glover (2014) 'the labels used to define this field have changed from 'educational administration' to 'educational management', and more recently, to 'educational leadership' (*ibid*: 554). The opening in 2000, and continuing existence of the National College for Teaching and Leadership can exemplify the shift in language. Leadership is viewed by Bush and Glover (2014) as being independent of any formal position of authority. The view that

leadership is separate from a hierarchical position is supported by Kotter (2013), who identifies a misconception between leadership and management where they are used interchangeably without recognition of the differences. For Kotter (2013) management is operationalising the leader's decisions. Kotter (2013) identifies two further misconceptions of leadership; the first is a tendency to refer to 'those at the top' of an organisation, and the second is that you need the right 'personality traits' to be a leader.

Leadership for Kotter (1996) is about actions, in setting the organisation's vision, and initiating change with the buy-in of others in order to achieve transformation (adaptation). Kotter (2013) argues in a Harvard Business Review Blog that leadership is not solely located at the top of a hierarchy but can appear anywhere in an organisation because 'the notion that a few extraordinary people at the top can provide all the leadership needed today is ridiculous, and it's a recipe for failure' (Kotter, 2013). Kotter (2013) is suggesting that leading an organisation does require others to contribute to its leadership. In Kotter's (2013) view, leadership is something people *do* and not something beholden to a fixed position within a school, such as senior leader.

The work of Bower (2006) has a similar view to Kotter's (2013) regarding school leadership which 'must be redefined if leadership is to move from the individual to the collective' (*ibid*: 69). For, Bower (2006) it is not only an issue of leadership moving from the individual to a shared model but a need to redefine leadership. He argues for leadership as a collective activity and suggests that definitions that focus on individuals are not useful. Others, such as Obolensky (2010), have argued that the hierarchical leadership of an

organisation does not have the monopoly on organisational wisdom and solutions to problems. This moves away from traditional 'hero' leadership models. Obolensky (2010) further argues that leadership needs to adapt and be structured to respond to complex organisations and be responsive to adaptation developed from within. He asserts that solutions to organisational issues can be found in lower ranking roles and not always within the leadership team. However, Obolensky (2010) does not substantiate his claim with research evidence when he states that over half of the solutions are held within the bottom third of an organisation. He also does not provide his rationale for separating the organisation into thirds. This lack of evidence does not detract from the notion that solutions to organisational dilemmas may come from individual leaders at any level. Leadership is a behaviour displayed by anyone in a school (Kotter, 2013 and Bush, 2010). Leadership can be independent of formal hierarchical positions of authority (Kotter, 2013) and anyone in an organisation, whether they have a formal role in the hierarchy or not, can show the behaviour and actions associated with leadership. This is particularly so in schools and education because they are less of a 'command and control' environment. This fits with Vinzant and Crothers' (1998) view of SLBs who demonstrate leadership and discretion because it is difficult for line managers to oversee all teachers' interactions with others. However, the position within a school hierarchy does come into play because a school leader/head teacher is exposed to greater accountability and has oversight of the whole school and not just one aspect. In this sense, the role in a hierarchy is important regarding

the scope and opportunities for leadership others are exposed to or allowed to exercise.

Recent literature in the field of educational leadership and school improvement has emphasised three competing trends regarding school leadership theorisation. First, the role of DL in supporting leadership and sustaining improvement (Harris, 2008; Leithwood *et al* 2008; MacBeath *et al*. 2004 and MacBeath, 2009); second, the role of head teachers as instructional leaders (Horng and Loeb, 2010); and third, teacher leaders (Barth, 1999 and 2011; Katzenmeyer and Moller, 2011 and Angelle, 2011). The literature on school leadership does however differentiate leadership from management. Leadership is the capacity to make decisions that influence organisational practice and management is the implementation of leadership decisions. However, leadership in schools can be multi-layered as Bush and Glover (2014) indicate when they argue against adopting a single model of school leadership; so more than one model might be in place. Or the various patterns school leadership are a form of DL that is multi-layered.

2.3.1 Distributed Leadership (DL) in English Schools

Literature in the field of school leadership emphasises DL in sustaining improvement (Bennett *et al,* 2003, Harris, 2008; MacBeath *et al,* 2004; MacBeath, 2009; Leithwood *et al*, 2008; Anderson, 2012). 'A DL perspective recognises that there are multiple leaders and that leadership activities are within organisations' (Harris, 2008:12), which means anyone in the organisation can contribute to leadership activity in a school.

DL is promoted by the National College of Teaching and Leadership (NCTL) which Bolden (2011) argues accounts for its popularity in the education sector. The NCTL sponsored the research by MacBeath *et al* (2004) into the relevance of DL in English schools. The NCTL include DL as a core component of its leadership development programmes such as the National Professional Qualification for Middle Leaders with an emphasis on how teachers in middle leadership positions can develop their leadership within schools. The NCTL runs programmes for head teachers (NPQH) and senior leaders (NPQSL) and, which also promote DL.

The work of Bolden (2011) discusses DL and identifies four taxonomies derived from research into schools. The frameworks he presents are Gronn (2002), MacBeath *et al*. (2004), Leithwood *et al.* (2006) and Spillane (2006). I am going to focus on the work of MacBeath *et al*. (2004) in this study as it was sponsored by the NCTL and is the basis DL content on the leadership programmes, which head teachers and senior leaders were exposed to.

In the MacBeath *et al*. (2004) study they shadowed head teachers and teachers, interviewed head teachers and collected additional data via 451 questionnaires to teachers. The MacBeath *et al.* (2004) research approach enabled them to view and comment on the actual practice of leaders in schools. However, they conducted their research in 11 schools in total, with four secondary schools, three primaries, two middle schools and one each of a junior and infant school. The sample cannot fairly be representative of all schools in England, however, because it is too small a number of participating schools. MacBeath *et al.* (2004) also leave questions regarding the approach

to shadowing because they do not expand upon the impact that having an observer made to interactions or participants actions. MacBeath *et al.* (2004) provide no information about whether they gained access to all meetings and events. This means they are relying on self-reporting and not on how leadership is being enacted. I would argue that a researcher from outside the school is unlikely to gain complete access because many meetings are of a sensitive nature, such as those concerning child protection or a staff disciplinary. MacBeath *et al.* (2004) develop a taxonomy (Figure 2 below) which reflects the patterns of DL in English schools based upon their limited sample. However, it is possibly a useful tool for understanding and identifying different types of DL being utilised in Woodhouse School. Figure 2 (below) summarises MacBeath *et al* (2004) taxonomy, identifying six patterns of DL from their research.

Figure 2: MacBeath et al (2004) Taxonomy

In *Formal Distribution* leadership roles are delegated by the head teacher and leaders are supported in their leadership; *Pragmatic Distribution* is often *ad hoc,* where workload is shared as a response to external pressure; *Strategic Distribution* is goal-orientated and roles are given in relation to long term objectives; *Incremental Distribution* happens, for MacBeath et al. (2004), when the head teacher is more trusting in the senior leadership team and extends their responsibilities; *Opportunistic Leadership* is when leadership begins to move from away from a 'top down' approach – it is where all staff can take initiative to lead and resolve issues; and finally, *Cultural Leadership* is expressed in activities rather than roles or through individual initiative. 'Distribution' as a conscious process is no longer applicable because people exercise initiative spontaneously and collaboratively with no necessary

identification of leaders or followers.' (*ibid:* 43). Cultural leadership presents a challenge for accountable school leaders as there is no oversight of who is leading and what they are leading on.

In contrast the work of O'Donoghue and Clarke (2009) indicates a modest position regarding DL because for them 'leadership is currently equated with, status, authority and position cannot be overlooked' (*ibid:* 4). O'Donoghue and Clarke's (2009) view is that the head teacher has ultimate responsibility/accountability, and therefore has more at stake in terms of career, so will be reluctant to devolve responsibility completely to others. This will intensify as governments focus on the accountability of leaders and they need to have a point or person with responsibility for an action. An example provided in the work of Harris (2008) identifies a significant leader at the top of an organisation instigating the distribution of leadership to address an issue. The head teacher at the apex of the hierarchy restructures the organisation into five schools, each with an assistant principal. These members of staff are then 'responsible to the principal and are accountable for the performance of their school' (Harris, 2008: 80-81). So, DL might be dependent upon a leader at the top of the hierarchy, instigating DL, or designating leadership to individuals through their roles and responsibilities. Harris's (2008) example seems to fit with three types of distribution identified by MacBeath *et al.* (2004) and those are 'Formal', 'Pragmatic' and 'Strategic'. To compare Harris's (2008) particular model of distribution against the taxonomy identified in MacBeath *et al.* (2004) is difficult without Harris (2008) providing more detail in her example. This is not to say that MacBeath *et al.* (2004) have the definitive answer to the

DL models adopted in England. MacBeath *et al.* (2004) extrapolate from a small study of 11 schools and identify six models, which is not even two schools adopting each type of DL. Because, as I argue above, the sample is small you cannot generalise from MacBeath *et al.* (2004) that their taxonomy is a reflection of patterns of leadership in English schools. The taxonomy is more useful as an illustration of practice in the sample rather than a definitive identification of practice in England. What the work of MacBeath *et al* (2004) does not consider is delegation within the six models they present. At present it appears MacBeat *et al* (2004) are claiming all leaders in a senior leadership team are equal and not under the direction of a team leader or more senior leader.

2.3.2 DL as delegation of leadership in schools

Delegated leadership is an issue within the literature (Harris, 2008, MacBeath *et al.* 2004 and Leithwood *et al.* 2008). However, the discussion of delegated leadership does not fully address whether this pattern of leadership practice is genuinely distributed. The promotion of staff and leadership roles is something the head teacher can control, so *they instigate* any possible pattern of leadership. It is the head teacher who appoints staff to key positions to suit their strategy for school improvement. This would suggest DL is dependent upon a strategic leader. However, these roles signify positions within a hierarchy and do not necessarily indicate leadership as Kotter (2013) identifies it, or as writers such as Harris (2008) would, in terms of DL. The DL models discussed assume all the leaders in a DL system demonstrate Kotter's (2013) ideal leadership, where individuals exert their influence to make positive

changes. But, the issuing of leadership roles is in the gift of the 'lone warrior', so any leadership in a DL system will have predefined parameters set by the head teacher. Wright (2008) also raises an issue regarding the distribution of leadership because it can, when not executed properly, be interpreted as *delegation*.

A further criticism of DL is that head teachers 'genuinely believed that they were distributing leadership, the feedback from teachers and support staff suggest this was not the case' (Harris, 2008:27). There could be a mismatch in expectations regarding distribution of leadership between staff in schools. Existing research does not indicate if head teachers 'direct' or over-manage, leaving little opportunity for others to lead. The instances in which 'others' are provided with opportunities to lead are difficult to qualify from the research on DL, because often the data is from head teacher claims and is subjective and prone to bias.

The work of Harris (2008) presents case studies that, she argues, give good examples of how DL has contributed to improved school results. Her evidence rests on the views of school leaders and documentation they provide in terms of policy documents and Ofsted reports. Ofsted does not yet comment upon the patterns of school leadership and whether a school is using good practice in terms of DL. Ofsted only comment on the quality of leadership in terms of impact on learners.

The nature of distribution identified by MacBeath *et al.* (2004) and from Harris's (2008) work is not different from more traditional organisational structures in schools because the head teachers decide the roles and the remit of

subordinate leaders. In all schools, leaders are given formal roles such as an assistant head teacher or deputy head teacher with a specific remit such as pastoral or data management. Therefore, formal, pragmatic, or strategic distribution, is not an indication of new practice. The research of MacBeath *et al.* (2004) and Harris (2008) is just a different language applied to leadership practice in schools and facilitates a re-categorisation of traditional school leadership model based on delegation.

2.3.3 DL: New language for existing practice

The recent literature on DL could be leading to the creation of a new lexicon (Ball, 2006a) for describing leadership in schools. Harris (2008) relies on language to satisfy herself that DL is taking place; but this can give a false picture of leadership within a school. Her conclusion regarding distribution is drawn from policy documents which are often aspirational and not informed by actual practice. As already identified, a key provider of courses to train leaders in schools is the National College for Teaching and Learning (NCTL) that exposes school leaders to the language of DL.

The National Professional Qualification for head teachers (NPQH) was taken by many senior leaders, as they were deemed mandatory at the time of Harris's (2008) research. The content of these NPQH courses deals with DL (NCTL) and, it might be argued, has served to broadly disseminate a new lexicon. It is quite likely that the language will reflect newer learning (Ball, 2006a), but it does not mean that practice follows. A series of changes in policy from governments since the late 1970s has introduced a 'language of markets', with

neo-liberal language permeating education in ways it had not before. The shift in language patterns may well be happening in terms of the language of leaders and leadership in schools. My argument is that, to some extent, the language used may not reflect the reality within schools. Something also identified by Bush and Glover (2014), who point to the dominance of the National College, which previously set the standard for head teacher and leadership teaching in schools and has influenced how leaders discuss leadership.

The development of a new lexicon (Ball, 2006a) for describing school leadership brings into question research by Leithwood *et al.* (2008) who consider, as do Day *et al.* (2010), what leaders in schools claim through self-reporting about their leadership practice. The emphasis on claims is reflected in 'Seven strong claims about successful school leadership' (Leithwood *et al.* 2008) and 'Ten strong claims about successful school leadership' (Day *et al.* 2010). These titles refer to claims based upon what the heads are saying about their own practices, so this may not reflect *actual* practice. It is the language of the head teacher and researchers and may not reflect experiences of other leaders. Therefore, it is essential to hear from a range of respondents within the school and not solely the head teacher within a school. But, regardless of the language and who is describing practice Leithwood et al (2008) opened a new line of enquiry pointing to one of the strengths of DL is it improves student outcomes.

2.3.4 DL and improved student outcomes

One issue a school leader might consider is whether DL is more effective at improving student outcomes than other models of leadership. Hartley (2010) questions whether DL has an impact upon student learning because of the lack of a clear causal link. However, Hartley's (2010) a view that is in contrast with an earlier view held by Leithwood *et al.* (2008) who declare that 'School leadership has a greater influence on schools and students when it is widely distributed' (*ibid*: 3). Leithwood *et al.* (2008) make the claim that DL is the most effective leadership pattern based upon improved motivation of teachers and increased responsiveness to teacher needs.

In later work Leithwood undertook with Jantzi (Leithwood and Jantzi, 2012) the claim is: leadership is second only to classroom instruction as a factor within schools for improving student outcomes. They use the term 'collective leadership' (*ibid:* 11) and argue that collective leadership has its 'strongest effects on teacher work settings'. A work setting is identified as a system in a school that is focused towards teaching and learning. Leithwood and Jantzi (2012) are actually arguing that, what is best, is leadership that focuses upon developing and facilitating learning and teaching. This, for them, is best done as collective leadership rather than from a 'hero' leader. However, their work makes no direct comparison between types of leaders and outcomes for students. Neither does their work adequately quantify the impact of leadership in comparison to instruction.

Hill *et al.* (2017) looked at different types of leaders and indicate that 'architect' leaders are the most effective. An 'architect' leader focuses on ensuring that

school structures are in place to deliver long term change and improvements in students' outcomes. However, they do not indicate if head teachers should distribute leadership or not. The evidence for a direct link between distributed or collective leadership impacting upon student outcomes is made by Leithwood and Jantzi (2012) but there is ambiguity regarding what constitutes DL for them, and how effective any distribution of leadership is against other approaches. It could be argued that the focus Leithwood and Jantzi (2012) put on leaders facilitating good learning and teaching means it is instructional leadership and not DL. The argument put forward by (Leithwood *et al*, 2008) that DL has an impact upon student outcomes is unproven because of the conflicting evidence, but what is clear is that DL does not have a negative impact. But the focus DL brings to improved student outcomes leads to a discussion of school leaders focussed on improving instructional practice.

2.3.5 Instructional leaders and teacher leaders

Within a DL team, it is possible for the leaders to also be instructional leaders or teacher leaders. MacBeath et al. (2004) state 'teacher leadership symbolises distribution' (*ibid: 15).* For MacBeath et al. (2004) teacher leadership allows a teacher to lead outside of formal hierarchical leadership models. It is about teachers being able to choose the course of action regarding ongoing change. Katzenmeyer and Moller (2011) see teacher leaders and teacher leadership as primarily focused on leading student learning in the classroom rather than leading in areas outside the classroom. This means that to be a teacher leader one should be a classroom practitioner. Harris and Muijis (2003) outline four aspects of the role of teacher leader: 1)

brokering, which is translating school rules and procedures into the classroom; 2) participating, which involves engaging with and coalescing support for change with colleagues; 3) mediating, drawing critically on external expertise and resources and finally; 4) relationships, which is forging close relationships to foster mutual learning.

The Katzenmeyer and Moller (2011) and Harris and Muijis (2003) definitions of teacher leaders are at odds with the views expressed by Barth (2011) who identifies the following ten role requirements for a teacher leader: 'choosing textbooks and instructional materials; shaping the curriculum; setting standards for pupil behaviour; deciding on tracking; designing staff development programmes; setting promotion and retention policies; deciding school budgets; evaluating teacher performance; selecting new teachers, and selecting new administrators' (*ibid*: 23). It is possible a teacher leader could meet Barth's (2011) criteria, but it is unlikely, because this definition is more appropriate to the senior teachers within a school, who have budgetary control and ownership of HR issues.

Adopting Barth's (2011) view moves away from the inclusive 'all teachers can be leaders' definition adopted by Harris and Muijis (2003) and Katzenmeyer and Moller (2011). Barth's (2011) view is that a leader is one who controls recruitment and finance, which can have an impact on who is employed and/or promoted and what actions are funded and prioritised. Barth (2011) shows that leaders who can recruit staff can choose to employ what they consider to be better performing teachers. Also, these leaders can choose to spend money on programmes or support that improves student outcomes. Barth (2011) is

therefore drawing a distinction between school leaders with budgetary and recruitment control and those who do not. In his view only the most senior leaders can be teacher leaders which precludes middle leaders and classroom teachers.

Although not adopting the terms 'teacher leaders'/'leadership', Lingard *et al.* (2003) accept that leadership needs an appreciation of quality teaching. An effective 'approach to leadership recognises that the pivotal elements of effective school reform are teachers and their classroom practices.' (*ibid:* 17). Leadership that prioritises teaching and learning is 'instructional leadership' (Shatzer *et al,* 2014; Salo et al, 2014; and Horng and Loeb; 2010). Traditional instructional leadership is defined as leaders 'unafraid to work directly with teachers, and often present in classrooms' (Horng and Loeb, 2010:1). Wright (2008) aligns instructional leadership with the single 'hero' head teacher and cites legislation from the Province of Alberta (Canada) stating a school principal must use instructional leadership.

2.3.6 A summary of school leadership

In summary the competing and overlapping definitions of leadership in schools leads to an argument for a multi-layered approach (Bush and Glover, 2014). Bush and Glover (2014) view adopting one model of leadership as counter-productive to our understanding of leadership patterns in schools; they see links between teacher leaders, instructional leaders and DL. They reference their own work from 2012 (Bush and Glover, 2012) as supporting their view that effective leadership has learning at its core. Leadership that addresses

learning (instructional) with teachers as leaders is for Bush and Glover (2014) a component of good DL and therefore is effective school leadership. Although Bush and Glover (2014) argue that no one model of leadership is applicable, they have, in effect, argued for an expanded definition of DL to include teacher leadership and instructional leadership.

From the literature that Bush and Glover (2014) discuss they propose that a head teacher can be an instructional leader who enables good quality teaching and learning to take place. Often, they will act strategically to achieve improvements in teaching and learning. The senior leadership team will support the head teacher where responsibility is distributed to cover particular areas/aspects of teaching and learning, such as curriculum areas or whole Key Stages. The most senior lead group will have another tier of leaders (often called middle leaders) to ensure good provision in the classroom. The head teacher and senior leadership can act as teacher leaders, but the main teacher leader will be part of the middle leadership team. Schools combining instructional leadership within distributed systems combined with trust, create a climate where a focus on classroom teaching improves student outcomes (Seashore Louis and Wahlstrom, 2012).

The combining of teacher leadership and instructional leadership within DL has already been proposed and is found in the work of MacBeath *et al.* (2004). A model of distribution from the work of MacBeath *et al.* (2004) that fits Bush and Glover's (2014) criteria is 'cultural' DL or 'opportunistic' DL (MacBeath *et al.* 2004). DL that is cultural or opportunistic creates fertile ground for teachers to lead and therefore act as teacher leaders (Harris and Muijis, 2003 and

Katzenmeyer and Moller, 2011). Teachers can instigate and lead change to their practice regardless of any position within a school hierarchy. The view expressed by Barth (2011) regarding teacher leaders is much narrower in who it's applied to, but it is entirely possible that teacher leaders, as defined by him, can be found in DL models, albeit in the formal, pragmatic, strategic and incremental DL of MacBeath *et al* (2004).

Although DL can incorporate instructional and teacher leadership a central weakness remains. DL outlined by Leithwood *et al.* (2008), Harris (2008) and MacBeath *et al* (2004) is dependent upon the head teachers' discretion. This is in terms of the structure of the leadership team and how decisions are made. As Shapiro and Gross (2013) note: 'In this era of accountability, final decisions are expected to reside with the person at the top of the hierarchy' (*ibid*: 24). The focus of accountability upon a single leader does not mean there is no DL. But, the effect of accountability focused on the head teacher will impact upon the level of decision-making the head distributes. This is why when looking at DL it's important for each actor to understand roles and responsibilities and accountability, which has to be explicit.

DL is beneficial because it includes other leaders and shares the leadership of the school. But a limitation to the leadership is dependent upon the head teacher and is therefore constrained by their actions and decisions. However, importantly for this thesis, the key unaddressed area within the literature is how the leadership of others is impacted and facilitated by the actions and discretion of the head teacher. This leads to a consideration of how school leaders use discretion to meet the requirements of their role. Lipsky (2010)

identifies street-level bureaucrats (SLB) as those workers in client-facing roles, such as teachers, using discretion to meet their own and their students' needs.

2.4 Street-level bureaucrats (SLB) in schools

In Lipsky (1980 and 2010), who looked at US schools, only teachers are street-level bureaucrats (SLBs) because there is a clear demarcation between administration (senior leaders) and teacher. But, in English schools, leaders can sometimes be in client-facing roles (teaching and meeting parents), and even those who are not will often need to use discretion. Discretion is a key element of how Lipsky (2010) identifies teachers as SLBs in student-facing roles.

I have outlined above how the head teacher holds the ultimate accountability for the performance of a school. The head teacher has discretion in how the leadership structures within a school are organised. In this section I consider whether leaders in schools use discretion in the same way as Lipsky's (2010) street-level bureaucrats. In addition, I encompass the work of Evans (2016) who argues that leaders in organisations also exercise a level of discretion.

2.4.1 School leaders as street-level bureaucrats

This section develops the importance of Lipsky's (1980 and 2010) theory of street-level bureaucrats (SLB) and the use of discretion for school leaders For Lipsky (2010) an SLB is someone who works in a client-facing role where there is discretion. For, Lipsky (1980 & 2010) discretion is the capacity and freedom to decide what best meets the requirements of the situation. I discuss Lipsky's (1980 and 2010) work and question his view that leaders are not functioning

as SLBs. I argue that leaders in Woodhouse School *are* in client-facing roles, because they deal with parents/carers and students alongside having a teaching role. This differentiates from Lipsky's (2010) view of leaders and managers as overseers and controllers of SLBs' work and not also being SLBs themselves. I question Lipsky's (2010) assumptions regarding how schools' function and how leaders and teachers work. He sacrifices detailed analysis to fit leaders and workers into his idea that they are in conflicting and opposing camps. This oversimplification by Lipsky (2010) creates a binary position of the 'maligned' worker being 'good' – meeting clients' needs, and the manager being 'bad' because they are only interested in systems and rules, regardless of the impact on their clients.

Finally, there is a discussion on school leaders acting as a state-agent or citizen-agent. Seeing leaders in both a citizen- *and* a state-agent role diverges from Lipsky (2010), where only workers are citizen-agents and the leaders/managers are the state-agents. I also address accountability, and the constraint placed upon SLBs as they try to meet demand for services from clients with limited resources. Accountability and resource scarcity are central themes in Lipsky's (2010) work and a key concern of school leaders nationally. This is particularly true at Woodhouse School where falling student numbers are reducing income and there is pressure to meet Ofsted and MAT performance requirements.

The seminal work and originator of research on street–level bureaucrats and bureaucracies came from Lipsky (1980). Since then, 'street-level theory and research has captured the imagination and empirical attention of scholars'

(Brodkin, 2016:25). Lipsky (2010:3) describes street-level bureaucracy as 'public service agencies that employ a significant number of street-level bureaucrats in proportion to their workforce'. In his latter edition, Lipsky (2010) also sees teachers as SLBs working within street-level bureaucracies.

Teachers are working in public services under pressure to reform, save money and meet societal or, as Lipsky's (2010) views it, community needs. There is a greater need to ensure effective use of limited resources, leading to greater accountability. Lipsky (2010) does acknowledge that not all public services are constrained by resources and argues that as availability of a public service increases, so does the demand. In fact, Lipsky's (2010) exemplification comes from road building and not schools. However, it applies that demand for school places (a public service) can be affected by school reputation and performance as well as demographic change. The resultant increase in demand increases student numbers to a fixed point of capacity.

The central point in Lipsky's (2010) work is characteristically fewer resources are provided in order for SLBs to do their jobs appropriately. This can, and does, lead to rationing of services. The two means by which SLBs are given fewer resources are insufficient time and the ratio of SLBs to clients. Lipsky (2010) also views 'housekeeping chores', such as paperwork, to be a key complaint of the teaching profession and their union representatives. The more time taken on these activities, the less may be spent on interacting with clients. This is truer if one accounts for the time a significant number of teachers are used in a non-teaching capacity such as in leadership and management roles. The burden of interfacing with clients falls on a smaller number of teachers

who have significantly larger amounts of their working time in contact with clients.

To illustrate the point Lipsky (2010) makes regarding frontline client-facing workers having less time to carry out their roles, one might consider that a typical Head of Year teaches fewer lessons than a main scale, less experienced teacher. As, Lipsky (2010) states, 'for teachers, overcrowded classrooms (with meagre supplies) mean that they are unable to give the kind of personal attention good teaching requires. High student-teacher ratios also mean that teachers must attend to maintaining order and have less attention for learning activities' (*ibid*:30). A teacher will spend less time on one-to-one interaction with students, therefore having fewer opportunities for feedback and scaffolding (Higgins *et al*, 2013 and Black and Williams, 1998), two things that have been shown to improve student performance.

A key point to consider when looking at leaders in schools is Lipsky's (2010) view that SLBs 'may also lack personal resources in conducting their work. They may be undertrained or inexperienced.' (Lipsky; 2010:31). The issue of a lack of experience/personal resource does arise in schools as teachers can find themselves covering roles in schools due to teacher shortage or sickness.

For Lipsky (2010), a street-level bureaucrat is in a client-facing role and uses discretion to meet the clients' needs. According to Lipsky (2010), the gap between client and procedures forces the SLB to make decisions using discretion that can meet the needs of individual, organisation, or their personal values. However, Taylor (2007) found the scope for discretion has changed in schools because of greater accountability of individual teachers and their

actions. School systems often focus on accountability in terms of outcome and not the process. It is here the individual teacher or leader has more discretion because they have some latitude in how they meet the outcome. In general terms, if a teacher is achieving the outcomes, i.e. good and exceptional student grades against school measures, then they are under less scrutiny regarding their processes.

For Lipsky (2010), clear goals and performance measures are associated with control measures because 'the clearer the goals and the better developed the performance measures, the more finely tuned guidance can be. The less clear the goals and the less accurate the feedback, the more individuals are left to act with discretion.' (Lipsky; 2010:40). The increased ambiguity regarding performance measures and goals further affects managers' ability to exercise control over policy (Lipsky, 2010:40). So, ambiguous goals, for Lipsky (2010), can lead to differences in how policy is enacted and interpreted because SLBs have discretion.

The ability of managers to set appropriate targets is queried by Lipsky (2010) as unrealistic; pointing out that the idea that clearer goals can lead to better developed performance measures of workers and their work is underpinned by the assumption that managers know their organisation and their subordinates well (Lipsky, 2010 and Seddon, 2008). Seddon (2008) argues that workers focus their energies on survival rather than organisational improvement. Therefore, they are aiming to 'thrive and survive' in their 'high stakes', target-ridden environment. Teachers may well be compliant with directives, as this is how they survive, which means the school needs are

prioritised over meeting client needs. This conflict between meeting client and manager needs, for Gilson (2015) reflects the complex set of relationships an SLB is nested within.

2.4.2 SLBs and conflicting goals

An SLB can be in conflicting roles that are not solely goal driven. Lipsky (2010) accepts that goals form one of many dimensions/parameters within which an SLB strives to work. Lipsky (2010) links public expectations of street-level bureaucracies and the roles of the SLBs. He argues that the stronger the community articulates its preferred role for the street-level bureaucracy, the more likely the organisation is to reflect the community preference. In Lipsky's (2010) view, 'community' is not only the client but also means politicians, professional bodies, and business leaders. Community for Lipsky (2010) is a fluid term, meaning the 'interested' and their vested interests outside of the school or school system. Therefore, it can just as easily be the national and local agenda, but for Lipsky (2010) it is not the students who in his terms are the clients of SLBs.

The pressure to reflect perceived national community and local community needs is placed upon schools with scarce resources. This leads to schools looking at how they can ensure they are meeting a requirement for British values to permeate their curriculum. In an accountability system, they will go for events and activities that are easy to audit by themselves and inspectors (BBC and British Values, 2014), and school leaders will devise systems and

approaches to address this and all other expectations – as will individual teachers.

The discussion surrounding the prioritisation of community (or state) over clients' leads us to Lipsky (2010) who emphasises the role of the individual and his/her use of discretion in meeting competing needs. This, for Lipsky (2010), is a client-focused approach, which Maynard-Moody and Musheno (2003) identify as a citizen-agent narrative. The meeting of state objectives means you are moving away from a client focus. Taylor's (2007) stance on SLBs moves away from individual interactions and tends to focus on policy implementation, mainly from a state-agent narrative (Maynard-Moody and Musheno, 2003). Taylor's (2007) view implies that as enforcers or 'subversive implementers' of policy, SLBs do act uniformly in implementing organisational/leaders' goals and policy. Maynard-Moody and Musheno (2003) argue that the complexity of cases and situations leads to differentiation in policy implementation. Complexity of workload and differentiated responses undermine the central tenet of Taylor's (2007) state-agent thinking.

Maynard-Moody and Musheno (2003) focus on the citizen-agent narrative. They illustrate its importance as follows:

> 'Finally, the stories reveal that judgements and related actions are reached with confidence and an unblinking focus on the people who come to these workers' (Maynard-Moody and Musheno, 2003: 8).

The point made by Maynard-Moody and Musheno (2003) illustrates the importance of the individual and his/her interactions in relation to others,

highlighting interconnectedness. I would further question Taylor's (2007) view because, like Lipsky (2010), I accept that teachers respond to the unique circumstances of individual clients, interpreting the directives of the school/community/state accordingly. It follows then, that this creates inconsistency and differences, not only in approach between individuals, but also, importantly, how leaders interpret the challenges and dilemmas they face. The response of a leader will impact upon the decision's others make as they adapt to a directive and accountability and use discretion to resolve any dilemmas.

The resolution of a dilemma or not choosing to act requires an SLB to use discretion (Lipsky, 2010). The use of discretion for Lipsky (2010) is identifiable in the SLB's under pressure to meet the requirements of their role in the school against the community's needs and/or the needs of a client. As noted, Bush (2013) feels greater accountability mitigates against a worker having any latitude in deciding. But teachers (Lipsky, 2010), like many SLBs, may find they *can* act with discretion, because so much of their role cannot be micro-managed, leaving many decisions up to the individual.

Others, such as Loyens and Maesschalck (2010), argue SLBs have discretion, because 'discretion is always about a tension between general and abstract rules, on one hand, and specific situations, on the other—in other words, a flexibility versus uniformity dilemma.' (*ibid*: 67). Discretion is not identified as good or bad for Loyens and Maesschalck (2010), it is just regarded as how individuals' function in organisations – although, the work of Lipsky (2010) does indicate that discretion is useful and therefore good for SLBs in order to

function in their roles. A key area of agreement between Loyens and Maesschalck (2010) and Lipsky (2010) is over control and the need for SLBs to use discretion. Loyens and Maesschalck (2010) indicate that controlling individual interactions is challenging, as does Lipsky (2010). The work of SLBs is so unique it is difficult to create procedures, which result in stifling rules and accountability (Lipsky, 2010 and Seddon, 2008). They take the view that a set of stifling rules is the result of managers, supervisors, and leaders seeking to control the work of SLBs.

The pressure on leaders to stifle discretion is addressed by Kimmelman (2010), who argues that school leaders responding to the policy mandates by blind observance will not, in itself, mean the school will be successful. School leaders need to embrace new forms of leadership, and design responses to the challenges they face based upon the present and the future they envisage. He argues that leaders need to see policy as one point of a triangle. The second point is effective leadership, which is created by adopting new leadership patterns; and the third, fostering innovation in response to the demands they face as school leaders.

What Kimmelman (2010) is arguing for, without stating it as such, is that leaders do not act solely in a state-agent role, but use their discretion, and consider leadership structures that facilitate school improvement, as well as utilising discretion for others to develop innovative responses to existing and perceived future problems. Kimmelman (2010) is not suggesting that leaders act as citizen-agents but that they should combine the need to implement state policy with the ongoing requirement to improve schools for learners. It is, in

effect, suggesting leaders need to consider both positions of state and citizen to develop innovative responses that improve schools. The school as an organisation is in effect aiming address external pressure and internal pressure. But, because of high stakes accountability (Stobbart, 2008) the school will could possibly look to address the requirements set out by an external inspection body Ofsted and therefore responding as state-agents rather than the students and acting as client-agents.

2.4.3 School leaders as State agents or client agents

Importantly, in this work, school leaders can act with discretion in relation to the school as a structure. This again brings the debate to a consideration of leaders in Woodhouse School acting as state-agents or, utilising discretion and acting as client-agents. Lipsky (2010) does emphasise the role of society and its structures, as well as the context SLBs work in, but his work focuses mainly on the SLB as a citizen-agent, struggling to prioritise client needs over societal and organisational demands – the SLB bureaucracy to the client. The individual SLB is the bureaucracy because that is how the client experiences the organisation. The SLB is the interface that shapes the client's experiences regarding the bureaucracy. So, in Lipsky's (2010) work we have the structure represented by leaders/managers and supervisors to the individual SLB (teacher), and the SLB representing the structure and state to the client. Lipsky (2010) does not see any SLB purely as a support for wider societal processes. He does, however, account for the individual having a sense of professionalism, which may mitigate any social structures around them

impacting upon clients. The work of Lipsky (2010) is focussed on the SLB meeting client needs, and therefore adopting a citizen-agent narrative.

SLBs having a sense of professionalism (Lipsky, 2010) or 'craftsmanship' (Sennett, 2008) is a valid point because it addresses the workers sense of how a role should be carried out. However, Lipsky (2010) limits discussing professionalism and argues SLBs are workers primarily motivated by a need to balance managers' demands against their desire to meet the clients' needs. Lipsky (2010) does not provide evidence for his view that leaders and SLB workers have completely separate concepts of professionalism. For Lipsky (2010) it is the case that SLB workers are different to leaders and managers because of their client-facing role. A counter view from Seddon (2008) is that there is an unfounded tendency to assume public sector managers and workers do not strive for the best results possible for clients.

A further criticism of Lipsky (2010) from Evans (2011 and 2016) is that he has not considered the managers' sense of professionalism and the use of discretion with frontline staff. Lipsky (2010) automatically assumes teachers are in challenging situations as they face delivering services in tight financial circumstances under rigorous and inflexible systems of accountability, and that managers are not under the same pressures. Evans (2016), sees leaders in schools as likely to experience accountability. My study takes Evans (2016) and Seddon's (2008) view of leaders being professional and having a need to meet clients' needs. This work serves as an extension of Lipsky's (2010) theorisation as he appears to treat leaders as state-agents and SLBs as citizen-agents. He does not conceive leaders also having a sense of

professionalism and desire to meet client needs. Evans (2016) does view leaders as having a sense of professionalism even if it differs from, and at times, overlaps with subordinates. Whereas, Lipsky (2010) sees leaders as setting targets and trying to micro-manage SLBs to achieve organisational objectives over client needs.

An issue with targets, as conceived by Lipsky (2010), is knowing when something is a unique, one-off incident needing a singular response, or a regular event needing further investigation (Seddon, 2008). Treating all events as regular can distort the measurement of targets can impact upon the response by leaders because of associated accountability. Introducing more accountability into the working lives of individuals (Loyens and Maesschalck, 2010) reduces opportunities for workers to use discretion. Also, the more critical problems become in terms of the immediacy of response required, the more limited are the available responses to the SLB. Although, Lipsky (2010) argues some roles cannot be overseen all the time and managers struggle to create metrics that encapsulate a teacher's day-to-day role, so discretion is always possible but constrained by others prior response/s.

2.4.4 A summary of school leaders as SLBs

In this study it is argued that school leaders in Woodhouse School have dual roles; one being a classroom teacher and the other, a leader; and in both roles they are client-facing citizen-agents and do not act solely as state-agents. The dual roles of leader and teacher can mean they are dealing with two differing

concepts of being ''professional'. In Woodhouse School, like many schools, leaders are also teachers. This means that leaders will experience dilemmas within the classroom, just as other teachers would, though they may manifest differently. This means a school leader can be working with two competing or overlapping conceptualisations of professionalism. The first, is professionalism borne from being classroom practitioners (OECD, 2016). The second, as a leader and manager with a focus on the performance management of others in a team.

A school leader has a duty to ensure school procedures are followed by others, while at the same time meeting the needs of their clients – hence the potential dilemma. This raises questions about teachers as leaders, because immediately one can see they will, at times, be conflicted by competing 'push and pull' factors caused through role conflict. This will mean that sometimes school leaders will choose to respond as a teacher, and a focus on student outcomes and well-being. At other times, they will respond as a leader, with responsibility to ensure conformity to rules regulations and procedures. This can create, for Tripp (2012), critical incidents, where they need to use discretion (Lipsky, 2010) to resolve the dilemma.

In order to make decisions, SLBs use discretion in interpreting and implementing policy, such as teaching and learning policy, behaviour policy, or SEND Code of Practice (DfE/DoH, 2015). The interpretation of policy to meet client needs underpins Lipsky's (2010) opinion that teachers are SLBs because they work in a multi-layered policy environment, (Hupe *et al.* 2016). Hupe *et al.* (2016), like Lipsky (2010), argue that teachers have 'degrees of

discretion and relative autonomy from organizational authority' (*ibid*:13). It is this culture of tiered discretion that enables leaders in schools to address dilemmas.

2.5 School dilemmas

In this section of the literature review I discuss different types of school dilemma where discretion by SLBs can be utilised. I then look at whether school leaders' responses can resolve dilemmas. I then discuss and present a typology of responses to dilemmas.

The work of Berlak and Berlak (1981) identifies three broad categories of dilemma; 1) 'Control Dilemmas', which focuses on the teaching situation; 2) 'Curriculum Dilemmas', which relates to the organisation of learning; and 3) 'Societal Dilemmas', which focuses on the purpose of education. This is a useful typology for identifying the origin of the dilemma. Berlak and Berlak (1981) make it possible to see how dilemmas impact upon all individuals. But not all individuals in a school will have the power, or available discretion, to address their dilemmas. The work of Berlak and Berlak (1981) looks at dilemmas faced by classroom teachers. They see teachers' dilemmas as those focused on schooling and how to organise learning and divide them into three types – 'Control', 'Curriculum', and 'Societal'. Essentially, they put the teacher at the heart of the dilemma, contending with competing demands to deliver effective schooling or, in today's parlance, teaching and learning. According to Berlak and Berlak (1981), a societal dilemma is one relating to how schools teach values. For example, should teachers aim to teach broadly shared

values or look at those of sub-groups, risking confusion or accusations of bias? This dilemma from Berlak and Berlak (1981) is described by Tripp (2012) as a 'critical incident'. Tripp (2012) illustrates this through a school activity regarding allocation of time spent studying Australian history. Forty thousand years of first people's history is taught in two lessons, with eight lessons spent on the 200 years of European settlement. This unequal distribution of time implies which is more valued and presents a 'critical incident' for the teacher, who may have a view on the importance of pre-European colonisation of Australia.

The work of Tripp (1993) develops dilemmas from the work of Berlak and Berlak (1981). Tripp (1993) and Berlak and Berlak (1981) both view dilemmas as 'choosing between mutually exclusive options' (Tripp, 2012:49). Tripp (1993, 2012) and Berlak and Berlak (1981) focus specifically on teachers' dilemmas. In both the work of Tripp (2012) and Berlak and Berlak (1981) dilemmas are resolvable. The work of Murphy (2007) focuses on school leaders and he identifies that head teachers cannot always resolve dilemmas as some became intractable in any given moment.

Murphy (2007) identifies 21 pairs of dilemmas that leaders face in Scottish Schools. Murphy's (2007) dilemmas are around 3 themes: the purpose of schooling, the curriculum offered and classroom practice. The challenges identified by Murphy (2007) could be contested because they might only reflect his own experience as a head teacher. For Murphy (2007), school leaders are often 'in the eye of a storm' in terms of meeting the requirements of competing demands, so Murphy's (2007) dilemmas may not resonate with every leader as they are identified from his own experiences. However, the point is that

Murphy (2007) illustrates that dilemmas are faced by leaders in schools and not just teachers in client-facing roles.

Leaders in schools can be presented with additional dilemmas from goal conflict (Lipsky, 2010) as well as the role conflict (Handy, 1993) experienced by teachers. The additional goal and role dilemmas arise because leaders in schools also teach and are often in facing roles (Lipsky, 2010) as well as leading others. As Lipsky (2010) and Berlak and Berlak (1981) see it, teachers are trying to meet expectations at a societal, community level, using their own sense of the 'right course of action'. For Loyens and Maesschalck (2010) leaders' 'jobs, and the inescapable dilemmas they have to deal with, make it impossible to fully achieve the expectations of the agency, the client, and the broader society' (*ibid*:71). So, for Loyens and Maesschalck (2010), Berlak and Berlak (1981) and Lipsky (2010) dilemmas are inherent and ever present.

The work of Loyens and Maesschalck (2010), like Berlak and Berlak (1981), assume dilemmas are caused when an individual's and society's expectations conflict. A teacher or leader will therefore have dilemmas to resolve framed by resources, power interdependencies, and their own personal goals and aspirations. These goals and aspirations might be at odds with those set out by the organisation (Seddon, 2008 and Lipsky, 2010), which creates a dilemma. Also, there will be dilemmas created through role conflict (Handy 1993). This role conflict is likely to be an issue for teachers who are also leaders and who may see themselves in dual roles, or possibly in one role reluctantly. School leaders can jump between roles, assume one role or pragmatically blend the two in a synthesis (Clegg *et al.* 2002). The point is that

role conflict does create dilemmas. The ambiguity or the challenge of addressing an organisation's goals at a tangent to one's own priorities can create dilemmas for school leaders.

2.5.1 Ethical Dilemmas for leaders and teachers

Ethical dilemmas are outlined by Shapira-Lishchinsky (2011) who uses critical incidents to describe the tension between 'the caring climate and the formal climate' (ibid:648). For Shapira-Lishchinsky (2011) the 'caring climate promotes attention to individual and social needs, while a formal climate emphasises adherence to organisation rules.' (*ibid:* 648). She describes five ethical dilemmas faced by teachers (see table 2 below) that parallel the work of Lipsky (2010), Berlak and Berlak (1981) and Loyens and Maesschalck (2010). In table 2 below, I re-conceptualise Shapira-Lishchinsky's (2011) dilemmas in terms of a choice between people-focus and system-focus. Shapira-Lishchinsky's (2011) work adopts Tripp's (1983 and 2012) and Berlak and Berlak's (1981) view of a dilemma arising when there are opposing options.

People focus		System focus
Caring		Formal
Distributive justice	against	School standards
Confidentiality		School rules
Loyalty to colleagues		School norms
Family educational agenda		Schools educational standards

Table 2: Shapira-Lishchinsky's (2011) ethical dilemmas adapted into dichotomies

Shapira-Lishchinsky's (2011) ethical dilemmas can be positioned within the citizen-agent SLB and state-agent SLB frame so the five categories of

dilemmas are positioned correspondingly as people-focused and system-focus. The dilemma, for Shapira-Lishchinsky (2011), happens when the teacher is faced with a people-focus or a system-focus. For her, it is that one is set against the other. For example, caring, seen as a people-focussed approach, is *against* formal, which is regarded as system-focussed. However, it is not clear within Shapira-Lishchinsky's (2011) work if the ethical dilemmas diametrically opposed in table 2 are derived from results or imposed upon the results. It is quite likely 'Caring' could be set against School Norms, or any other combination. So, although the usefulness of her diametrically opposed categories can be questioned, I nevertheless accept that these illustrate the issue of teachers facing dilemmas where a decision or choice needs to be made (Shapira-Lishchinsky, 2011). Shapira-Lishchinsky's (2011) work is a simpler interpretation of the dilemma axis identified by Berlak and Berlak (1981) and Lipsky (2010) because she negates societal impact upon teachers and leaders in schools and only considers the organisation.

Ethical dilemma is not the language of Lipsky (2010), Murphy (2007) Berlak and Berlak (1981) or indeed of Tripp (2012). In Shapira-Lishchinsky (2011) an ethical dilemma is not defined and identified except for her five categories. The work of Shapiro and Gross (2013) identifies an ethical dilemma as decision-making and problem solving when one option is chosen over another. A key element of the decision-making for Shapiro and Gross (2013) is the consideration of values. They draw on the work of Begley (1999), noting that the values of the individual may conflict with the values of the organisation;

and also, the work of Dewey (1958) regarding 'good outcomes'. For Shapiro and Gross (2013) it is about right and wrong, good and bad.

For Loyens and Maesschalck (2010), ethical dilemmas originally focused on leadership dilemmas in the private sector. Whereas, the literature on decision-making, which includes much SLB work, such as Lipsky's (2010), focuses on the public sector. The work of Shapira-Lishchinsky (2011) was published after Loyens and Maesschalck's (2010) and she uses ethical dilemmas in a public realm. As do Shapiro and Gross (2013) when they discuss turbulence and dilemmas that school administrators/school leaders address in their role.

To address leaders dilemmas Shapiro and Gross (2013) developed four interwoven ethical paradigms: ethic of critique, ethic of care, ethic of justice and ethic of profession. In Shapiro and Gross's (2013) work, ethic of critique highlights inconsistencies in ethic of justice, which aims to reduce injustice where disadvantage is still in evidence: ethic of care is consideration of emotions and the whole person and ensuring people are at the forefront of thinking and decision-making; ethic of justice is about utilising law, rights and policies to inform decision-making and ethic of profession is adherence to professional body codes of ethics. An ASCL (2019) report highlights the importance of ethical decision making based upon a framework for leaders that adheres to Shapiro and Gross's (2013) professional paradigm. Although the report cites 'The Seven Principles of Public Life' (Nolan, 1995) as an underpinning influence. The Nolan report was intended to apply to public servants such as MPs and members of the House of Lords, but has become,

through wider adoption, the template for professional frameworks as illustrated by the ASCL (2019) report.

Values are significant for Shapiro and Gross (2013) who adopt Begley's (1999) view that an ethical dilemma is such because decisions invariably involve values when one option is preferred over another. Also, leaders, in Shapiro and Gross' (2013) view, are likely to deal with the conflict between their own values, those of the organisation and of the community. This moves beyond Shapira-Lishchinsky's (2011) conceptualisation of ethical dilemmas. But it places the leader into a situation identified by Lipsky (2010) in which he/she is faced with dilemmas based on a conflict between his/her own values and societal demands. However, Branson (2014) argues that not all leaders act ethically, saying that 'a more cogent argument for ethical educational leadership is still required – especially for those leaders who still cling to the view that just because they are leader, they have the sole right to choose how they will lead' (*ibid:* 1,215). He implies that ethical leadership involves others in the decision-making. This puts Gross's earlier iteration of ethical leadership with Shapiro (Shapiro and Gross, 2013) at odds with his later collaboration with Branson (Branson and Gross, 2014). As I identify above, Shapiro and Gross (2013) align ethics with achieving good tangible outcomes, but now it is about if a leader should include others in the decision-making and leadership (Branson, 2014). Achieving good tangible outcomes for a client as an SLB does not require the involvement of others in making the decision. Including others is more a means to achieving good ethical outcomes rather than a determinant of a good tangible (Dewey, 1958) outcome.

Leaders in schools also have to achieve good outcomes are no different from workers because they also need to use discretion to meet client needs. However, Shapiro and Gross (2013) and Kristinsson (2014) argue that educational leaders are a distinct group of professionals. Kristinsson (2014) proposes that profession must be distinguished from professionalism, which is characterised by acting professionally. Kristinsson (2014) gives no explanation as to what acting professionally is, except that it meets society's expectations of what it is to be 'professional'. However, Kristinsson (2014) does argues that professionalism consists of knowledge, skill, and care. Care is broken into three elements: service, morality, and occupational standards. Kristinsson's (2014) conceptualisation overlaps with Lipsky's (2010) view of an SLBs professionalism discussed earlier. This is not exactly the stance taken by Shapiro and Gross (2013), who argue for a distinct ethical paradigm, 'Ethic of Profession' based upon the work of Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005). Shapiro and Gross (2013) advocate a moral imperative for the profession to 'serve the best interests of the student' (*ibid*, 2013:81). This is not different from Lipsky's (2010) notion of meeting client needs because the best interest of the student is paramount for SLBs. The term 'professional' or the 'imperative of profession' is therefore applicable to both teachers and school leaders in this work. So, drawing together the work of Shapiro and Gross, (2013); Branson (2014) and Shapira-Lishchinsky (2011) with the work of Berlak and Berlak (1981) and Tripp (2012) we can identify an ethical dilemma as one that puts a good tangible outcome (Dewey, 1958) for the student at the heart of the decision-making process. This conceptualisation of ethical dilemmas could be seen as

aligning more closely to the citizen-agent of Maynard-Moody and Musheno (2000) and not the state-agent who puts school or society outcomes first.

The emphasis on administrators as a separate profession as leaders of schools and not teachers in the work of Shapiro and Gross (2013) might be a reflection of the completely different roles and expectations on leaders in a US school system as opposed to an English school system. The clear delineation of the roles in US schools between leaders and teachers identified in Shapiro and Gross's (2013) work can account for Lipsky (2010) seeing teachers and leaders in schools as different, with only the teacher (worker) being an SLB. In English schools there is a blurring between being purely a leader, with 100% of time spent on leading and managing, and a teacher, who is 100% teaching and classroom focused. Often, head teachers, and in particular senior leaders, in English schools have a teaching timetable as well as leadership responsibility. I find it hard to accept that a leader in a US school would never interact with clients or feel the pressure at any time to meet client needs at some point in their working week. Because Lipsky (2010) does not define SLBs as *always* meeting client needs. Due to SLBs dealing with dilemmas regrading organisational and society needs, their needs as a worker and the needs of a client who they may wish to help. This is surely no different for leaders. However, it may be the case that in English schools' leaders and teachers are drawn towards being state-agents rather than citizen-agents. But, regardless of the teacher being a citizen-agent or state-agent, in the work of Shapira-Lishchinsky (2011), Murphy (2207) and Shapiro and Gross (2013) the

individual leader or teacher addresses the dilemma alone, rather than in a distributed team.

The work of Shapira-Lishchinsky (2011) and Shapiro and Gross (2013) further assumes that individuals can resolve all dilemmas whether they are a teacher or a leader. Shapira-Lishchinsky's (2011) work concentrates on *resolved* dilemmas, as they illustrate a focus of her work, and she does not discuss any unresolved dilemmas. Shapiro and Gross (2013) only provide a model/ toolbox for addressing dilemmas and no empirical data to support the success of their approach. So, their work is a proposed approach to resolving dilemmas rather than a tried and tested model. For Shapiro and Gross (2013), all dilemmas are resolvable by a leader if the right approach is adopted and, for them, their toolbox is the right method.

The view of Shapiro and Gross (2013) is contrary to that of Murphy (2007) who identifies unresolvable dilemmas as paradoxes. For Murphy (2007) a paradox indicates a contradiction between choices, but also the tension between the two choices that cannot be readily addressed without artful navigation. Murphy's (2007) view of paradox is similar to Stacey's (2011), where the contradiction between two or more choices is not resolvable. A paradox, for Murphy (2007), is different from a dilemma (Tripp, 1993 and Berlak and Berlak, 1981), which involves choosing between two 'mutually exclusive' options; because, with a paradox, *neither* choice is optimal. This does not discount the usefulness of artful navigation, as it enables the organisation to function. Therefore, the leader needs to utilise discretion and carefully navigate the options, so the result is best for them, the students *and* the school.

Whereas, Ball (1998) identifies paradoxes happening when an action intended to produce one outcome, such as transparency, produces the opposite outcome, opacity. Staber (2013) identifies paradoxes occurring as "stability-change and control-flexibility" (*ibid*:81), which aligns with Stacey's (2011) view. As does the view of Carr & Kemmis (1986), where they distinguish between contradictions and paradoxes. For Carr & Kemmis (1986) "a contradiction is to imply that a new resolution can be achieved, while to speak of a paradox is to suggest that two incompatible ideas remain inertly opposed to one another" (*ibid*:34). Or, as Lipsky (2010) terms it organisational or client needs. The issue is that there are going to be competing demands upon leaders in organisations creating dilemmas and paradoxes.

Unresolvable dilemmas are discussed by Witzel *et al.* (2016) who introduce the concept of 'antinomy paradoxes' in which there are two, equally logical, but contradictory statements that no amount of logical reasoning can dispel' (*ibid:* 3). The contradiction cannot be resolved by choosing one option over another (Shapiro and Gross, 2013). The works of Murphy (2007), Shapiro and Gross (2013), and Witzel *et al.* (2016) do not discuss shared responses, and only discuss the dilemmas, and subsequent paradoxes, as ones that leaders tackle alone.

The view of the lone leader, tackling both resolvable and unresolvable dilemmas alone, is countermanded by the work of Grint (2005) and Beabout (2012). They both suggest that leaders work together to deal with problems that are too large for any one individual. This *collaborative* approach may aid in resolving the 'antinomy paradoxes' that Witzel *et al,* (2016) view as beyond

logical reasoning. The need for a team to share responsibility for apparently insurmountable problems is why Harris (2008) and MacBeath *et al* (2004) suggest DL as a response to the challenges of leadership in schools.

To sum up, the debate on patterns of school leadership and school leaders addressing dilemmas and paradoxes we have leaders dealing with dilemmas alone (Murphy, 2007; Lipsky, 2010; Shapiro and Gross, 2013 and Shapira-Lishchinsky, 2011) and leaders working with others to resolve dilemmas (Harris, 2008; MacBeath *et al.* 2004; Beabout, 2012 and Grint, 2005). It is for leaders to choose how to resolve dilemmas. Leaders can use discretion and choose to address dilemmas and paradoxes alone or choose to resolve the problem with others and facilitate DL. This means patterns of leadership in English schools is impacted by senior leadership choice and deciding how to respond to dilemmas and the challenges they face.

2.5.2 Responding to dilemmas

In this sub-section I consider how school leaders can respond to dilemmas. Leadership dilemmas and competing demands are identified in the work of Grint (2005). Grint (2005) adapts Rittel and Webber's (1973) typology of 'Tame' problems, 'Wicked' problems, and 'Critical' problems for leaders. Tame problems (dilemmas) require a *linear* response. This, for Grint (2005), requires a management response that essentially follows already adopted/accepted processes. Obolensky (2010) argued that leaders have two options: a *linear* approach (Yang) and a shared approach (Yin). Grint (2005) and Obolensky (2010) believe that a *linear* (Yang) approach should be an option for leaders.

Obolensky (2010) identified Yin (shared) as most suitable for dealing with complex issues, and Yang (*linear*) for less complex matters. Because 'tame' problems are less complicated, a *linear* response can be an option.

For Grint (2005), a wicked problem is complex, 'often intractable, there is no 'stopping' point, it is novel, any apparent solution often generates other 'problems', and there is no right or wrong answer, but there are better or worse alternatives' (*ibid:* 1473). The huge level of uncertainty regarding the right option to choose, plus a lack of an existing *linear* process, means a leader is required, in Grint's (2005) view, to facilitate a *collaborative* process. This developing of a *collaborative* process links to the work of Bower (2006) where individuals within an organisation need to communicate and provide one another with feedback to develop a response to large scale turbulence. 'Wicked' problems are complex and therefore a shared response is most likely appropriate. This makes *collaboration* the response to 'wicked' problems.

In Grint's (2005) typology, a 'critical problem' is one that requires an immediate response, which is associated with command rather than management or leadership. It is where decisions are taken by those in authority – such as the head teacher – to solve or respond to the dilemma, and adherence to the command is expected from others. Grint (2005) points out that overuse of the command approach can indicate weakness in leadership, and ultimately undermine it. He is, however, referring to political leadership. He presents no evidence from his illustrative cases to support this view that using a command response undermines leadership. The additional critique of Grint (2005) would be that he is not explicit about the type of leadership he is addressing, except

that it should be socially constructed. He is, therefore, arguing for collaboration (the social process of actors coming together), albeit without using the language of Beabout (2012). So, Grint (2005) is arguing for a *collaborative* response, which is ideally suited to 'wicked problems' (Fyke and Buzzanell, 2013). If a dilemma requires an *urgent* response, then a command approach is an option. As Bolden *et al.* (2016) state, 'A critical problem is defined as *urgent*, requiring immediate and decisive intervention. In the face of a critical problem, leaders and managers need to act fast and may not have time for a wider consultation' (Bolden *et al*. 2016:157). So, critical problems need *urgent* responses that will often preclude sharing and socially constructing the response.

Grint's (2005) typology is useful because it begins to identify potential discretionary responses to dilemmas by leaders. Bolden *et al.* (2016) view Grint's (2005) typology as socially constructed, in that the problem is categorised under either 'tame', 'wicked' or 'critical' through a process of social construction. But this is undermined by their view stated above, that fast action without consultation is needed. Also, a head teacher or first responder can choose to include others or not, and the very nature of a critical problem is that the response is required immediately and may not allow time for socially constructing the response. This could also be true of 'wicked' and 'tame' problems because it relies on the first responder recognising the nature of the problem. The head teacher may not consider, or feel able, to include others in deliberation. Or, they may always respond as if any dilemma is critical and so undermine opportunities for collaborative leadership.

But it would be an oversimplification, and a retreat into dualism, to assume that it is either the leader alone, or a team, that decides the complexity of the problem and the appropriate response. The key factor would be context and how many leaders experience the turbulence. However, the overriding point, discussed earlier, regarding leader or team is that the head teacher sets the pattern of leadership and uses discretion when deciding how much others can contribute to leadership in the school and resolving a dilemms

However, a more immediate issue for this research is the use of the term 'critical'. I will argue later that critical may be defined as 'significant to the individual' rather than a dilemma requiring an immediate response, or as a Bolden *et al.* (2016) *urgent* response. I have, therefore, redefined critical to reflect the level of urgency required by leaders, in terms of how quick a leadership response is required to address a dilemma. The term *urgent* will therefore be used instead of critical because it better reflects the need for an immediate response to resolve the problem or dilemma.

2.5.3 Summary of dilemmas for school leaders

The literature points to both dilemmas and antinomy paradoxes having the potential to be so complex they are not solvable by one individual. In Grint's (2005) work these are 'wicked problems', which require individuals to come together and address. For Beabout (2012) and Morrison (2002) this requires a *collaborative* response where individuals come together to address the issues that are causing the dilemma or paradox. The need for a shared response to 'wicked' leadership problems beyond any single leader is the rationale for

schools adopting DL (MacBeath *et al*. 2004 and Harris, 2008). So, DL is a leadership response to challenging dilemmas but one where the leadership is focussed on improving student outcomes (instructional leadership) in order to address the requirements of the various stakeholders and bodies that hold them to account.

2.6 Concluding thoughts

The discussion and critical analysis of the literature on school leadership and dilemmas has identified turbulence as a significant factor in the creation of dilemmas for school leaders. These dilemmas can affect all levels of leadership. A significant factor creating turbulence for school leaders would be the transfer into a multi-academy trust (MAT). This change from a local authority-maintained school to one within a successful MAT will create turbulence and present dilemmas for school leaders that they may or may not be able to resolve.

The literature review identifies how leaders may utilise discretion and act as street-level bureaucrats in order to address dilemmas. Discretion this is the basis of Lipsky's (2010) theory of SLBs. However, he precludes leaders and managers and assumes only workers are in client-facing roles where they need to use discretion. The reality is that school leaders are often in dual roles, acting as teachers and leaders, and are therefore, necessarily in client-facing roles. In these client-facing roles they can choose to act as state-agents or citizen-agents, and as leaders or teachers they will need to use discretion and choose an appropriate response.

Leadership patterns within a school has the potential to mitigate any turbulence from external sources has been identified within the literature review. The literature reviewed further suggests that DL as a leadership pattern is commonplace in English schools. Although the particular pattern of DL in each school may vary based upon the model adopted by the head teacher.

A key point identified within the literature is that the decision a school leader makes in response to a dilemma can be procedural, shared and created with others, or an immediate response due to an urgent matter. I have adapted Grint's (2005) typology to indicate the three types of response a leader can choose to resolve a dilemma: 1) *linear*; 2) *collaborative* and 3) *urgent*. '*Linear*' is a response based upon policy and procedures, *collaborative* is a response where the help of others is sought, and *urgent* is one which requires an immediate response. The literature indicates that a *collaborative* approach is a suitable response to complex dilemmas. The need to have leaders able to respond to complex dilemmas is a further justification within the literature for DL as a pattern of leadership suited to English schools.

Turbulence is a factor in creating dilemmas for school leaders which leads to the research question: How do school leaders respond to turbulence and any subsequent dilemmas in the context of academisation?

The critical discussion of street-level bureaucrats identifies discretion as a key to leaders and workers resolving dilemmas they face, which leads to the research question: To what extent are school leaders able to use discretion when dealing with dilemmas?

The literature identifies distributed leadership as a loose term to describe leadership patterns in schools. Distributed leadership is identified as a means enabling school leadership teams to respond to turbulence, which leads to the research question: What patterns of school leadership are associated with school leaders' responses to dilemmas?

Chapter 3 – Methodology

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter I explain and critically evaluate the research approach taken in the thesis. I discuss instrumental case study as the appropriate methodology that fits within an interpretivist paradigm. I then outline the phases of the study, the methods, the implications from the pilot study and the approach to analysis. Finally, I address any ethical considerations.

3.2 My ontology, epistemology and paradigm

In this study school leaders self-identify their critical issues and dilemmas that they face. I do not impose my view on what is a critical incident or dilemma and adopt an interpretative paradigm.

Alignment of my research to a paradigm without consideration of its ontological and epistemological underpinnings would mean my paradigm is defined purely in terms of the method I used, and the data collected. Audi (2003) views epistemology as 'perception, memory, consciousness, reason, and, secondarily but indispensably, testimony' (*ibid:* 331). He further asserts that once our beliefs are grounded in one or more of these 'five sources of non-inferential knowledge and justification' (Audi, 2003:331) we can extend our knowledge through deductive inference. The debate has, in the past, been polarised between two broad paradigms: positivism and interpretivism. Mertens (2003) outlines three paradigms operating within the research

community – the positivist-postpositivist paradigm, the interpretive-constructivist paradigm and the third, a transformative-emancipatory paradigm. The issue is, at times, one of language. Cohen *et al.* (2011) also have three paradigms – positivist, interpretive and critical theory. The transformative-emancipatory paradigm that Mertens (2003) adopts is subsumed within the critical paradigm described by Cohen *et al* (2011), because, for them, it is about emancipation and transformation.

The paradigms of Cohen *et al* (2011) may be elaborated as follows:

Positivism can be seen as value-free, detached observation, seeking to identify universal features of humanity, society and history that offer explanation, and hence control and predictability (Crotty, 1998:67). It is also associated with realism in that an object is 'real' regardless of whether or not a human is aware of it.

The critical paradigm holds that positivists and interpretivists have neglected the 'political and ideological contexts of much educational research' (Cohen *et al.* 2011:31). Critical theory is normative, in that it starts with the premise that society is unequal, and that reducing inequality and increasing social justice is right for all members, which leads to the view that critical theory's intended outcome is transformative (Mertens, 2003). Critical theory is 'intensely practical and political' (Cohen *et al.* 2011:31). The view of transforming society and reducing inequality dovetails with Critical Race Theory (Delgardo and Stefancic, 2001), which aims to eradicate race-based inequality and takes a normative stance on racial inequality. Adopting the critical paradigm would mean taking a normative stance that academisation creates, or at best

exacerbates inequalities. This may or may not be the case, but it is not the focus of this research. It is for this reason that the critical paradigm is not appropriate for this study.

Interpretivism, however, holds that subjective interpretations of the world for individuals is key. It is about studying how knowledge is constructed by looking at the ways in which people understand their world, the way that understanding is created and how people create knowledge (Hammersley, 2012). Interpretivism also holds that actors in any situation are not value-free and therefore cannot be totally objective. In the interpretivist paradigm, a researcher is a co-originator of knowing, which, for Creswell (2009), makes it social constructivist, where meaning is constructed between the actors. Although Creswell's (2009) view underplays the impact of the researcher undertaking extensive analysis and review of data at a later stage, it does, however, merit consideration. This is discussed below, when identifying appropriate methods and consideration of my analytical approach.

Not all researchers, however, consider locating research within a paradigm to be essential. Bredo (2009) counters the debate around research paradigms as unhelpful to the furtherance of knowledge of educational issues. Cohen *et al.* (2011) support Bredo's (2009) view because there is a 'need for less confrontational approaches to be adopted between different research paradigms' (*ibid*21). Bredo (2009) further argues that the protagonists on each side of the debate have been dogmatic and not focused on producing good research 'that clears up ambiguities in the situation it aims to resolve while opening up fruitful lines of future inquiry' (*ibid:* 447). Symonds and Gorard

(2008) are supportive of Bredo (2009), saying that educational researchers should focus 'on the quality of our actual research techniques, the resulting data and on how that data is used, no matter whether this involves one or more sets or types' (*ibid:* 17). Symmonds and Gorard (2008) are arguing that answering educational questions and solving educational problems should be a key focus for researchers, rather than promoting quality 'through the overarching categories or researcher identities' (i*bid*:17). The data collected that addresses worthwhile educational problems is paramount for Bredo (2009) and Symmonds and Gorard (2008).

Symonds and Gorard's (2008) main rationale for any methodology is based on resolving ambiguities and opening fruitful lines of research rather than from a philosophical position centred on how we know what we know. This leads to the question of whether a choice is necessary between competing epistemologies and ontologies. Hartley (2010) indicates that interpretivism is the most common paradigm for research into patterns of school leadership and few studies have adopted a scientific approach.

I am also aware of the need to understand how actors have acted through their perceptions of reality, which may differ from mine. The research is, therefore, located within an interpretivist paradigm, because it facilitates an understanding of the world view of others, and it enables the research questions to be answered. In adopting an interpretivist paradigm I need to be clear on my positionality and how this is addressed in the study.

3.3 Researcher positionality

In the introduction I outlined how my present and previous roles of teacher, middle leader in schools, deputy leader of a local council and senior lecturer coupled with the turbulence I experienced in these roles underpinned my interest in this study. These experiences and my present role providing continuing professional development for senior leaders in school informs my researcher positionality.

Thomas (2016) highlights how as a researcher undertaking case study research you are immersed in the subject and situation of your research. Thomas further asserts that as a researcher within an "interpretative paradigm undertaking a case study you need to accept your subjectivity and not be ashamed or afraid of it" (*ibid*68).

In accepting one's positionality researchers from differing traditions Gilborn (2008) and Thomas (2016) recommend being explicit about one's gender, race, biography, class and ethnicity needs to be made clear. In the case of researchers such as Gilborn (2008) who is a white male academic study racial disadvantage from a critical race theory perspective his positionality is important. It could be the case that who he is not only impacts on the data he chooses to collect, how he interprets the data but also on how research participants respond to him.

The need to be clear with about researcher positionality has a dual purpose: firstly, for readers of your research as it helps in terms their understanding of your perspective; secondly, it shows you are able as a researcher to take

account of how your positionality impacts upon the research topic, data collection and interpretation.

My positionality in relation to this study is informed by my experiences as a teacher undergoing radical change in the teaching profession from curriculum, inspection regimes, change of role and leadership within school. The need to constantly adjust practice due to external and internal turbulence has been a key feature of my work within the English Higher Education sector as universities try to align provision to meet external market needs and UK policy changes. My previous experience as a senior leader within a local authority developed an awareness of how high ideals were often sacrificed in order to meet tight budgetary controls and national policies. I am aware that in these roles I need to meet competing and challenging needs of stakeholder groups.

My positionality made me more have empathy with leaders who are working in challenging circumstances aiming to meet the needs of students, parents, colleagues and more senior leaders and this made me better at interpreting the world from the participants viewpoint as I have similarly been faced with dilemmas, some of which I could not resolve alone.

3.4 Research Design: Case Study

In this section I discuss case study as an approach before justifying instrumental case study (Stake, 1995) as the approach adopted in this study. The use of a case study was in order to enable an exploration of how leaders respond to dilemmas. Case study research has no one definition that dominates. For Yin (2012) 'case study research assumes that examining the

context and other complex conditions related to the case(s) being studied are integral to understanding the case(s)' (*ibid:* 4). Cohen *et al.* (2011) identify the case study as being able to deal with many variables operating in a single case. Creswell (2005) sees case study as a form of ethnomethodology. So, despite the acceptance of case study as an approach, it remains loosely defined. The looseness of the definition might, in part, be due to writers such as Yin (2003 and 2012) and Hamilton and Corbet-Whitter (2013) discussing case study in terms of their own practice, reflecting the work they have undertaken, as well as identifying how others have used it. In Yin's (2012) work you can see how, from his examples, case study has changed and been applied, but there is no one, consistent approach. The central theme is to uncover insights into a case.

One can argue that, because case study can be utilised to explain or describe something as an example, it is an established methodology. In Hamilton and Corbett-Whittier (2013) view case study has evolved into a viable approach via the work of Yin (2003). However, Stake (1995) had in an earlier work already identified case study as a research approach and this is supported by VanWynsberghe and Khan (2007). For Yin (2003) it is 'a comprehensive research strategy' (*ibid* 14) with allowance for variation. It is the variation that is a key factor in the utilisation of case study methodology. It enables a researcher to identify particular, unique cases to study, and uses a range of data collection methods that appeal to researchers.

For, VanWynsberghe and Khan (2007) view case study as trans paradigmatic, which means, for them, that 'case study is relevant regardless of one's

research paradigm' (*ibid:* 80). Case study is context-dependent, so it is suited to this study investigating how individual leaders respond to dilemmas in a school undergoing turbulence. However, case study can be seen as a global term for a range of approaches outlined in the work of Stake (1995) and Yin (2012). The section below I outline my particularly type of case study that would enable the research questions in this study to be addressed.

3.4.1 Types of case study

The identification of case study as a methodology in this research then leads to a consideration of types of case studies. Yin (2012), Stake (1995), Creswell (2009) and Thomas (2016) have each identified their own types.

Ethnographic case study is proposed by Creswell (2009), which for him is suitable for those able to gain a close and regular access to the case being studied. However, the study I undertook was one where I had access to the school leaders only in specific periods, so an ethnographic case study (Creswell, 2009) was not appropriate. Yin (2003) is critical of the definition of ethnography as case study, arguing that it is a historical miss-definition, based upon early use of life histories and participant-observation. This shows that case study can cover a range of types that can be contested.

A case study for Yin (2012) is either 'descriptive' or 'explanatory', based upon the research questions for the study being either descriptive or explanatory. Yin (2012) critiques the use of case study as an exploratory element in a larger research project where it 'appears to serve only as a prelude.' (Yin, 20125) prior to the main study. Yin (2012) is arguing against case study being

subsumed into action research and becoming merely a 'reconnaissance or fact-finding' stage (Lewin, 1948). For Yin (2012), an explanatory case study explains a phenomenon that is within the case study. Yin (2003), identifies Allison's (1971) seminal work investigating the actions of leaders in the Cuban missile crisis as an example of an explanatory case study, because it seeks to explain the actions of actors at the time.

A descriptive case study (Yin, 2003) rests with research questions that are 'what questions, who questions and where questions' (*ibid*:6). In later work (Yin, 2012), he identifies descriptive case studies with the opportunity to provide rich insight in five differing situations: revelatory – inaccessible situations for social scientists; exemplary – highlighting successful cases; unique – one-of-a-kind cases; extreme – cases in extreme situations; and lastly, typical cases – cases under ordinary conditions. The difficulty for researchers thinking of descriptive case study is its seemingly beguiling ease. But, Yin (2012) views descriptive case study as problematic, because identifying what will be covered and what will not, coupled with what can be described and analysed, as an unnecessarily exhaustive and time-consuming process. Being exhaustive in itself is a valid, and not necessarily negative criticism, unless one is restricted by time constraints. Description is useful as a means to a fuller picture of a case, or in Flyvbjerg's (2001) view, an 'example'. Taking into account Yin's (2012) reservations and Flyvbjerg's (2001) view of enabling a fuller picture of the case, is useful in order to build a clearer picture of the case study school – Woodhouse.

Another approach to case study identified by Thomas (2016) is 'evaluative', which assumes you are looking at how well something is working. Evaluative case study works when one assesses the case before and after a change, in order to measure the impact and success of a change against criteria. One might evaluate to assess process or outcome. My study never set out to test a 'before and after' effect and so cannot be considered to be an evaluation.

An earlier writer on case study, Stake (1995), differentiated between 'intrinsic' and 'instrumental' case study. An **intrinsic** case study is one where, for example, Woodhouse School would be considered 'the case', and where the aim is to build as full a picture of the case as is possible. Hamilton and Corbett-Whittier (2013) liken intrinsic case study to an Ofsted inspection, where a picture is built up of the whole organisation using differing data collection tools. I will not digress into whether the approach taken by Ofsted is effective, or debate the weighting given to each item of data, or whether Ofsted's approach is carried out consistently, but the comparison illustrates that an intrinsic case study is aiming for a complete picture of the case, which is also bound by time and place. It is, as Thomas (2016) sees it, because one is interested in *the case* and not a trait, or problem, it exemplifies.

An **instrumental** case study (Stake, 1995; Baxter and Jack, 2008) is one where the researcher is looking at an *aspect* of the case. It can be an 'aspect, concern or issue' (Hamilton and Corbett-Whittier, 2013:12). Or, as Thomas (2016) states, 'an instrumental study is one done with a purpose in mind' (*ibid*:120). In my study, I was looking at an aspect within the case study organisation, and therefore the case study undertaken was an instrumental

one. The aspect being addressed in my case study is how leaders and teachers respond to dilemmas. I have identified how instrumental case study enables the research questions to be answered the next step is to discuss and demonstrate the robustness of my data.

3.5 Reliability, validity and generalisability in this study

Thomas (2016) writes that 'reliability and validity are not your principal concern when doing a case study' (*ibid:* 63) arguing that since there is no expectation that the results will be repeatable, they are irrelevant. He adds that they are borrowed from other disciplines and methods but make no sense in case study research. However, this view is not supported by Yin (2003), who feels that researchers should conduct their research as if being closely watched by an auditor (though it is not clear who the auditor is). It seems to me that all research needs to be seen to be adopting appropriate measures to ensure the conclusion is robust, and, to this end, Yin (2003) develops the auditor idea in suggesting that procedures should enable any auditor to arrive at the same conclusions.

A case study that is positivist, and using quantitative data to draw conclusions, can adopt repeatable procedures – thus ensuring reliability, in Yin's (2003) terms. But if one is taking an interpretative approach, using qualitative data, then Thomas's (2016) argument is stronger.

Golafshani (2003) proposes that reliability could be redefined for qualitative researchers, so that it reflects how *trustworthy* the results are. Trustworthiness

makes sense in my case, and, although I accept Thomas's (2016) view that the data from my study is unlikely to be repeatable in another setting, I do concur with Yin's (2003) view that *procedures* need to be replicable, for the purposes of showing trustworthiness, rather than producing the same result. Yin (2003) and Cohen *et al.* (2011) identify replicable procedures as 'construct validity'. For me, it means carrying out a case study that might be useful as an example, or illustration, of what can happen in a similar setting when there are similar dilemmas.

Validity, like reliability, is from the positivist paradigm (Golafshani, 2003) and needs to be adapted for interpretative researchers using qualitative data unlike Thomas (2016), where it is not a principal consideration. Indeed, Macklin and Whiteford (2012) argue that qualitative and interpretative research and researchers need not adhere to practices 'underpinned by positivist reasoning processes but by practical rationality' (*ibid:* 87). Macklin and Whiteford's (2012) argument for practical rationality is one for doing what works to answer the question one wants to answer ethically. Thomas (2016) and Macklin and Whiteford (2012) argue that researchers do not need to consider processes such as validity from the positivist paradigm, which goes against the view of Yin (2003) who views validity as important in case study research. Gorard (2013) supports Yin (2003) where 'The 'validity' of any findings refers to their real-life applicability and to their robustness when examined sceptically' (*ibid*:159). For Gorard (2013), real-life applicability relies upon due care and attention from the researcher. The due care and attention of the researcher indicates a development of 'tacit knowledge' (Thomas, 2016). However, the

above discussion does not answer how my thesis addresses validity. Essentially, validity will be ensured through construct and internal validity (Cohen *et al.* 2011 and Yin, 2003), where data is analysed transparently.

Reliability and validity are the basis for establishing generalisable research, but generalisability is more than just reliability and validity. One must also consider what, if anything, arising from this study of particular leaders dealing with particular dilemmas, that could usefully be extrapolated for use in other settings It is not necessarily the purpose of interpretative case study research to provide generalisations, but, identifying methods for studying schools, as well as gaining an understanding of how some leaders might deal with dilemmas, are both important. This case study can support other studies or provide an exception, through the creation of an illustrative example, that queries generalisation. Yin (2003) argues that researchers using case study should aim for 'analytical generalisations' and not concern themselves, as he sees it, in *Level One Inference* 'statistical generalisability' where inferences are made from a sample of the population. For, Yin (2003) case study is not a sampling unit and therefore cannot be related or extrapolated to a whole population. However, it does indicate the 'case' being studied and can be useful for 'analytical generalisations' where one or more cases support or refute a theory. This can be achieved through the generation of examples based upon small-scale studies of particular cases.

The generation of examples, for Flyvbjerg (2001 and 2006), is a good thing, as the examples can be used to illustrate and make clear points. Flyvbjerg (2001) sees the creation of examples as historical, because cases have

always been used to illustrate and make arguments clearer. It could also be said that case studies facilitate the creation of exemplars, as Flyvbjerg (2006) argues in 'Five Misunderstandings about Case-Study Research'. It is, therefore, possible to use case studies to illustrate, support or falsify theories. And this, for Flyvbjerg (2006), is the strength of case study research. He argues that unique cases have moved forward our understanding of the world. He relates that even Galileo had observed that 'Aristotle's law of gravity was not based upon observations across a wide range' (*ibid:* 74). Flyvbjerg (2006) also describes case study as a 'black swan', which acts to contradict a theory, and therefore, generalisation is not always necessary and can be overrated.

The view of Macklin and Whiteford (2012) is similar to Flyvbjerg's (2001) and Symmonds and Gorard (2008) regarding 'doing what works' within ethical parameters. Generalisation, for Flyvbjerg (2001) is one of many practical skills researchers need and can use. This fits with Symmonds and Gorard's (2008) argument that all researchers need concern themselves with is whether they can answer the important educational questions.

The stance taken in this current study is that answering the research questions is central, and that, as an interpretative and qualitative study, it does not need to adhere to positivist thinking and processes. But, a consideration of how research might be made robust and applicable to other settings is worthwhile. As Thomas (2011) writes, conducting research should also develop my Technical skills (*techne),* theoretical understanding *(episteme),* my tacit knowledge *(phronesis)* and my actions *(praxis)* as a researcher*.* The identification of the paradigm and methodology in this thesis which has

developed my learning needs to be considered alongside a suitable research tool that collects good data.

3.6 Identifying school leaders' dilemmas using Critical incident technique (CIT)

There is a growing interest in using critical incident technique (CIT) in education (Wragg, 1999; Tripp, 1993; Douglas *et al,* 2009; Farrell, 2008; Shapira-Lishchinsky, 2011). CIT is suited to case study research (Cope and Watts, 2000; Chell, 2004; Fitzgerald and Dopson, 2009). Chell (2004), claims CIT is beneficial as the 'analysis enables the researcher to relate context, strategy and outcomes, to look for repetition of patterns, and thus build up a picture of tactics for handling difficult situations.' (*ibid*:47). Each critical incident (dilemma) will be, by its very nature, a difficult situation and therefore CIT is a suitable approach.

The types of 'incidents' under discussion include ongoing issues as well as completed occurrences, but because they were critical to the interviewee, they were recalled to a high level, as predicted by Chell (2004). The study looks at school leaders who were confronted with myriad incidents, of which some were ongoing and recent. I am aware that teachers may focus on the last critical incident (dilemma) rather than the most important.

The use of CIT as a research method began with Flanagan (1954), who defined it as 'a procedure for gathering certain important facts concerning behaviour in defined situations. It should be emphasised that CIT does not consist of a single rigid set of rules governing such data collection. Rather it

should be thought of as a flexible set of principles which must be modified and adapted to meet the specific situation at hand' (Flanagan, 1954, no page numbers). Flanagan (1954) adopted a positivist approach, which was the dominant paradigm at the time (Chell, 2004). However, CIT has been developed further as an investigative tool within an interpretative or phenomenological paradigm and for use in occupational settings (Chell, 2004) since the 1990s. Chell (2004) however, does rely on referencing her own work to support this development. It has become popular within an educational setting since Tripp (1993), who developed critical incidents to unpick—and develop a further understanding of—one's actions, and to reflect on practice, as a key element of teacher development.

A summary of trends from 70 years of critical incident technique research (Butterfield *et al.,* 2005) notes an evolution of use from Flanagan's 1954 study. In their summary, Butterfield *et al.* (2005) note that CIT has become more focused on self-reporting of incidents by participants in studies. For Butterfield *et al.* (2005), self-reporting 'corresponds with the move towards exploring incidents of personal importance and the significance of factors related to critical incidents' (*ibid:*490). The work I have undertaken is part of the evolving use of CIT. The focus on individuals and their experiences is 'consistent with another trend in the CIT literature, namely that of adapting the method to focus more on thoughts, feelings, and why participants behaved as they did' (Butterfield *et al.,* 2005:490), which is how I have used it in my own research.

In education, the work of Tripp (1993) is salient, as he identifies CIT as a means of developing teachers' reflective practice. Tripp (1993) produced his

work in response to teacher training moving away from higher education institutions and in to schools. This trend has continued unabated in England. However, the location of the training is not a concern for Tripp (1993). Instead, the emphasis on practical knowledge over other kinds forms Tripp's (1993) concerns that 'practical competencies are insufficient for professional practice; the creation and analysis of critical incidents is a good way to develop the equally necessary skills of informed professional judgement' (*ibid*:152). So, Tripp's (1993 and 2012) CIT is a means for developing tacit knowledge in teachers. It allows for reflexivity to develop teacher practice, as Kinsella (2012) argues, through reflection, both tacit and explicit. Professional knowledge is developed through reflection that is deliberative (Tripp, 1993 and 2012) or revealed through action.

The work of Tripp (1993) outlines four kinds of professional judgement; the first is instant and practical, used to make many teaching decisions, which Tripp terms 'practical judgement'. The second is diagnosis, which produces an explanation of the first, leading to a conscious understanding 'of the nature and effects of practical decisions made' (*ibid*:137) that Tripp (1993) terms 'diagnostic judgement'. The third is 'reflective judgement' and 'is most common when the teacher knows there are no obvious 'right answers about how to act.' (*ibid*:137). This last one has parallels with Stacey's (2011) paradox and to Lipsky's (2010) need for SLBs to act with discretion autonomously. Tripp (1993) outlines 'critical judgement' that involves challenge to, and evaluation of, the judgements and values revealed by reflection' (*ibid:*140). Interestingly, he also adds that this last judgement is revealed 'through formal investigation'

(*ibid*:140), though he provides no explanation of his reasoning for this. Tripp (2012) develops and presents four approaches to the analysis of incidents, which could be formalised into a study. In addition, it is, surely, reasonable to assume that further iterations of various incidents, and the consequences of one's actions, can, and do, lead to further reflection.

Ongoing reflection, which is a focus of Tripp's (2012) work, is mirrored by management theorists who have used CIT (Fitzgerald and Dopson, 2009; Chell, 2004; Cope and Watts, 2000; Cope, 2003; Gray, 2007; Amy, 2007) and is seen as important, not only for individual learning, but also organisational learning.

Although Staber (2013) and Stacey (2011) view the individuals as the learners and not the organisation. For them the organisation learns when the individuals within the school have learnt. So, if learning is not shared there is no organisational learning. To prevent change being isolated in this way, schools need to be open to shared learning, so that new learning flows freely and is disseminated throughout. Hunt *et al.* (2000) use critical incidents to uncover what education managers see as 'obstacles to effective working' around communication. They do not frame the debate around learning. Their study showed that there is a need for greater training in one-to-one communication. So, the learning here was around identifying an area for improvement on an individual basis. However, this development of the individuals would contribute to a wholesale improvement by allowing for a more effective flow of information and learning.

The definition of critical incidents I am working with is taken from Tripp (1993), in which not all incidents are critical and typical. An incident could be a life-affirming moment, for example, but these types of incidents happen rarely and could not constitute the basis of research. The incidents of interest to Tripp (1993) are ones that are critical because they are 'indicative of underlying trends, motives, and structures.' (*ibid*:25). These incidents are rendered 'critical' through analysis (Tripp, 1993). The development of Tripp's (1993) critical analysis is from Schön (1983) and also Dewey (1958) on reflection and practice. Tripp (1993), outlines Dewey's (1958) work thus: 'reflection begins with some form of surprise, followed by perplexity' (Tripp, 1993:xii). Thus, perplexity can lead to a dilemma that may not be resolvable. It is also worth noting that any critical incident pertains to how each person has perceived the event/surprise. This is due to the multiplicity of situations faced by teachers and the fact that each person has a differing set of technical, theoretical understandings, as well as ethical positioning. It is, therefore, not possible, as an outsider, to denote what is a critical incident for the participant. However, CIT is a useful research tool for gaining an insight into how leaders respond to dilemmas in practice.

3.7 CIT research tools

CIT is useful for providing insight into leadership dilemmas. To uncover participants' dilemmas appropriate research tools, need to be used. When utilising a research tool it is important to keep in focus that incidents and issues are seen as critical if they are perceived to be so by the participant. An incident

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means a rethink of practice, values and skills, which might be a dilemma that is unresolvable or the resulting role strain (Handy, 1993). Therefore, the individual's interpretation of what constitutes a significant incident is their decision. I, the researcher, need to illicit what the incident is, and why, for them, it is a critical one, as well as uncovering the underlying dilemma. In order to assess the usefulness of CIT a pilot study was developed and trialled on senior leaders in two East London schools. Neither was part of the eventual study.

3.7.1 Pilot Study evaluation

After conducting the pilot study, I decided to have two sets of interviews, the first to build a picture of the case (Flyvbjerg, 2001), and the second as the CIT interview (Chell, 2004), and a CIT log drawn from the literature on research approaches after conducting a pilot study.

The research instruments in any study are designed to capture data that is of value to the study. To ensure the data collection tools were effective at this, a pilot study was undertaken. The pilot study served three purposes, which were: firstly, to test a new data collection tool I have not utilised before, to assess the effectiveness at capturing data; secondly, to adapt the instruments to ensure they are effective and finally, to provide an opportunity for me – the researcher – to develop my research skills (Thomas, 2011). Sampson (2004) identifies some uses of pilot studies to test the instruments, researcher bias and develop questions. 'However, pilots have rarely been comprehensively reported on in reflexive accounts of research in action.' (Sampson, 2004: 386). Sampson's (2004) concerns were addressed by reflecting on the learning from conducting

the pilot study along with the implications and adaptions to finalised research methods. The process of reflecting upon the pilot study develops – as Thomas (2011) sees it – the researcher's tacit knowledge, leading to generally enhanced research skills.

The first step in the pilot study was to issue a critical incident log (Appendix 1) to three leaders in three separate schools. The feedback indicated that the log was easy to use, and the instructions attached to the log were clear. One respondent who provided verbal feedback highlighted the importance of the log as an 'aide memoir'. He noted how his memory of an incident was different from his notes. A significant difference was the level of anxiety and fear he had around his chosen decision and actions regarding stopping a student fight. This was a useful comment as it highlights the benefit of the log to capture thinking and emotions around incidents near the time they happened. It also relates directly to my criticism of research relying solely upon semi-structured interviews with participants. Chell (2004) takes the view that because incidents are critical there will be good recall. However, Chell's (2004) view was not supported by the pilot study. The use of a critical incident log to act as an 'aide memoir' is supported in the pilot study.

A key issue thrown up from the use of the log in the pilot study was the need to have contextual information regarding the participants' roles. One participant in the study had been a senior leader in the same school for several years, one was a returner to schools and teaching and the third had just taken up a new role as a senior leader. Because of this feedback from participants in the pilot study an initial interview was undertaken, prior to engagement with

the CIT log, to uncover significant detail relating to Woodhouse School. An additional interview did facilitate richer data on Woodhouse School. The use of an initial interview allowed for a deeper, richer description of the context and decisions of individual leaders. Initial interviews enabled identification of leader roles, position within the hierarchy and whether they were established or new leaders (therefore facing greater challenges). Finally, initial interviews gave an insight into the values leaders at Woodhouse School have in relation to education. It is important to understand how teachers perceive issues such as inclusion, SEN, social justice or accountability. Gaining insight into leaders' views on educational issues gave an indication of how the individual might prioritise certain decisions, and links to Lipsky's (2010) SLBs navigating the needs of clients against those of the organisation. I also gained an insight into the perceived threats, challenges and dilemmas the participant faces.

The key learning from the pilot study was the need for two sets of interviews. The first phase interview was conducted to gain a richer understanding of the context and the leaders' views of Woodhouse School, and the second set of interviews became the critical incident technique interview. This meant the second interview could focus solely on the incidents that the respondent wanted to discuss. Also, CIT logs were a useful 'aide memoir' for respondents and these were best introduced after the initial interview. Introducing the CIT Log after the first interview meant that their use could be explained to each individual.

3.7.2 CIT Interviews

Interviews can be aligned with different epistemological positions such as positivism (Cassell, 2009), in which they are highly structured. However, they are more recently understood in terms of interpretivism and qualitative research (Kvale, 2006 and Cassell, 2009). Chell (2004) uses interviews as a primary means of data collection within CIT. Wragg (2002) on the other hand, is not specific about any broader paradigm or methodology, but does identify three types of interview: structured, semi-structured and unstructured.

Although an interview is a research tool appropriate for getting closer to the subject, one wonders if it is any more effective than participant observation at collecting data on critical incidents. Wragg (1999) uses participant observation for collecting observation data in classroom settings. Participant observation enables data to be collected on incidents as they happen. However, there are several reasons for discounting observations. The benefit of interviews in CIT research over participant observations is that they constitute an overt activity (Chell, 2004). The interaction between the researcher (myself) and the interviewee is one where each is aware of what is taking place and can respond accordingly. The explicitness of interviews fits with an ethical view, and the University's ethical regulations stating that participants may withdraw at any time. Participants can choose to withdraw more readily in an upfront and overt process. A second benefit of interviews is teachers perform myriad roles and observing them in all settings is not possible because, at times, they will be dealing with sensitive issues. Using interviews in CIT is practicable and it achieves the same objectives in a less obtrusive way than observation. A

third benefit of interviews over observation is the individuals identify and reflect upon their critical incidents, and the researcher can gain an understanding of the participant's worldview. The CIT interview therefore fits within the interpretative paradigm. Interviews are useful as they can be a flexible means of exploring people's thinking and can yield rich data (Drever, 2003). Drever (2003) cautions that they take time and cannot be used for large samples (a survey is better). He adds that effective interviewing is a skill, at which one needs to have gained a certain level of proficiency.

CIT can be utilised in interviews (Cope and Watts, 2000 and Fitzgerald and Dopson, 2009) where the researcher asks questions around a self-identified incident. The approach has an advantage over unstructured interviews in that it provides a focus for the interview. Although, Chell (2004) seems to consider having a clear focus for an interview means it is unstructured. I see Chell's (2004) preference for unstructured interviews over semi-structured interviews as an error because the unpicking of an event can follow a similar sequence/ set of questions. I will utilise an approach identified by Tripp (1993) where an incident is outlined, reasons for it being critical for interviewee are discussed before the learning, and subsequent actions are discussed. In fact, Chell (2004) herself utilises 'generic probes' (Chell, 2004: 49) as they are useful. Although generic probes lead one to question why she has not tailored probes to the individual and their responses.

In dilemma research conducted by Shapira-Lishchinsky (2011), where it was important to elicit participants' views, a semi-structured interview drawn from critical incident technique (CIT) was used. Incorporating probes for additional

information will be utilised (Shapira-Lishchinsky, 2011) enabling the collection of data 'on concrete accounts of the events as recalled by those who have experienced them' (Fitzgerald and Dopson, 2009: 47). Utilising semi-structured interviews has an advantage over unstructured interviews (Wragg, 2002 and Coleman, 2012) in that it provides a focus for the interview. Wragg's (2002) and Coleman's (2012) interviews are like the semi-structured interviews I am familiar with from a British Educational Leadership, Management and Administration Society funded project (Stevenson *et al.* 2012). The use of a semi-structured interview enabled further probing of participants' thinking and clarified why incidents were significant.

This study encompassed two phases of semi-structured interviews. The first set of interviews builds a picture of the school (Flyvbjerg, 2001) and how the leaders in Woodhouse School see their roles. The second phase (predominantly with the same individuals) was the CIT interview (Cope and Watts, 2000 and Fitzgerald and Dopson, 2009), which addresses the issues that present dilemmas.

3.7.3 CIT logs as an 'Aide memoir' to support the interviewees

I used an 'aide memoir' overcame Chell's (2004) criticism of CIT with a critical incident log (CIT log) to aide participants' recall. The CIT log created an opportunity for the participants to record critical incidents nearer the time they experience them, rather than using only recall during the CIT interview. A further benefit of the CIT logs was the incidents were identified by the participant and the reflections were the participants' and not be my own.

An alternative to the use of logs would have been to use a journal but after initial piloting a journal approach was considered unhelpful for leaders because it was deemed to be too time-consuming by the pilot study participants. So, a structured CIT log was utilised (Appendix 1). The CIT logs helped to structure the responses from the participants in the critical incident interviews. The structuring of the interview responses was evidence that the logs had worked as an 'aide memoir'. However, only two participants of 12 in the CIT interview submitted and bought their logs with them. The fact only two were returned did not mean the logs failed to meet requirements of the study, because respondents used the format to prepare for the second interview. Lessons regarding their future use are discussed in the limitations section within the Conclusion Chapter.

I can, from the use of CIT logs, conclude I did address the criticism I made of Shapira-Lishchinsky's (2011) work about immediacy of recall. My critique of Shapira-Lishchinsky (2011) was her work could not be certain that only most recent incidents are recalled. The teachers in the second interview did recall a range of incidents over time.

However, the CIT logs although successful in the pilot study were not utilised by participants as I had envisaged. The CIT Logs in my study, although useful for framing responses and acting as a preparatory recall tool for participants, were not submitted in sufficient numbers to be used as a stand-alone research tool. In future, developing the CIT Logs as a research tool would be useful. However, they did fulfil their primary purpose, which was to aid recall of a range of critical incidents and not just the most immediate.

3.7.4 Designing the interviews

The first interview was a semi-structured interview designed to gain an understanding of how leaders saw the school, the challenges faced as it became part of an academy chain and their roles. In fitting with CIT, a semi-structured approach was also adopted for the second interview because interviewers can delve into participants' meaning of the world (Kvale, 1996). But also, importantly, semi-structured interviews allow incidents to be explored in greater depth.

Adopting Kvale's (1996) Seven Step Guide to interviews is useful as it allows for the development of themes through: thematising, design, interview, transcribing, analysing, verifying and reporting. The interview schedule allows for key themes identified from the literature to be addressed. Also, it allows for 'off-piste' activity that enables a fuller exploration and analysis of the meanings and interpretations of the participants' socially constructed world. The first interview (Appendix 2a) is focused on understanding how the leader perceives their role and the turbulence within the organisation.

The second set of interviews (Appendix 2b) were the CIT interviews and focused on the incident for the individual only, as outlined in the work of Beth et *al* (2005). The participants had the benefit of an aide memoir in the form of a CIT log used to structure their responses in the critical incidents interview. Only two respondents wrote out and submitted their CIT logs prior to the second interview, but clearly, the structure was beneficial for verbalising their incidents in the CIT interview.

3.7.5 Analysing the interviews

I decided to analyse the interview data using a hybrid approach (Fereday and Muir-Cochrane, 2006) to analyse the data. The hybrid approach (Fereday and Muir-Cochrane, 2006) combines inductive and deductive approaches, rather than seeing them as mutually exclusive. One further approach is thematic analysis. As Braun and Clarke (2006) state 'thematic analysis is a poorly demarcated and rarely acknowledged, yet widely used qualitative analytic method (Boyatzis, 1998; Roulston, 2001)' (*ibid*: 77). Fereday and Muir-Cochrane (2006) further define thematic analysis as 'a form of pattern recognition within the data, where emerging themes become the categories for analysis.' (*ibid*: 82). Pattern recognition and identifying themes is like Strauss's (1987) work where the processes of utilising deductive and inductive 'processes go on throughout the life of the research project. Probably few working scientists [social] would make the mistake of believing these stood in simple sequential relationship.' (*ibid*: 12). The data utilises Strauss's (1987) continuous analysis of data using induction and deduction to identify key issues and themes.

The inductive approach is about seeing themes within the data, and doing so without preconceptions and prejudgement (Regan, 2012). I doubt if one can approach data without preconceptions as does Yung (2013), but there is merit in looking at the data for themes and issues not previously identified. A hybrid approach combines the inductive with a deductive approach, which utilises a codebook (template) created *a priori* from research questions and a theoretical framework (Fereday and Muir-Cochrane, 2006). The strength of Fereday and

Muir-Cochrane's (2006) approach is the ability to combine looking at the data for new themes and applying a theoretical framework from the study. Interwoven with Fereday and Muir-Cochrane's (2006) deductive and inductive analysis is a Straussian approach (Strauss, 1987 and Ball, 1998). This is identified by Ball (1998) as the categories, themes and codes being 'subject to continuous interrogation and refinement as new pieces of data were collected' (*ibid*: 318). Strauss (1987) believes continuous interrogation should go on until saturation where 'nothing new happens as he or she reviews the data' (*ibid*: 26). Strauss's (1987) approach was taken because the more data is processed, the more one uncovers and identifies new themes that can be applied to existing data, until the cycle yields no new meaningful information for the study.

The initial coding was conducted in stages. The initial interviews were coded first to help understand the case and build a description of the leadership structures and the issues that were important to leaders. Once the critical incident interviews had taken place these were coded, and the results presented as an adaptation of Creswell's (2009) 'Concurrent Embedded Strategy' (*ibid:* 214). This is an approach adopted in mixed methods studies. It is useful because it outlines the approach taken, which is to embed one set of data within another. However, mixed methods research, discussed by Creswell (2009), is concerned with the mixing of quantitative and qualitative, where a secondary source of data is used to support the primary source. In this study, the first interview is used to support the second critical incident interview. The weakness of a concurrent approach from Creswell's (2009)

perspective is the need to transfer one data type into another to ensure compatibility. In his work it is quantitative into qualitative or vice versa. However, in this study the data type (interview data) is the same, so Creswell's (2009) perceived weakness of concurrent embedded strategy is not an issue.

Once the interviews had taken place, codes and data were looked at again to ensure items had not been missed, which is the saturation approach (Ball, 1998 and Strauss, 1987). The process of saturation enabled dilemmas to be identified from first appearance to potential crisis.

To aid the process of analysing the data I used some software called Nvivo (Thomas, 2013). Nvivo was designed to aid qualitative researchers with analysis based upon coding they have created. The software's effectiveness does rely upon creating suitable codes (See appendix 2c). Ball (1998), Strauss (1987) and Fereday and Muir-Cochrane (2006) agree that codes are developed through the process of coding and analysis until saturation. This meant I could ensure the fullest use of valuable data and have a greater certainty I had a truer representation of leaders dealing with dilemmas in Woodhouse School.

3.8 The Case Study School

Woodhouse School is located on the border between two counties outside of a major conurbation. Prior to the study, the case study school, Woodhouse School was taken into a multi-academy trust (MAT). This occurred in September 2014 and the study started in the March 2015. A new interim head teacher was appointed by the MAT in mid-year. The head teacher post was

made permanent during the data collection phase of this study. The head teacher was put on to the school's governing body in September 2014, prior to being promoted to lead Woodhouse School in the spring of 2015. The first interviews started in March 2015 (see table 3 below on page 121), with the head teacher, followed by the next 11 interviews in the summer term. All interviews were conducted once the school had become an academy. The school became an academy with the then most recent Ofsted grading of 'good' (Ofsted report in 2013). The academisation of Woodhouse School is not the usual route for schools becoming academies because it was not grade as either failing or outstanding by Ofsted. In the academic year of 2014-2015, schools either became academies because they were 'outstanding' as graded by Ofsted and chose to be become an academy, or they were graded 'requires improvement' and academisation was part of the turnaround process aimed at delivering better student outcomes. The journey towards academisation for Woodhouse School, however, began when the local authority became concerned about the school's financial viability due to falling student numbers. At the time of the first interview, only one-year group out of five had more than 67 students. In fact, four-year groups had between 50 and 60 students, where there was capacity for 120 students per year group.

Charhill (pseudonym), was a very successful secondary school in a neighbouring county which was already developing into a MAT that also included local primary schools. Charhill chose to combine with primary schools in order to drive up standards by ensuring that students attending Charhill in year 7 were ready for the secondary curriculum they offered. Charhill had once

been the worst performing school in its area, but, under the guidance of a new head, became the outstanding school in the area. The head teacher of Charhill is now the Executive Head (CEO) of the multi-academy trust (MAT).

The structure of the academy trust is as follows: CEO – the head teacher of Charhill, who now leads two secondary schools and four primary schools; Head Teacher – each head teacher is also a chair of governors of another school in the trust. The head teacher at Woodhouse is a chair of governors at one of the four primary schools in the location of Charhill, the sponsor academy.

3.8.1 Participants – justification and identification of the sample

The participants in this study were a purposeful sample (Creswell, 2007). In this purposeful sample participants were identified for interview. The sample consisted of middle leaders: assistant head teachers, deputy head teachers and the head teacher. A purposeful sample is 'the pursuit of the kind of person whom the researcher is interested in' (Thomas, 2013: 137), which in this study is school leaders. A purposeful sample illustrates 'different perspectives on the problem, process, or event' (Creswell, 2007:75) and was a useful way for me to reflect upon the differing roles teachers with leadership responsibility have in secondary schools. Not all writers of case study accept the need for sampling, and Thomas (2016) views 'sample' as the wrong word for case study researchers. He argues that a sample is chosen to represent the whole. Therefore, one would select participants on how well they represent the whole organisation. Yin (2003) suggests case study researchers should screen

individuals for suitability. I do see the need to choose individuals based upon likely value to a study. In my study, an individual's value is solely derived from their status within the organisation, such as middle or senior leader. It is for the reason the new academy head teacher is included in the purposeful sample of leaders who were interviewed.

The first interview addresses Hartley's (2004) recommendation that case study researchers spend a period orientating themselves with an organisation, in order to understand the structures and identify suitable participants. Thomas (2016) concurs that knowing an organisation is important. It is because of the need for detailed knowledge of Woodhouse School that I used two phases of interviews. The first phase addressed the point of knowing the organisation and the individuals. Table 3 below illustrates the purposeful sample of participants for each interview and the roles they fulfilled in the organisation. The sample consisted of all available leaders within the school. The school is in an area of England that is white British with no non-European staff. Table 3 (below) indicates each interviewee's position within the school and whether they were in post before or after academisation, as well as how many times they were interviewed.

Table 3: Identification of leaders' roles; pre and post academisation appointment and how often they were interviewed:

Name (pseudonym)	Position	Role	Pre or post academisation appointment	Interview 1	Interview 2
Joseph	Head teacher	Head teacher	Post	Yes	Yes

Sharon	Assistant head teacher	Senior leadership Team	Pre	Yes	Moved to another school
Carrie	Assistant head teacher	Senior leadership Team	Pre	Yes	Yes
John	Deputy head teacher	Senior leadership Team	Pre	Yes	Yes
Elizabeth	Assistant head teacher	Senior leadership Team	Post	Yes	Yes
Dave	Head of Pastoral Area	Middle Leadership Team	Pre	Yes	Yes
Maria	Head of Pastoral Area	Middle Leadership Team	Pre	Yes	Yes
Anthony	Head of Curriculum Area	Middle Leadership Team	Pre-but now an enhanced role	Yes	Yes
Annabel	Head of Curriculum Area	Middle Leadership Team	Pre	Yes	Maternity Leave
Judy	Head of Curriculum Area	Middle Leadership Team	Pre	Yes	Yes
Shirley	Head of Curriculum Area	Middle Leadership Team	Post	Yes	Yes
Lauren	Head of Curriculum Area	Middle Leadership Team	Pre	Yes	Yes
Tracey	Head of Curriculum Area	Middle Leadership Team	Post	Not available	Yes
Jean	Head of Curriculum Area	Middle Leadership Team	Pre	Not available	Yes

Table 3 above shows that most leaders were in post prior to the school becoming an academy. However, significantly, both the head teacher and another senior leader were new, representing two out of five senior leaders at the start of the research and three out of four by the completion of the research.

3.9 Ethical considerations in this study

Ethics is from the Greek 'ethos', meaning character or disposition. Ethics, as applied to the Social Sciences, is relatively new in comparison with ethics and the natural sciences. The application of ethics to research started, for Israel and Hay (2003), after 1945, with the 1947 Nuremburg Code.

In more recent writings in the field of education, ethics has become an explicit area to be written about (Alderson and Morrow, 2011) and considered. An acknowledgement of ethical research is part of the researcher's responsibility to the wider community, the case study school, the participants, and to fellow researchers in the field (i.e. reputation damage to the discipline). Though I recognise a tension against the need for academic freedoms, I nevertheless accept my obligation to abide by rules that the university and the case study school have in place for conducting research.

The research involved gaining informed consent from the head teacher of the school (Appendix 3a) and the participants (Appendix 3b). The participants were made aware that 'informed consent' meant they could withdraw from the research. They were also made aware of the need for anonymity. In addition, participants were given an opportunity to look at conclusions drawn from data collected, in order to ensure their views were not misrepresented. The

participants were made aware of the scope, timescales and possible outcomes of the research, as per BERA 2018 guidelines. I attach, the Consent Form (Appendix 3a) from the head teacher for research to take place in his school, and Appendix 3b, the Consent Form from the participants.

It is important that my research is judged to be ethical before it is undertaken, and this was achieved via meeting the requirements of UEL's ethics committee. Although, ethics committees are not created solely because of research causing harm in the past. They must ensure present and future research fits in with today's conceptions of what is, and is not, acceptable or harmful. Acting ethically means being pro-active. It means making sure work meets the ethical considerations of the field which was done in this study by adhering to BERA Ethical Guidelines (2018). Also, the work fits my own position regarding ethics of care (Israel and Hay, 2003). The research met Israel and Hay's (2003) ethics of care because primacy was given to ensuring participants did not create workplace difficulties for themselves and could review their own data. The research undertaken in the thesis adhered to BERA guidelines (2018), which ensured the work met the requirements of researchers in my field.

The issues around anonymity, informed consent and confidentiality were made explicit in the consent forms and at the beginning of each interview. The need for anonymity meant only the data relevant to each individual was made available for each participant to review, so they were able to confirm they were not identifiable.

3.10 Concluding thoughts

I have argued that my research sits within the interpretative paradigm. The methodology is instrumental case study (Stake, 1995 and Thomas, 2016) using a qualitative method – critical incident technique – in the form of semi-structured interviews, as best suited to answering my research questions. I am not arguing for the primacy of case study over other approaches, just that it is the most suitable for addressing my research questions. My approach to adopting case study and CIT interviews is in line with Symonds and Gorard's (2008) and Bredo's (2009) view that a central concern as a practitioner is to deal with educational leadership issues in schools and answer my research questions.

Chapter 4 – Findings

4.1 Introduction

In the Findings Chapter, I present the results from two sets of interviews. The first interview helped build an understanding of the school within a MAT. The second interview is the Critical Incident Technique (CIT) interview and focused on issues and incidents. Table 4 below identifies which staff were interviewed in the first and second interviews. As explained in the analysis section, the CIT interview is supported by the data from the first interview. Presenting the findings from both interviews simultaneously is adapted from Creswell's (2007) concurrent embedded strategy.

4.2 Critical Issues

The critical issues from the second interview are identified in Table 4 below. Most leaders in the school discussed *ongoing* issues rather than short-lived incidents. Occasionally, there was an incident, but this was always related to a longer-term issue. Therefore, in this section I describe 'incidents' as 'critical issues' rather than critical incidents. In Table 4 below, I identify the critical issues each leader discussed. The leaders often mentioned more than one issue, and this is reflected in Table 4 below.

Table 4: Critical issues from Phase two interview: The leader, their position and the critical issues they identified.

Name (pseudonym)		The leadership role	Categories
Joseph Carrie John Elizabeth Anthony Dave Maria		Senior leader, head teacher Senior leader Deputy head teacher Senior leader Senior leader Middle leader curriculum Middle leader pastoral	Colleagues
Joseph Jean		Senior leader Middle leader curriculum	Relationship to MAT (Sponsor Academy)
Carrie Elizabeth Shirley Lauren Tracey Maria		Senior leader Senior leader Middle leader curriculum Middle leader curriculum Middle leader curriculum Middle leader pastoral	Student Behaviour
Joseph Anthony Shirley Jean		Senior leader Middle leader curriculum Middle leader curriculum Middle leader curriculum	Classroom practice
Joseph John Carrie Elizabeth Shirley Tracey Dave		Senior leader Senior leader Senior leader Senior leader Middle leader curriculum Middle leader curriculum Middle leader pastoral	Leaders in multiple roles
John Judy Maria		Senior leader Middle leader curriculum Middle leader curriculum	Status

Interviewees were questioned about issues that concerned them as leaders and teachers, and these were identified as fitting into the categories above. The categories were not set before the interview and came from the analysis of the data.

4.2.1 Critical issues related to colleagues

Several interviewees in their critical issues interview (see Table 4) mention the issue of dealing with colleagues. A critical issue related to colleagues for Joseph (the head teacher) was the lack of support given to a teacher who had failed a lesson observation. The lack of support given to a teacher who failed their lesson observation led to a discussion with John (deputy head teacher), initiated by Joseph, about progress towards improving teaching and learning in December 2015.

> 'I knew I had to do it because it, I had a couple of conversations
> with that member of staff saying things weren't improving and I
> gave that member of staff time' (Joseph-critical issues interview).

However, despite several conversations John the deputy head teacher and Joseph the head teacher the desired improvement in teaching and learning was not happening.

> 'So, I had that dilemma whether to shy away from the hard conversation
> or whether to really, to find someone else to do it' (Joseph-critical issues
> interview).

Joseph had clearly been working through the dilemma of how to handle John's lack of progress in improving classroom practice. Joseph identified several

discussions with John. Joseph was considering carefully the impact of any decision on John and himself. The lack of progress in improving classroom practice across the school by John led Joseph to consider the problem of inertia through an unwillingness to choose between two available options. One was to allow John to continue in his role and see classroom practice improvements stagnate or take the role away from John, which would damage their working relationship and result in more work for Joseph.

Joseph admitted his own slowness to react when informed of a failing teacher who reportedly did not get the required support from John. Joseph identified the reason for his inertia was that in a school of a few members of staff, there was no other suitable candidate to lead on teaching and learning. As Joseph states:

> 'The dilemma was also… or what may be delayed it, was because I was thinking: 'Who else in the school can do it? And actually, there is nobody else. There was no-one else apart from this member of staff,' (Joseph – critical issues interview).

The issue, for Joseph, was that resolving the dilemma about taking John off improving classroom practice, because there had been no progress in terms of improving teachers' lesson performance, led to another dilemma about who else could do the role. In addition, as Joseph stated, no one was totally suitable. Here Joseph is clearly dealing with a dilemma that, in order to be resolved, resulted in an outcome he was reluctant to accept until it became imperative.

Joseph consistently reiterates his belief that 'schools are for students'. He also shows he is willing to make decisions that he feels are not beneficial to him personally. This indicates a decision that puts the client's needs first.

'But if you ask me: 'Was it the right decision, and do I feel better about making it?' I do, because it's right for the kids. If you're asking me whether it was right personally; probably no.' (Joseph-Critical issues interview).

Despite considering it a poor decision for him personally, he still made the decision to remove John's role of improving classroom practice across the school. As Joseph explains his decision, he indicates another dilemma – that of damaging a good professional relationship with John.

'Personally, because I think I've damaged a relationship with a member of staff' (Joseph – critical issues interview)

Joseph felt that despite the consequences of this decision, it was, nevertheless, the correct one if improvements in student outcomes were to be achieved.

'It's about students. So that when they get to our age, they have a better life, you know? (Joseph – critical issues interview).

For Joseph, the improvement was to do with outcomes for students and improving the students' life chances. So, despite a decision being damaging to a working relationship and changing his workload, the imperative to improve the education for students was an overriding consideration.

Another leader who had an issue regarding a colleague is Dave, a middle leader. Dave's issue relates to a teacher who has received the same training as the rest of the staff but who, in the view of Dave, does not implement these strategies to ensure a student with SEND is given a chance to learn. For Dave,

'it's quite frustrating and I have to deal with it because we were all in the training, and when certain strategies are not implemented, which we were all given, which is causing the student more stress'. (Dave – critical issues interview).

This shows Dave is clearly thinking of the student but finds dealing with staff frustrating:

'I've got to take a colleague to task in a sensitive way…… I don't have a solution yet. It's not ducking the confrontation, but it's thinking how the teacher develops in their experience now'. (Dave – critical issues interview).

As the above quote shows, Dave is thinking of how to meet the teacher's and the student's needs and is finding it difficult. The difficulty of the dilemma results in Dave not taking any decision or action. The lack of a decision is justified by Dave because he does not have a solution. Dave later states

'It's not for me to take a teacher to task. It would be me talking to a Senior Leadership Team member, who would then deal with it sensitively'. (Dave – critical issues interview)

Here, Dave is identifying that he wants a more senior leader to take responsibility for dealing with the member of staff. This moving the issue to a senior colleague would in Dave's view absolve him of any responsibility.

In Dave's case, he clearly feels he has not got the experience to deal with a teacher not following teaching guidance. He however does not consider discussing this with other leaders and chooses to grapple with his dilemma alone. The lack of a decision and action results in inertia on Dave's part.

> 'I wouldn't have the experience, necessarily, to take that teacher to task and I don't want to take another teacher to task. That's not what I am employed for and that is the next step'. (Dave – critical issues interview)

Dave is clearly assuming the issue would move from 'dealing sensitively' with the teacher who is teaching the student with SEND to one of a 'taking to task'. For Dave, 'taking to task' means a confrontation and he clearly wants to avoid this scenario.

Dave does expand on the Education, Health and Care Plan for the student with SEND and the very good working relationship they have built with the parent, who has moved their child to Woodhouse School on the expectation of more appropriate treatment. Education, Health and Care Plans came in with the 2014 SEND Act and resources follow the decisions and wishes of parents/carers. The money to support this student is now allocated to Woodhouse School because the parents wish for it to be so. They are, as part of the Government's opening of markets to increase consumer choice, free to choose another provider of specialist support.

The final issue relating to colleagues is from Maria, a middle leader. Maria had unintentionally undermined a colleague who is a technician and should have got lesson apparatus ready for her class. When Maria arrived at the lesson, the materials were not in place so they could not conduct the lesson as planned. In the ensuing discussion with the technician, Maria felt the technician started to

> '…come up with an excuse and, rather than listen to him, I walked away' (Maria – critical issues interview).

Maria did apologise because, upon reflection, she realised this was wrong:

> 'When reflecting on it I was thinking, you know, had that been a senior member of staff, would I have walked, just walked out? … This really affected me' (Maria – critical issues interview).

Maria's issue is explicit in identifying how one would act differently depending upon the power differential between protagonists. This is different from the others such as Dave, where he does not consider he has the power and skill to resolve the dilemma, and Joseph, who does address a dilemma, but is reluctant to address the issue initially because of his view regarding his lack of skill and the potentially negative consequences for himself.

4.2.2 Relationship between Woodhouse School and the Multi-Academy Trust (MAT)

The relationship between Woodhouse and the sponsor MAT academy Charhill was identified as an issue by Joseph and Jean, as is evident in Table 4 above.

In the phase one interview, the relationship between Woodhouse (pseudonym), and Charhill (pseudonym), was identified as a strength by Joseph. Joseph had come from the sponsor academy, Charhill, to be the head teacher at Woodhouse. At Charhill, Joseph was a deputy head teacher and had been at the school as it improved in performance. Joseph was a key part of the MAT and felt that the expertise they had developed, plus the readily available support from the sponsor academy, would enable them to improve the school. He had a good working relationship with the senior leaders at Charhill MAT. He was also aware of the strengths the leadership team and teachers had at Charhill. He was not so complimentary of his present leaders and teachers

> 'I'm not stupid enough at this moment in time we can't survive without Charhill; only because of their teachers will work. And everyone in SLT knows that but they don't … I suppose they don't want to admit it if I'm being realistic here. But I have said that to SLT, I've said 'this school would be shut if it wasn't, if teachers hadn't come over'. And I think that's left a bad taste in their mouth.' (Joseph – critical issues interview)

Joseph, the head teacher, is clear that, in his opinion, the school needs, and is dependent upon, the sponsor academy. The first line indicates that he feels support from Charhill is needed now but that it is not always going to be needed. He sees the teachers and leaders arriving from Charhill as essential to maintaining the viability of Woodhouse School. As you can see, the message from Joseph to his senior leadership team is stark; without Charhill staff and the close link to them, Woodhouse would be shut.

The head teacher, Joseph, is aware that saying Woodhouse would be shut without Charhill's support has been unpalatable to some colleagues, as he identifies in the quote. Joseph is also aware that he is the key figure in the relationship between his school and the sponsor academy, which also has a new head teacher who was a deputy head teacher at Charhill with Joseph. The previous head teacher of Charhill is now the CEO for the MAT.

Joseph is, in his own words, the key conduit between the support on offer at the MAT (Charhill) and his staff at Woodhouse.

> 'The only person who had those links in the school was me. I did try to engineer some links with some of the teaching and team at Charhill but there is a … I've got a very difficult relationship with the new head of Charhill, a very difficult relationship.' (Joseph-Critical issues interview).

This makes the development of a strong working relationship between staff at Charhill and Woodhouse more challenging if the two main facilitators have a strained relationship.

> 'Does it work in terms of the curriculum planning? No, because basically there's very little communication between us as heads, about what's going on back earlier. 'J' [the head teacher at the sponsor academy] does what's right for Charhill Academy, I can understand that, and I do what's right for Woodhouse but, it's, it's, it's one of those, you just should accept. You just have to accept.' (Joseph – critical issues interview).

Joseph is clearly identifying that the process of bringing Woodhouse School into the MAT is not ideal and is far from an integration of schools into one

network/trust. This may be more to do with the head teachers and how they work, but as indicated below, there is also a backdrop of financial viability for his school – Woodhouse – and the wider MAT.

Joseph is also aware of teachers needing to fit into Woodhouse but equally needing to fit in with the MAT; the indication is that some people at Woodhouse School do not meet the MAT's requirements

> 'And actually, when you're in the Trust, basically your face fits or it doesn't,' (Joseph).

Upon reflection, and re-reading the transcript, Joseph was admitting that not all staffing and human resource decisions were his to make, because the MAT would often lead. This restricted scope for action was not how the Coalition Government presented academisation in England, where greater freedom from central bureaucracy was a thrust of the promotion of Academy schools. Often, decisions around staffing were taken by the CEO of the MAT.

Joseph also indicates another issue, which was the sharing of an assistant head teacher across both schools instead of having separate ones in each school. Initially it is about improving teaching and learning and integrating the two schools. However, this statement indicates another motive, which is financial

> 'we have to use some of those staff for two reasons, one, they're teachers and they haven't got a teaching role at Charhill anymore so we have to use them basically because, from a finance point of view, Charhill can't afford to use them full time because they need some of

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> our money to pay for it if that makes sense' (Joseph – critical issues interview)

Joseph, in the above statement, indicates that the relationship is not one way and his school in a poor financial position is being used to prop up staffing levels in a sponsor academy. Charhill is effectively obliging Woodhouse – the poorer school – to pay part of the salary of the lent member of staff – thus alleviating some of the financial burden of Charhill. One would assume the sponsor academy would be financially supporting the underperforming school.

Jean started the phase two interview unwilling to identify issues and dilemmas. He then went on to identify quite a significant issue regarding what is being taught and, in his view, the impact on students. Jean, a member of the middle leadership team, indicated how the relationship pans out at the curriculum leader level. Jean's issue revolved around changing how they worked previously at Woodhouse to fit in with the Charhill way, which is how it is to be done across the MAT. At first, he stated he did not have any incidents/issues 'everything is going pretty well now really.' After some probing within the interview, he outlined how he works within the MAT.

> 'So yes, I do have to work with the Assistant Head for [curriculum subject mentioned] and it was obviously difficult because their methods: from the schemes of work, the way they teach and the resources. I think that has been challenging for me and it has made me think about the way I teach quite a lot' (Jean -Critical incident interview)

Jean then mentions after eight years of teaching, and being settled in his approach, having suddenly to make wholesale changes to the resources, curriculum and the way he teaches. The sudden changes at Woodhouse have affected how Jean views himself as a teacher.

> 'I think about the fact, well…Am I doing the right thing here, am I teaching the right way?' (Jean-critical issues –interview).

A further concern for Jean is the impact has been the reduction in the time available to complete a GCSE. The reduced time available to teach the students will in his view impact upon student outcomes

> 'They have a year to complete everything and that is quite challenging'. (Jean – critical issues interview).

Jean, when asked what happens in the next year, answered,

> 'That's a good question. This has yet to be talked about because I have no idea'. (Jean – critical issues interview).

The change to students completing a two-year GCSE in one year presents a considerable challenge for Jean. He felt the change from a two-year GCSE to a one-year GCSE had not been thought through carefully to consider the impact upon 'A' level options. Students might be encouraged to pass, but not get the grades needed for A Level, which, when prompted at this point, Jean answered 'yes, that is correct'. He later outlined how, although the two-year GCSE is being taught in one, they are supplementing teaching time with interventions to support students outside of the school day.

'We have interventions like intervention clubs, so they come after school for an hour and a half, I think'. This is applied to all students 'everyone, so the more able students and the less able students are altogether so it's, let's say it's another lesson, an extra lesson if you like' (Jean-critical issues interview).

The reduction in teaching time during the normal school hours is being supplemented with extra lessons after school, which has an impact on the teaching, preparation and marking load. This would be an issue but is only mentioned in relation to ensuring that students reach expected targets and how having students of mixed ability in the same class adds to the difficulty.

Jean then outlined how he works together with the Assistant Head, based predominantly at Charhill.

'The Assistant Head for [subject mentioned] teaches a few periods of Key Stage 3 so we do manage to meet regularly'. (Jean – critical issues interview).

Jean also mentions the support he receives in terms of lessons.

'I've been observed as well, and I went there to observe how they work' (Jean – critical issues interview).

When Jean identifies 'there to observe' he means at the sponsor academy school, Charhill. Another concern for Jean was, staffing the curriculum with suitably qualified people, which was also mentioned by Joseph, Anthony and Lauren. The issue of having suitably qualified teachers is a national concern (EPI, 2018) despite government action to address the growing shortage.

Jean works with one other member of staff, for whom he is the line manager.

'One person who does [subject mentioned] part time and the rest of the time she is in [another subject mentioned] and her timetable is extremely full and it's extremely difficult for us to meet, most of the communication, to be honest, is done via email'. (Jean – critical issues interview).

It is worth noting that this is a small school because it is below its full student capacity, with around 300 students and 34 teaching staff, and it is still difficult for staff to meet. Jean identifies the nature of the communication as:

'… very short, it's very busy, yes, so… Have you done this? Are you okay to do this?' (Jean – critical issues interview).

This is not the same with the assistant head.

'That's different, because she has loads of free periods; I have got some, so we can actually sit down for an hour'. (Jean – critical issues interview).

The assistant head teacher having lots of free periods when they are working in two schools with travel time between the schools is surprising, considering the constrained financial position and the need to work each resource to achieve value for money. In this case, within a school the staff are the key resource. But, as can be seen in Jean's comment, staff resources are not being utilised effectively. Those in leadership positions, from Jean's perspective, have a significant amount of free time, and he, as a middle leader, has little,

because he is teaching his normal teaching hours *and* – as identified above by Jean – after-school study clubs.

In Woodhouse School, working relationships are impacted by the availability of staff to communicate the changes to working practices. In turn, those changes are impacting negatively on middle leaders' time in Jean's view.

4.2.3 Student Behaviour

In this section I present dilemmas faced by leaders in Woodhouse School as they respond to poor student behaviour. Carrie had an issue of a student she mentored behaving badly in her lessons. Carrie is a member of the senior leadership team. She was concerned about her role as a senior leader, a teacher and mentor of students as she indicates:

> 'I suppose it's getting the relationship, the balance between the mentor and teacher'. (Carrie – critical issues interview).

This balancing of the demands of being a mentor and a teacher has been made harder for Carrie because the behaviour of the mentee has been more challenging. She is concerned that his behaviour is undermining her as a leader, class teacher and as his mentor.

> 'He has been pushing the boundaries across the board, so it's been difficult at times in my lessons …. He might find it difficult that I have to treat him like everybody else, even though I'm his mentor' (Carrie – critical issues interview).

Carrie does not question the effectiveness of the mentoring, which is not providing an improvement in the student's behaviour. When questioned on how effective mentoring is, Carrie states 'It's as effective as the students want it', later stating:

> 'I would not say it is closely monitored at the moment in that way, [I asked a follow up question on data to support assumptions] I think it is probably more anecdotal' (Carrie –critical issues interview).

Carrie admits to interpreting the school policy to fit her requirements to carry out her dual role. She interprets policy to enable her to perform as a teacher and a mentor:

> 'I think it has to be changed for individual students ….. I will be more understanding of certain things because I know obviously, reasons behind why he might behave in such a way' (Carrie-critical issues interview).

Carrie, in order to deal with challenging behaviour, is forced to take a nuanced approach because the teacher role and the mentor role demand different responses to behaviour issues. She is clear that the policy needs to be changed to meet the needs of the individual student. This is the crux of her dilemma because the student is unable to accept the differing roles Carrie adopts and how each role changes how she responds to him. The nuanced approach she is adopting seems to be exasperating the challenging behaviour.

Elizabeth, a member of the senior leadership team, also identified a behaviour issue related to a student who absconded from lessons. She identified this as a behaviour issue and not absenteeism.

> 'He just pressed the button and walked out and got on a train and went home. So, we have put in different safety measures.' (Elizabeth – critical issues- interview).

The openness of the school site is an issue for any school, but in a school as open as Woodhouse, it is all the more pressing. Woodhouse has fields on three sides and a sports centre on the fourth side. The school is built for 900 students and has, at present, 300, so it feels quite empty, and there is space not fully utilised. In a previous visit, I noticed the open access between the school and sports centre, which was not highlighted in a previous Ofsted inspection, unusually, as it is a child protection issue. Elizabeth made the resolution of this issue an early action 'within the first three weeks' of becoming an academy. She identified new measures to be put in place to reduce students absconding from lessons, understanding that student safety is paramount and failure to ensure it could lead to a school failing an Ofsted inspection.

Shirley, a middle leader, identified student behaviour and the resulting parental response to her response. The issue for Shirley happened during

> '… parents evening, being questioned about challenging students too much and that made me question why I became a teacher. Because, I thought I was here to challenge students and try and make them achieve the best they could' (Shirley – critical issues interview).

Shirley was consistent in her belief that her role as a teacher was to develop resilient students. In her first interview where she stated:

'… not letting them give up, developing skills like determination, resilience…' (Shirley- interview 1).

Shirley works across all the schools in the MAT and previously taught in Charhill. Now, she teaches in Woodhouse and works across several other schools in the MAT. However, the difference between the two secondary schools (the sponsor academy and Woodhouse School) is most marked in the difference between the parents at each school. As she states:

'This is a very different school to my last school and parents are very different…. there's this idea that kids are special in here and that they need to be put in a bubble and looked after' (Shirley – critical issues-interview).

Shirley has reflected upon the difference in attitude in parental attitude between Woodhouse School and her previous school. She is aware that at Woodhouse she needs to adapt her approach. She now considers the whole child and the need to build relationships. This is because she sees the parental attitudes and the students at Woodhouse as being different from her previous school, the sponsor academy, Charhill. One change has been regarding student outcomes because previously Shirley assumed that grades were most important. But, now

'I've forgotten about them being human beings and about them as a whole child and I think now it's made me think about actually a number

of things, about building those relationships with overtime and the way you approach them and the way you speak to them; and then that can filter through to their achievements' (Shirley – critical issues interview).

The above quote from Shirley shows she is focused on students achieving but had changed how she went about getting students to achieve what she saw as the students' potential. She realises that developing students' confidence is important. She illustrates this with an example of a difficult student she motivated by getting to know them:

'I would still push them but maybe now, whereas before, it was you should be doing this, this and this, very much study, study club now I'm a bit more actually getting to know them as a person and trying to build confidence within them' (Shirley – critical issues – interview).

When Shirley states 'study club' she means, the school expects students performing below expectations to go to an after-school club for extra input.

The behaviour issue identified by Lauren, a middle leader, is linked to Shirley's issue because it also involves parental attitudes. Lauren's issue involves parents wanting to prevent their child being given a detention. In Lauren's view this student was always first to make a remark in class and show off.

'It was not a good working relationship' (Lauren – critical issues interview).

In Lauren's view the relationship between herself and the student was such that it made managing behaviour more difficult. Lauren had called the parents

to a meeting to discuss the detention and behaviour. In the meeting, the head teacher was involved and supported Lauren in giving the detention and the reasons for the detention.

> 'The Head was very good and backed me all the way. However, the parent was insistent that the student did not have one and 'demanded that he [student] wasn't in my class anymore'. (Lauren – critical issues interview)

This resulted in the student dropping from a higher science group doing triple science to one where they did only double science. So, although the head teacher being involved in meeting the parents was supportive his decision undermined Lauren. The decision by the head teacher was not one that Lauren wanted as she felt the student should have remained in the higher set science class.

Tracey, a middle leader, also adopted a nuanced approach when dealing with pupil behaviour. She discusses her treatment of one student and how she felt this maintained a good teacher student relationship despite his at times poor behaviour.

> 'I would sometimes treat him slightly differently; I think'. (Tracey – critical issues interview).

The student under discussion was previously at the sponsor academy Charhill, with Tracey. It was at Charhill Academy, where they first met, when Tracey was his form tutor.

'The student has got a temper on him and he can "kick-off" and last term I asked him to move and he was rude and it kind of – then spiralled his mood and he ended up swearing at me and walking out'. (Tracey – critical issues interview).

Tracey had always felt she could keep him quiet and minimise disruptions in class by applying rules differently to maintain a good learning environment for the rest of class and is aware that the others in the class are aware.

'I do think that they would see it as not fair, but it does mean that he generally stays in a positive mood'. The approach is justified because 'generally it does have a positive impact on everyone' (Tracey- critical issues interview).

This links back to the first behaviour issue identified by Carrie, where she took a nuanced approach to deal with a difficult student she mentored and taught. But, just as Carrie found the nuanced approach only worked in the short term for Tracey. Neither Carrie nor Tracey made any progress in improving the behaviour of students. The nuanced approach was enabling both teachers to navigate school behaviour requirements and their need to meet student needs. However, it was ineffective and did not resolve the issue of student poor behaviour.

Maria, a middle leader, introduces a behaviour management issue where she used discretion in application of the school rules. A student is in care and has anger management issues. The student used offensive language after being spoken to by Maria, who caught the student behaving inappropriately and

challenged the poor behaviour. The student responded appropriately but when walking away the student expressed their frustration using bad language. However,

> 'The senior colleague and I that dealt with the issue felt that the offensive language hadn't actually been directed directly at us' (Maria – critical issues interview).

Maria and the senior colleague were still going to sanction the poor behaviour that they challenged but not the bad language. The next day

> 'I found the out the student was outside the Head's office and that another senior colleague had actually overridden us' (Maria – critical issues interview).

Maria was not happy that a senior colleague had taken the issue regarding the student using bad language to the head teacher without consulting her or the senior colleague that was initially involved. Maria felt she had had her judgement undermined and that all the hard work she had put into developing a good relationship with the student was ruined.

> 'It then totally destroyed all the work that I had been doing because the student then lost trust in me'. (Maria -Critical issues interview)

Maria mentions that the student stated

> 'You said that there was going to be no sanction for the language I used' (Maria – critical issues interview).

The student was asked by the head teacher to write an apology letter regarding bad language and the student highlighted the statement by Maria not to sanction them for the bad language. Maria now feels she is faced with a dilemma, as

> 'It has left me with a little bit of a grey area as to, you know, who is it that should be making the final decisions on these things' (Maria – critical issues interview).

She felt the other senior colleague who reported the issue to the head should have consulted her. A consequence of the senior colleague reporting the incident to the head teacher for Maria is that it will affect what she communicates with other teachers and school leaders in the future.

> 'It won't affect the way I work with students; it will affect the way that I communicate with other members of staff' (Maria – critical issues interview).

This indicates a breakdown of trust within this small school that could be detrimental. It also indicates how Maria will act in order to teach by their rules and will bend the school rules in a nuanced way to meet their requirements.

In Woodhouse we can see students' poor behaviour is an issue for the leaders in their roles as leaders and teachers. In one case the additional role as a mentor added to the complication. Interestingly, not one of the leaders addressed poor behaviour as a leader, but as a teacher. It is noticeable that when the head teacher was involved, he undermined the leader and imposed

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his own solution. The head teacher-imposed solution was not one the leader would have chosen. The behaviour issues identified by the leaders show how, in each case, they tried to meet the needs of the student with challenging behaviour. However, what is also evident is that the solutions did not address or improve behaviour, only kept the behaviour to a manageable level so that others in the class could learn.

4.2.4 Classroom practice

All respondents were classroom practitioners and leaders. The head teacher, Joseph, viewed teaching and learning as the most important area he needed to address in order to improve student outcomes at Woodhouse School. In Woodhouse School all respondents who discussed teaching and/or learning used the term 'teaching and learning' when referring to teachers' classroom practice. At no time did the interviewees indicate they might see the terms separately. Joseph was clear that classroom practice needed to improve and the benefit to the school would be an increase in students choosing the school. This was not universally accepted, as many pre-academisation staff saw the smallness of the school as a strength, which enhanced its reputation for Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) provision. They saw the SEND provision and the school's good reputation for working with dyslexic students as a positive. However, the head teacher saw it as a factor that stopped parents with aspirations for their children's academic success choosing other schools. This factor could contribute to differing perspectives on the priorities for classroom practice.

Joseph knew he needed to make the school financially viable, and failure to do so could have severe consequences for him.

> 'I have taken on the headship of a school that's in challenging circumstances and – how can I put it – it's probably not the most advantageous job, and two years down the line… I've got to think about my job, I've got to think about my mortgage, I've also got to think about this school' (Joseph Interview 1).

This meant that included in the dilemmas for Joseph were his remaining in his job and being able to pay his mortgage. This created a 'high stakes accountability' (Stobart, 2008) for Joseph that was unique to him. It is often the case that head teachers who fail an Ofsted are asked to leave by their Governing Body or MAT. The school needed to improve, and Joseph saw poor quality teaching and learning as the key area to address.

Joseph was consistent in his view regarding the need to improve teaching and learning across both interviews. This was his stated priority when he took the headship permanently in February 2015. This period is important when one considers that the teaching and learning issue Joseph identified led to the eventual resignation of John, who was the school's designated lead for teaching and learning. John was also aware of the need for improvement in teaching and learning, and this is discussed below from his perspective. Joseph had allocated a member of the senior leadership team not only to observe teachers in the classroom but also to lead on a programme of support for those not meeting the expected standards.

A critical issue for Joseph, which was discussed in further detail earlier was the lack of support given by his deputy head, John, to a teacher who had failed a lesson observation. This led to a discussion with John about progress towards improving teaching and learning in, when the issue became apparent to Joseph. Improving teaching and learning meant addressing John's (a member of the senior leadership team) performance. Joseph felt teaching and learning would only improve if senior leaders put into place agreed training and support for teachers in order to enhance the learning of students.

> 'But it was one of those decisions where, and I said to him, I had to make the decision because the teaching and learning wasn't improving quick enough and it goes back to 'is he good enough for the kids?'' (Joseph-Critical issues interview)

Other staff mentioned teaching and learning but they had differing perspectives that included, for example, staffing levels and curriculum coverage. Anthony, a middle leader, identified a number of issues—a loss of teaching staff, insufficient teachers covering the curriculum, line management changes and the introduction by Charhill MAT of a new head teacher who was implementing the MAT's view on classroom practice—as all being factors affecting teaching and learning. Anthony's view was in contrast to Joseph's who felt that teachers at Woodhouse had not been challenged and supported so that they improve the quality of their teaching. For, Anthony a pre-academisation member of staff who had gained a recent promotion. They had a depleted staff to cover the curriculum. This meant Anthony had the new head teacher and two other senior colleagues teaching in his curriculum area. Being

a middle manager who was managing to more senior colleagues regarding curriculum delivery which was presenting difficulties. This challenge was also mentioned by Joseph. The solution from Anthony's perspective was to have:

'…a good working relationship going I think, and the idea is to maintain that…. It means that you have to keep performing and if you're not performing then there's evidence' (Anthony-critical issues interview).

From this statement you can see the relationship between colleagues and superiors is important, and they see the way of maintaining the relationship is by meeting expectations and performing.

However, the main issue for Anthony was the lack of staff to cover the GCSE curriculum. It was leading to poor student outcomes due to staff not being adequately trained in the appropriate subject specialism. The issue emerged when a colleague went on long term sick leave. Due to employment law, the member of staff could not be replaced, so they:

'…had to cover an entire Key Stage 3 subject and her resources, lessons, to be taught by anyone' (Anthony – critical issues interview).

Anthony worked with the Assistant Head from Charhill Academy to devise a strategy to tackle the lack of subject experts. The approach they took was to prepare the resources in advance and rely on covering staff to follow the original curriculum plan. This was 'a complete disaster'. The result was that not enough learning was taking place and

'The students were beginning to disengage with us' (Anthony – critical issues interview).

Anthony abandoned the approach and tried a new one, with booklets to aid auditing of work and make it easier for 'cover teachers' to find the relevant resources.

> 'Again, this proved to be mixed because the students couldn't access the resources in a clear way, and they would give up and then at that point suffer disengagement' (Anthony – critical issues interview).

Anthony decided that he needed to start teaching these lessons

> '… and found it very tricky to engage with them [the students] … [interviewee pause] ...the classes I teach normally are very active. The classes without a specialist teacher for nearly a term at this point had no set routine and had no set seating plan. They had no real expectations on them and things like homework wasn't set or chased up and this means no home learning' (Anthony – critical issues interview).

In this quote from Anthony he clearly outlined the issues with teachers not able to deliver the curriculum to expectations. This is the basis of Jean's concerns discussed earlier.

Anthony further exemplified this issue of learning in the lessons when he discussed the measures needed to be put in place by him to support a member of staff who had been observed and not met the school's requirements. He saw it as his

'… responsibility to support this person and make sure, to check, so it can be through looking at books making sure work is set on a weekly homework check' (Anthony – critical issues interview).

So, Anthony's issue indicates that despite a willingness to teach well, the quality of the staff is so low, there is little likelihood of meeting the school's observation criteria for outstanding lessons.

Anthony subsequently decided to tackle the lesson performance in his area through an 'Action Plan' to bring practice across the curriculum areas into alignment. This plan was an intervention in the shape of a course called 'Six Weeks for Success', aimed at aligning classroom practice across the department, such as:

'…in the way they approach the start of lessons, the way they break up the lessons' (Anthony – critical issues interview).

Anthony did this to fulfil his 'vision' outlined in his recent promotion interview. As…

'…a senior member of staff you had to have an understanding, a vision of where you want to go otherwise you end up with 10 – 15 staff just milling around just knowing their own thing and although you might get results from that' (Anthony – critical issues interview).

Anthony wanted to create a means of auditing and checking on lessons via a consistent model, because he felt he had

'… no way to check progress, check learning so you need something, so goals and some benchmarks to come back establish where your staff are at and what's happening' (Anthony – critical issues interview).

This shows that Anthony, the head of a curriculum area (middle leader), had learnt that, in order to cope with maintaining a check on everyone's lesson performance, he would have to get everyone to follow the same routines. But, significantly. Anthony talked about his actions and his plans at no time did he mention John the senior leader for improving classroom practice. This supports the view held by Joseph about inadequate progress from John regarding helping staff improve classroom practice.

Another issue came from Lauren, a senior leader, who identified a lack of appropriately qualified and skilled teachers was impacting upon the quality of provision for students.

'… new timetable came in at the end of the summer term but somebody left and they did not replace them so we didn't actually have enough people to cover the timetable…Senior Management were covering it [teaching], but they weren't scientists' This is still the case 'it could have been better, if we still had another member of staff' (Lauren-critical issues interview).

Lauren and her line manager – an assistant head teacher working out of Charhill, the sponsor academy – decided to create some very large classes of 36; which, in Lauren's view, was unworkable.

The next solution was to divide them up according to types of teaching assistant support; so that a general support teaching assistant worked with one class and the specialist dyslexia teaching assistant worked with another. They then decided to:

> '…split them as to whether they were going to do the GCSE or whether they were going to do the entry level certificate' (Lauren – critical issues interview).

It is important to note the splitting of the students was by the support available to meet the students' needs. They finally split the students into two groups based upon the curriculum they were following.

The issue of inadequate classroom practice was indicated above in Dave's issue, a middle leader, as 'head of house' had a remit for overseeing the welfare and academic performance of students in a pastoral context. In this context we can see his concern about a particular student who has repeatedly been reprimanded using the school's behaviour policy, a circumstance that he saw as conflicting with the inclusion policy, as a classroom practice matter. A student with SEND had often been given negative behaviour marks in class by a particular teacher and would sometimes be excluded from the lesson. This meant that the student was missing vital learning. Dave had tried to address this with whole school training. However, this had not produced the desired results. As Dave identifies:

> 'now I'm having to review a lot more how the teacher has caused the issue and the sensitivity needed to address that and get the teacher to

think differently about how they deal with that student' (Dave-critical issues interview).

The original incident was a student getting into trouble in teacher A's class. Training was put in place for all staff.

'We had an external agency come in and discuss with us strategies, how to deal with SEND [specific need redacted in line with ethical requirements] …we do have a skill deficit, but we are addressing it' (Dave –critical issues interview).

Here, the issue is that the teacher did not follow agreed procedure for meeting the needs of all learners.

The main factor affecting teaching and learning by middle leaders was a lack of appropriately skilled and trained teachers. In the view of senior leaders and the MAT, it was about teachers not being challenged and/or supported sufficiently.

4.2.5 Leaders in multiple roles

This section addresses leaders' concerns about the number and types of roles they were expected to undertake. Joseph's own issue with roles, was to do with his ability to take on a second role as 'lead for teaching and learning'. This, in his view, was a role more suited to a deputy head teacher. Joseph also felt he did not have the right skills for the role but admitted that, in his view, no one else was any more suitable.

'I hesitate because I knew the only the person who could do it was me, not because I'm any good at it, I don't believe. That's the dilemma because I know I'm probably not the best person to do it, however, sometimes you've got to actually, if you want to get it done you've got to do it yourself.' (Joseph – critical issues interview)

This is a problem in part due to the smallness of the school, where there are fewer members of staff to share leadership responsibility. Also, it indicates that the head teacher was aware of the skills required and the skills they perceived themselves to have.

An issue regarding roles is also identified by Carrie and is in relation to her changed role within the school.

'It is difficult as somebody that has moved within the same school into a different position'. (Carrie-critical issues interview).

She is conscious of the need to win people over, which has been more challenging than winning over students.

'Winning people over …. could have been more challenging than with the students …being accepted in that position' (Carrie-critical issues interview).

Carrie is part of the newly formed teaching and learning team and has adapted her approach to adults from her teaching of children…

'That's the challenge, been the challenge for me because I've been teaching adults in terms of the teaching and learning role certain things whereas obviously, I've been experienced teaching children, so it's then

how you use the same skills but adapt them' (Carrie – critical issues interview).

There was no mention of training for this enhanced role. Carrie did not discuss support or working with colleagues across the MAT except, when pressed, she mentioned senior leadership meetings. Her view about 'up-skilling' individuals seems not to address her own needs for new skills. She was also the leader for the dyslexia team, and she chose to ignore her responsibilities as a line manager in their case.

John, who had responsibility for teaching and learning, felt that working multiple roles impacted negatively upon his ability to perform in any one role to the head teacher's and MAT's expectations. John's issue aligns to Tripp's (2012) interpretation of an 'incident' because the changing of roles happened at a critical point. It occurred, in John's view, due to a single incident, and ultimately resulted in his belief that he could no longer work at the school. Joseph had changed John's role from 'lead on teaching and learning' because, in Joseph's view, progress was not being made and processes were not being put in place to support staff. This, however, was not John's interpretation, though he agreed about the underperformance of teaching and learning over time. It was the change, or 'demotion', as he saw it, of his role that was critical. You can see from his response (below) that he was clear on why this was an issue…

> 'I suppose the main incident which I've had, which I would refer to as being an incident was something which happened to me rather than I had any sort of well I would call control'. (John-critical issues interview)

The issue for John specifically, was the

> '…meeting which I had with the head teacher where we discussed roles
> and responsibilities' (John-critical issues interview).

Joseph had been dealing with this issue of John's below-expected performance regarding improving teaching and learning in the school. However, John was not aware of Joseph's concerns until Joseph removed him from the role. Although, John does mention that they had been discussing lack of progress in teaching and learning which

> '…wasn't moving as good as we wanted it to as a school' (John – critical
> issues interview).

John clarifies this with the fact that it was

> '… common knowledge that teaching and learning was not improving…'
> (John – critical issues interview).

So, John was aware that teaching and learning had not been improving but he saw the responsibility for this as being outside of his role and performance.

> 'It wasn't a case of the fact that your [my] leadership's not
> happening…I'd had various letters from various people within the
> organisation congratulating me on the hard work that was being done'
> (John – critical issues incident).

These congratulatory letters were enough for John to think progress was being made. Joseph did accept that progress was being made by John, but

improvements in teaching and learning were not happening as fast as he (Joseph) wanted. This is something John accepted and agreed with.

'It was not necessarily moving as quickly as we wanted it to' (John – critical issues interview).

John was, however, aware that the head teacher wanted more immediate improvements and that Joseph was concerned that some staff were not adapting to the MAT's requirements for good quality teaching and learning. John, however, did not consider that this reflected on his own performance, but more on the other teachers' inability to adapt. Joseph, on the other hand, felt that John was not helping staff to adapt, so

'…the head teacher was to take lead of this, which was, understandable, which was a strategic decision. I completely understood, I completely agreed' (John – critical issues interview).

John was under the impression that he and Joseph would be working together to improve teaching and learning. He was upset that he had lost the sole responsibility for this area. But he was willing to work with Joseph on improving the classroom practice of others across the school. However, improving teaching and learning across the school was not John's only responsibility as he also taught students and line-managed colleagues. In addition, a significant area of work for John was being the designated child protection lead in the school. John was struggling with the conflicting demands on his time, which he cited as one of the contributing factors in the lack of progress regarding teaching and learning.

'…because of things such as safeguarding and other things I had to do'. (John – critical issues interview).

Safeguarding is a very important aspect because schools must provide safe places for parents and carers to leave their children, and Ofsted will fail a school immediately if they find evidence of shortcomings with a school's safeguarding procedures and practice. John was choosing to focus on one area of his job and not the key issue for the MAT, which is improving teaching and learning.

Undertaking the safeguarding role was not something John wanted, but he did see the positives from the learning he gained in this role as safeguarding officer. However, the change of roles led ultimately to John resigning.

> 'Moving forward I've told the head I'm leaving but between now and then it will give me experience of something which I would have chosen not to get' adding later 'there are positives to it' (John – critical issues interview)

John had been discussing his performance with the head teacher prior to his demotion. But the lack of clarity from Joseph regarding his expectations of the role had left John thinking his performance was acceptable. John had been proactive and had discussed his performance prior to his resignation

> 'When I challenged the situation with regards the fact that if I'm not doing a good job, I don't ever get a reply, we talk around it, so we never get a yes or a no'. (John – critical issues interview)

The quote above contrasts with the view of Joseph who felt the situation was clear to John – that classroom practice was not improving sufficiently and in Joseph's view the responsibility for improving teaching and learning lay firmly with John.

However, John's overall perspective was that he had multiple roles and that the improvement of teaching and learning was just one among a number of (sometimes conflicting) roles. In the first quote below he outlines how he wants to help students by empowering teachers.

> 'obviously to empower staff so that the students get a better deal, but also the fact that they get the opportunity to, when they want to, if they want to, leave, that they've got the skill set that they need to in order to do that. (John-interview one)

In this statement you can clearly see John saw himself as a mediator between the classroom teachers and the head teacher, Joseph.

> 'I mean I see myself as a sounding board for the staff, I see myself as sort of, the person that they potentially may want to go to before seeing the head, in order to sound, sound something out or to let off steam or whatever so that the conversation that they have with the Head is constructive'. (John-interview one)

This is illuminating in that John did not mention strategies or supporting staff to improve classroom practice, which was the priority for the school that was identified in the first interviews. Evidence for a lack of support given to staff is identified in Anthony's issue above. The fact that John saw himself as a

mediator, colleague and confidant to teaching staff meant he was unwilling to challenge them as a leader regarding their classroom practice. John avoided the role of leader as he felt it damaged his relationship with teachers. For John there was an incompatibility between being a senior leader and supportive confidant.

John had previously identified a culture of blame within the school since becoming part of the MAT, where

'…under the current climate where the fact that it's, I don't like the culture of and, and it's across society, of blame. And I think there's far too much of that about and, fingers will be pointed, and you will be blamed, and I don't know whether or not that's where I want necessarily be' (John –interview one).

However, John saw the main issue as being the changing of his role and subsequent loss of status. The result was that he felt compelled to resign.

'It was a professional thing, not a personal thing… but it hurts' (John- critical issue interview).

The crux of John's grievance was that Joseph didn't understand how impractical, indeed impossible; it was for one person to fulfil simultaneously all the roles that had been given to him. He was the lead for safeguarding, the lead for improving classroom practice as well as Joseph's number two. And he consequently felt it to be unjust that he should be held to account for the underperformance of colleagues.

A further matter regarding roles was highlighted by Elizabeth, a senior leader, when she talked about leading and managing others. Elizabeth was aware that as she was new to the school, and tasked with setting new expectations, she needed to tread carefully, build trust and establish positive relationships with her new colleagues before she could be effective in her role. Her approach was

'…to give lots of praise. They don't respond very well to negative feedback' (Elizabeth- critical issues interview).

By 'they', she means the teachers, not the students. This is something Carrie also mentioned when discussing issues where

'… winning people over' has been more challenging than it has been with the students' (Carrie – critical issues interview).

Carrie adapted skills learnt through dealing with students but

'…it's how you use the same skills but adapt them' (Carrie-critical issues interview).

Elizabeth, however, decided to look at 'up-skilling' staff, such as the librarian, where Elizabeth had

'… been sending her out on some courses because she hasn't done any training' (Elizabeth – critical issues interview)

However, this was not a consistent approach as Elizabeth treated another subordinate differently. She got another colleague 'onside' by acknowledging that person's expertise

'… so, "you're the expert in this, could you help me with this? Because, you know, I'm quite new in the job" … and you 'big them up' and they come around, normally.' (Elizabeth-critical issues interview).

Elizabeth was learning how to lead individuals. For Elizabeth, the lack of fully trained curriculum teachers were an issue. She felt she needed to tread carefully because both leaders and teachers were overstretched in their efforts to cover the whole curriculum in challenging circumstances. From Elizabeth's statements we can see leaders were keen to ensure that staff were kept happy so that good teachers did not leave Woodhouse.

When we look at Anthony's issue and Lauren's issue, both discussed above, from the perspective of roles we can see that they are in multiple roles and are at times both a leader and subordinate to the same people. In Anthony's case it is the Head teacher Joseph.

4.2.6 Status

'Status' as an issue for leaders came up during the interviews. Participants identified the impact of incidents upon how they felt about their perceived status. John's change of roles affected his status as he saw it within the school, and this caused him considerable unease and hurt as mentioned above. Judy, a middle leader, talked about an incident that affected how she perceived herself as a teacher. In the first interviews, all participants indicated they saw themselves as *teachers* primarily; so being able to maintain their status as a good teacher was important to them. Judy identified an issue with a lesson

observation feedback where she was given a low score and the lesson was graded as a fail. As Judy admitted, the lesson did not go well.

'At the end of that lesson I was told that the children hadn't made enough progress, which was not a normal lesson because I've always had 'good' to 'outstanding'. So, with that, other things were then criticised that I then confronted them, and I obviously questioned some of these things which seemed to be taken quite out of the air. Shall I give you examples? (Judy – critical issues interview).

I asked Judy to expand on why the failed lesson seemed to her to be a catalyst for further concerns. Judy felt that the lesson observation did not fit with how she had been performing across the board. If her *results* were being praised as 'outstanding', she wondered, then how could an observation of her *teaching* come out as 'poor'?

'I was told that my results weren't good enough last year, although my results were actually up on the leader board as 'outstanding', in the main, at the beginning of the year. So, there's a mixed message there, so obviously, I questioned that; and the fact that I'd hit my targets and gone beyond my targets' (Judy – critical issues interview).

Judy then inferred that it wasn't to do with her classroom performance that day, but rather, she felt, that the school did not want her.

So, I get the feeling at the moment that my face doesn't fit' (Judy – critical issues interview).

This last point raised by Judy about her 'face not fitting' was mentioned by Joseph when discussing John's eventual resignation. In Judy's case, the feedback, being so different from previously, led her to

'…questioning everything that is happening day by day…it's almost making me slightly paranoid' (Judy critical issues interview).

Judy contrasted this poor lesson grade and associated feedback against the number of years she had been performing well as a teacher. Her identity as a good teacher was being challenged, as was her position within the school.

'Fifteen, sixteen years and I've always been at the top of my game – outstanding or good, for it to suddenly change with a flip, it doesn't quite make sense' (Judy – critical issues interview).

Judy queried the process she experienced and was

'…now looking for another job' (Judy – critical issues interview).

This was because, normally, you have procedures put in place after *a number* of 'poor' lesson observation grades; but Judy was put on 'capability' after one 'poor' lesson, by Joseph, the head teacher.

'He was very, very quick to try and place procedures in place, which have now been withdrawn' (Judy – critical issues interview).

Judy was beginning to distrust the school senior leadership and stated that the implementation of support because of one 'poor' lesson, and later its apparent withdrawal, had undermined her confidence and status. The sudden change from some support to no support experienced by Judy might have been due to

either John's poor performance at supporting staff or the change in roles between Joseph and John causing a lack of continuity.

Judy had a sense that she was 'being bypassed now', with decisions being made by the assistant head for this curriculum area across the two secondary schools in the MAT. This assistant head teacher worked at Charhill School, the sponsor academy and lead school in the MAT. Judy's perception was that

'Heads of faculty that have already left haven't been replaced and I'm the last one' (Judy – critical incident interview).

Here, Judy is indicating how she felt that all other pre-academisation heads of faculty had been removed and she was the last one. However, this is not a reflection of reality as indicated in table 4 above, where, of the seven middle leader curriculum leads, five still remained.

What is significant here is the threat level that Judy *felt.* What was becoming clear for Judy was that personnel predominantly from the sponsor academy, Charhill, were making decisions regarding the curriculum delivery at Woodhouse, and this fuelled her fear of marginalisation. Because she felt that she was unable to lead her faculty, which is in contrast to those who were trusted and could demonstrate their ability to lead.

Another facet of issues related to status – identified by Lauren – was that of promotion within the school. She had applied to be an assistant head teacher across the two secondary schools and did not get the post.

'And actually, now I am quite glad I didn't get it because they are being pushed and pulled all over the place. Their job is not—I don't think—

what they first set out, or thought, it would be' (Lauren-critical issues interview).

In this statement, Lauren is referring to the 'they' as in the new assistant head teacher. Lauren indicated that no one at Woodhouse got a promotion to assistant head teacher across the two MAT secondary schools. Lauren was not certain that the process was the same for all applicants.

'You know they want to move people up in Charhill and that was a way to do it and they kind of had already decided who was going to have the job. I had to teach a lesson, the other person didn't. You know, there were just sort of differences in how things were being done' (Lauren-Critical issues interview).

Lauren did not, however, blame the new assistant head teacher – 'it's not her fault'. But it had created a concern, because

'I'm not sure if I fit, does my face fit? You know, and I think I'm not the only one who thinks that' (Lauren-critical issues interview).

To sum up: there were issues around status, and three respondents (Lauren, John and Judy) mentioned a concern about whether their 'face fitted in'. Those leaders, who were all at Woodhouse before academisation, felt under pressure, and that they were, in ways they were powerless to change, not what the MAT wanted. Judy felt that even if her teaching altered it would still not satisfy the new head teacher and the MAT. So, in theoretical terms, the *explanandum* was 'face not fitting in'; but neither Judy nor Lauren provided an *explanan,* that is, why they felt this was not made clear. There were two

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possible reasons: either it was because the MAT had expectations that Judy, John and Lauren were unable to meet; or it was that staff were unable or unwilling to adapt to the newly imposed requirements.

Interestingly, data from the interviews indicates that some staff who were at Woodhouse prior to academisation *were* coping and did not raise any concerns along these lines. It also shows how some senior leaders adapted their behaviour in order to keep staff happy and other leaders did not. It appears that once a member of staff had been identified as falling below expectations, they were treated in such a way that they decided to leave.

Finally, there is the matter of Joseph mentioning the financial strain across the MAT, and Woodhouse School's apparent obligation to help pay for Charhill staff that the sponsor academy school could no longer fund by themselves. This implied that decisions about who to employ or promote might be constrained by financial considerations and not solely upon ability.

4.3 Concluding thoughts

The findings indicate that the change to a school recently taken over by a MAT had affected staff in terms of their status, their roles and how much discretion they could use. At times, the leaders felt they were being led by those outside the school —the sponsor academy— and that there were new expectations to meet, which were being arbitrarily applied.

The findings also show leaders grappling with a range of dilemmas that spanned the roles of both teacher and leader. It is notable that, in general, leaders addressed students' poor behaviour in the classroom while in their role

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as teachers. When a leader, acting as a leader, did address a behaviour issue with a colleague, it was overruled by the head teacher. This undermined the leaders concerned. The head teacher undermining leaders created turbulence for the individuals concerned.

The drive to improve classroom practice resulted in significant turbulence for several individuals. The result was that leaders felt that their face no longer fitted in Woodhouse School. The drive to improve classroom practice resulted in dilemmas spanning several categories. In particular, the issue resulting in John losing his role as lead for improving teaching and learning across the school is illustrative of the cross-over into multiple categories. The dilemma spreading into several categories is an indication of its complexity. The complexity of a dilemma for an individual resulted in a delayed response.

The findings show that the leadership team at Woodhouse had been recruited for their willingness to compliantly implement the head teacher's decisions and not to use their own discretion to any great extent. In addition, the MAT, and indeed the head teacher at Woodhouse, were not always entirely clear in their directions to other leaders. This put their subordinates in a difficult position, made worse by the sense that any failure to meet the expectations of the head and MAT might place their roles and status under threat.

In the findings we see that the head teacher has a clear view on the key areas that need to improve to change the school to one that is focussed on student attainment. Teaching and learning, which, in Woodhouse, was interpreted as improving the classroom practice of teachers, was the head teacher's main

priority for change. He was clear it was about raising grades to improve the life chances of his students.

The findings indicate that many of the dilemmas experienced by the school leaders were linked to this expressed requirement to improve outcomes for students – a MAT priority. But, apart from the head teacher, the dilemmas experienced by leaders in the school were internal only. The head teacher had to face dilemmas created externally from his interaction with, and decisions taken by, the MAT leadership.

Lastly, in the findings we see that leaders were responding to dilemmas in different ways according to the role they adopted, that is, either as a teacher or as a leader. Leaders in Woodhouse School were facing change, in their work practices and the expectations upon them. The changes experienced by leaders at Woodhouse had created uncertainty, leading to inertia as they became increasingly unclear as to their own most prudent course of action.

Chapter 5 – Analysis and discussion

5.1 Introduction

In this analysis and discussion chapter, I draw upon the data and the literature review to analyse the dilemmas that leaders in my study experienced. Earlier I presented a typology of three responses to dilemmas: *linear*, *collaborative* and *urgent*. A '*linear*' response is one using a known pathway and procedures. A *collaborative* response is required when leaders encounter a complex dilemma, where need to work together to find a resolution. Lastly, an *urgent* response is when a dilemma requires immediate action to avert a threat. Here I present the turbulence and dilemmas that leaders in Woodhouse School faced and how those leaders responded.

Both, Shapiro and Gross (2013) and Beabout (2012) see turbulence in terms of impact upon the whole school that the leader responds to or galvanises others to respond to. The turbulence experienced by leaders in the study was shown frequently to create dilemmas. A key observation was that one senior leader's responses to dilemmas influenced how turbulence affected others at Woodhouse School, cascading down from one leader to another.

The outcomes of a leader's discretionary response to a dilemma created from turbulence varied radically from de-escalation and resolution to exacerbation and escalation within Woodhouse School.

I explore patterns of leadership in Woodhouse School. I also look at how middle leadership is affected by responses to dilemmas by senior leaders. These responses can be *linear*, *collaborative* or *urgent*. Urgent and *linear*

responses tend to curtail genuine opportunities for leading (MacBeath *et al.* 2004 and Kotter, 2013). At Woodhouse, most leaders merely operationalised the head teacher's decisions and did not initiate leadership, which is a case of 'pseudo-distributed leadership' or 'distributed management'. But, despite often operationalising a more senior leader's decisions they still had the option of discretion when responding to dilemmas.

5.2 Leaders' responses to dilemmas

Leaders in Woodhouse School used unconstrained discretion (Lipsky, 2010), or had restricted discretion because of accountability (Bush, 2013). With restricted discretion, Lipsky (2010) argues there is still scope for choice (Lipsky, 2010) because it impossible for every interaction and decision to be overseen. Even in *linear* responses, with known pathways or explicit procedures/policies, leaders were sometimes able to utilise discretion. The complexity of dilemmas faced by leaders at Woodhouse School led to differentiation in policy implementation as leaders attempt to resolve the issue.

The research seems to imply that leaders sometimes choose when they are accountable by selecting when, and when not, to alert those in senior positions who can hold them to account regarding a dilemma. For example, the case when Maria, a middle leader, came to the decision that she would not inform line managers of her decisions and actions after being undermined by a senior colleague. Another example is that of the line manager who had responsibility for the dyslexia team and chose not to exercise leadership. Her view seemed

to be that if no one knew how the dyslexia team was performing, then no one would have to account for their actions.

Leaders in Woodhouse School prioritised and swapped identities, just as Chandler (2008) identifies in his study of middle leaders in HE, where they 'portray ambiguity, ambivalence, multiple and fluid identifications' (*ibid*: 58) in response to dilemmas faced. This also fits with how Lipsky (2010) sees street-level bureaucrats (SLB) as they need to take a case specific response approach to meet a client's needs. Lipsky (2010) does not delve into the ethical motivations of individuals, except to suggest that they want to achieve what they consider to be good for the client. In Lipsky (2010) ethical frameworks are secondary to the SLB's aspiration of good outcomes for the client. An example of someone adopting an approach that fits their values is in the differentiated treatment given to a student who was being mentored by teacher, Carrie. Whilst teaching a lesson where her mentee was present, with regard to behaviour and expectations, she adopted one approach for this student and another for the rest of the class. Carrie wanted to meet the needs of all students and not just the majority. To achieve her goal of meeting all the students' needs Carrie adopted a nuanced approach balancing the needs of the student with the need to adhere to school policy and procedure. Carrie showed discretion in how and when to apply Woodhouse School's policies. This is the case for all teachers who balance the requirements of inclusion policies that require tailored responses to individual needs and behaviour policies that treat everyone the same.

The data in this study gives a picture of dilemmas faced by school leaders but does not discriminate between an ethical dilemma and one that is not. We see that leaders tried to achieve good outcomes for the client—in this case, students—which meant acting as a Lipskian SLB. But, interestingly, leaders in Woodhouse wanted good outcomes for themselves and wherever possible make decisions that did not create turbulence that might threaten their position. This is illustrated in Dave's dilemma and his inertia over tackling a colleague's treatment of a student with SEND.

5.2.1 Student and colleague dilemmas

Overwhelmingly, the data shows that the leaders within Woodhouse School identified themselves as teachers first, then leaders and managers. They did not, however, see themselves as members of a team or as subordinates. Leaders' identification as teachers primarily is important because it affects how they act (Chandler, 2008). It also raises questions about the social construction of the 'teacher' as a role. I will discuss this latter point in relation to identification as a leader and leadership, but first I will concentrate on identity and role, which is a dilemma that emerges from the literature and in the data.

The findings chapter shows that, in Woodhouse School, individuals were often juggling several roles, such as teacher, leader, manager and mentor. Handy (1993) identified individuals within organisations as dealing with dual roles, but, in this study, the data shows that leaders in Woodhouse School saw themselves as being in three roles. Adopting multiple roles added to the challenge of dealing with a dilemma because of possible role conflict.

Woodhouse leaders swapping between the role of a leader, or a teacher can help them address competing needs through the creation of a case specific response to dilemmas. At times it may be helpful to a leader to select a role suitable for resolving a dilemma in order to break a stalemate of indecision, and in this study the leader who elected to prioritise her role as mentor to an individual student over one as teacher to a class of students is a good example of that. Indeed, in this example, the teacher, Carrie, actually had three role options – teacher, leader, mentor, and, using discretion, chose mentor. Carrie's response fitted Shapiro and Gross's (2013) ethics of care and Lipsky's (2010) concept of SLB, where meeting client (student) needs is the primary concern.

The dangers of role conflict are illustrated through Dave's story in which he needed to challenge a more senior colleague's teaching in order to support a student with SEND but was at risk of damaging his relationship with his colleague. He had the discretion to act either as a colleague or as an advocate for the student. At the time of this study Dave had not resolved the issue, remaining in a state of inertia (Mason, 2008) that meant student needs were not being addressed.

Dave's unresolved dilemma, where he does not address a teacher's poor practice, illustrates a leader dealing with an 'antinomy paradox' (Witzel *et al.* 2016). Dave had a concern he would be perceived negatively by more senior leaders; he was concerned to maintain his relationship with colleagues, and he wanted better treatment for the student. So, Dave had multiple needs to meet he was unable to predict the consequences of any decision. For Dave, it

was an antinomy paradox because all options appeared equally unpalatable. He adopted the role as a fellow teacher and colleague as it meant he did not have to address the dilemma. But, his lack of action indicates his prioritisation of his relationships with colleagues. In essence his inertia meant he was putting his colleague before the student's.

Dave chose not to act; so, the dilemma either resolved itself, or someone else stepped in and resolved it instead. Here the priority for Dave was to make sure he was seen to be following the school rules and procedures so that he could not be challenged. The fear of being held to account had resulted in inertia (Mason, 2008) in this case. Discretion was affected because of Dave's pre-judgement (Yung, 2013) led him to assume that the consequences of his actions could mean greater turbulence for him. His presumption that the responses of more senior leaders would cause negative consequences for him resulted partially in his inertia. Dave's response was also formed by concern for himself and his need to be seen as a colleague. Dave was in a client-facing role, that is, he met parents and students and should have been aiming to meet the clients' needs (Lipsky, 2010), but he was putting his own needs first and used discretion to do so.

Other school leaders at Woodhouse also occasionally viewed available options as unpalatable for the client or themselves and likely to threaten their position/status and identities within the school. Sometimes, the leaders were uncertain of the consequences of their particular choices. In effect, the discretionary choice for these leaders was to not make a choice, because each option would cause further turbulence for them. This is not necessarily what

Lipsky (2010) and Loyens and Maesschalck (2010) mean by discretion used by front-line workers. They refer to making decisions that ensure an individual carries out their role as they see fit to best meet the clients' needs. In Woodhouse the leaders were elevating their own needs above the clients (students). This was implied by a marked avoidance of turbulence.

The findings showed that most dilemmas were the result of leaders interacting with others, either fellow leaders, teachers or students. Often, leaders were making *urgent* responses to incidents in the classroom. The nature of the *urgent* response meant that the manner in which the immediate dilemma was resolved did not always reflect school procedures, so it was not a *linear* response. This *urgent* response showed discretion and was on a basis of 'what works now'. This approach did not always resolve the dilemma, but postponed it; by which time, the immediacy of the dilemma had dissipated and there was time to treat it as a *linear* dilemma. However, they would only do so if they could not find a suitable pathway that met their conceptualisation of being a teacher. I uncovered no evidence of teachers swapping to their role as leaders when dealing with students; it was the role as a teacher that took prominence. The adoption of one role over another enabled teachers and leaders to adjust to the turbulence they experienced. This was particularly so as pre-academisation teachers and leaders at Woodhouse adjusted to new MAT leaders.

5.2.2 Turbulence created as Woodhouse School joined the multi-academy academy chain (MAT)

I found that turbulence emerged at Woodhouse—a school within the MAT—once the new head teacher joined from the sponsor academy. Staff felt this turbulence in their relationships with new line managers from the MAT. All staff below that of the head teacher were dealing with new line managers (the new head teacher of Woodhouse School retained the same line manager and CEO, who was his earlier head teacher at the sponsor academy). My findings emphasise how much the business of adapting to new leaders creates turbulence for all staff, some of whom who complained that their 'face no longer fitted' after receiving negative feedback about the classroom practice. This issue was mentioned explicitly by several interviewees yet is one that the literature on academisation seems not to recognise, focussing much more on structures (Wilkins, 2015; Gunter and McGinity, 2014) than relationships.

The leaders at Woodhouse School before academisation, once the school became part of the MAT, found that some of their responsibilities were taken from them, having the effect of restricting their powers of discretion. They also had another person to report to, further curtailing their independence. Yet the new leadership pattern does not completely eradicate discretion, as the middle leaders are still expected to design the curriculum. An exception, in this case, is Jean who was obliged to adopt 'wholesale' the practice from the sponsor academy. The imposing of a curriculum from Charhill Academy on Jean illustrates the leader from the sponsor academy taking an *urgent* response. The *urgent* response from the senior leader restricted Jean's discretion, and

he responded in a *linear* way i.e. he followed new processes. The adoption of an urgent response created internal turbulence. This, as Beabout (2012) suggested, can be a useful means of fostering change.

5.2.3 Internal turbulence

In the Findings Chapter, internal turbulence within Woodhouse School came primarily from relationships between staff; and need to improve the classroom practice. The head teacher has created intentional and unintentional internal turbulence (Beabout, 2012) as he drives forward change and adaptation into the MAT school. He also did it by changing practice that had been considered good before academisation. The difference between the head teacher and those at the school before academisation was in how they perceived the school. The head teacher created *intentional* turbulence (Beabout, 2012). He accepted that some discomfort will be experienced and is a natural outcome/symptom when change is being affected during change.

The interviews showed that the pre-academisation leaders (excluding John) viewed the school's small size as a strength, but the post-academisation staff saw it as a weakness. This difference in the social construct led to differences in the way that leaders acted. Those who saw the school as stable and good and not threatened by reduced numbers of students responded to new rules differently from those who did not. According to Kotter (1996) such a group of staff are the least likely to see a sense of urgency and resistance to change is likely, especially where the rationale for the change has not been communicated effectively. This is exactly what the findings showed in terms of

pre-academisation and post-academisation staff adjusting to new classroom practice criteria.

The head teacher saw being a small school with low student numbers as a weakness, because low numbers of students meant a reduced budget and restricted his ability to offer a sufficiently broad curriculum. He wanted to increase the numbers of students and felt that that improving GCSE results (as compared with competitor schools) would generate more applicants. This difference in construct created dissonance for some leaders as they were still wedded to the smallness of the school being a strength. However, those who accepted the view of smallness being a weakness did not experience internal turbulence because they aligned their construct to the head teacher's view.

The school was undergoing turbulence (Gross, 2004 and Beabout, 2012) as shown in the interviews. The turbulence was external and manifested in the threats to financial stability. I also identified *internal* turbulence around adapting to new rules and procedures introduced by the head teacher. It is notable that academisation *per se* was not identified as a direct threat in interview 1 by any of the respondents, though it was in the second (CIT) interview. Academisation had already happened by the time of interview 1 in the summer of 2015, and therefore a 'done deal'. There were no ripples of turbulence from academisation identified in interview 1. But, academisation became an issue in terms of how the MAT was working with Woodhouse School leaders and teachers. The broad areas that affected leaders at Woodhouse were the financial allocation because Woodhouse was having to part fund Charhill staff; the newcomers from the sponsor academy were given

leadership roles which further affected Woodhouse staff who felt overlooked and believed they were not wanted.

The relationships within the MAT between staff had a direct impact on their practice in the classroom. In fact, the head teacher identified the need to use leaders from the sponsor academy to drive change within classroom practice at Woodhouse School. This created internal turbulence as staff adjusted to changing expectations about classroom provision and student performance.

The specific academisation experienced at Woodhouse affected staff in terms of threats to their status and changes to their levels of accountability as more leaders were introduced from the MAT. At all levels of leadership, they learnt that the sponsor academy and the wider MAT was where ultimate accountability was held. The head teacher was aware he was accountable to the CEO of the trust, but other leaders, at Woodhouse School, either identified the leaders from the sponsor academy who was imposed upon them or they identified the trust leadership, which in essence is the CEO and head teachers of the schools within the MAT.

The head teacher chose actions – in particular to changing classroom practice criteria – which created internal turbulence (Beabout, 2012). Although not explicitly identified as turbulence by him he was actively choosing to use turbulence as a means of delivering his priorities. He did state his intention to 'shake things up' and rid the school of individuals not improving teaching and learning. He saw inertia in the project to improve teaching and learning and used internal turbulence to deliver change through adaptation. The response from the head teacher is an *urgent* response because improving teaching and

learning was the immediate issue to address in the school. The head teacher's response meant he directed others to act and set new expectations. Some leaders accepted this, and their response also became either *urgent* or *linear*.

However, some leaders did not see improving classroom practice as *urgent* and found adaptation to the new rules presented dilemmas. The head felt it was a clear priority that classroom practice needed to improve. He knew from earlier experience that a school where he was a deputy head (at the lead school in the MAT) improved because of the focus on teaching and learning. I suspect that where he found inertia at Woodhouse School was because he did not first build a *consensus* around what he was trying to do. I saw little evidence of *collaboration*, or creating a guiding coalition (Kotter, 1996) to improve classroom practice. Instead, he chose to, as Kotter (1996) terms it, create a sense of urgency to galvanise others to act. It was an *urgent* response from the head teacher that required a '*linear*' response from others (to follow rules and procedures). However, as discussed earlier this rationale was not always communicated effectively which created additional uncertainty. John himself did not grasp the need for urgency and prioritised other aspects of his multiple roles. John because of his lack of focus on Joseph's priority did not fully meet the expectations of the head teacher. John had not followed the procedures and was therefore removed from the responsibility of leading improvements in teaching and learning. As Joseph states, 'John was not following agreed processes to support underachieving colleagues' (Critical issues interview).

The 'disconnect' between the head teacher and several leaders regarding improving student outcomes created inertia. The inertia stemmed from some leaders who did not see the change as a priority or understand what it required. The reason they thought this way was that an Ofsted inspection conducted before academisation identified the school as 'Good'. Leaders at Woodhouse in the wake of the Ofsted inspection saw no need to adopt new academy requirements. Judy mentioned this issue about earlier classroom practice being labelled as 'outstanding' and now, under the academy criteria, 'not satisfactory'. The head teacher had brought in new criterion for 'good' or 'outstanding' lessons and those teachers and leaders previously identified as 'outstanding' classroom practitioners were now – unexpectedly to them – failing their lesson observations.

The middle leaders, who were also classroom teachers' understanding, not only of the new teaching standards criterion, but also its level of priority for adoption, differed markedly from that of the head teacher, which shows that there had been ineffective communication. Creating and communicating a sense of urgency is vital to galvanising individuals to deliver change according to Kotter (1996) and there was an observable lack of urgency in the way the head teacher had managed this change. His ineffective communication regarding new criteria slowed down his staff's adaptation to the new rules and procedures.

Although the interviews do reveal a certain level of awareness from several leaders that teaching and learning needed to be improved, in the main, it was the newer staff, brought in by the new head teacher, that saw poor teaching

and learning as a problem. Interestingly, the two staff employed at the school before the new head teacher started, who also saw teaching and learning as an issue, were promoted. This led to further dilemmas for those staff, regarding working relationships and their sense of identity, because, for colleagues, they were now associated with the new regime.

Working relationships between leaders and those who reporting to them was an issue within the school that created turbulence and dilemmas. The head teacher's relationship with the MAT became a whole-school dilemma because of his responses. For the head teacher, who was part of the MAT leadership, it *was inter-organisational* (Loyens and Maesschalck, 2010); but in terms of how other leaders perceived the dilemma, it was *extra-organisational* (Loyens and Maesschalck, 2010) because it originated outside of Woodhouse School.

The quality of the relationships between the sponsor academy and Woodhouse had a direct impact on the school's ability to adapt. The head teacher of Woodhouse School, when deciding on a senior leader's role responsibilities within the school, can be seen to be weighing up perceived turbulence from above and below. On the one hand he was being motivated by the extra-organisational turbulence he was experiencing (from the MAT) as well as the likelihood of this causing turbulence internally (to his staff). This internal turbulence was a threat because hard to replace staff may leave. But to avoid creating turbulence meant accepting inertia, an unacceptable option that would lead inevitably to extra-organisational turbulence from the Academy CEO, directly impacting him. The head teacher, in the realm of inter-organisational dilemmas, felt he had little option but to assume responsibility

for the project that had disintegrated into inertia and set about trying to resolve the classroom and client-facing issues by introducing new leaders, and new systems for monitoring classroom practice. But, he did not take on board that teachers did not understand the change. The head had a choice in the measures he deployed, and used discretion as a leader, as in Vinzant and Crothers (1998), where measures introduced meet the client needs and improve the school's reputation locally. In this case, however, the head teacher's discretionary choice was muddied by his perception of the dilemma. He saw it as poor practice in the classroom and an indication of the need to make teachers comply with his diktat. He used a *linear* approach rather than a *collaborative* approach, which did not facilitate leaders making sense of the new reality.

I identified discretion in how the head markets the school to future parents and cares of prospective students. He has a choice whether to do so with a strong emphasis on SEND provision, or on a school where students can achieve outstanding results. The head teacher sees the need to improve grades as a priority to improve the students' life-chances. The head teacher's added motivation was that by improving student outcomes he would increase the number of applicants. Student numbers at the time, made the school financially unviable. Fluctuating student numbers based upon school popularity with parents can be seen as the 'marketplace in action', as opposed to the 'pseudo-marketplace' (Ball, 2006b). But, even in a pseudo-marketplace there are real impacts. Woodhouse School could eventually close—as did a school in Sunderland (BBC News, 19th Jan 2017), due to few parents/carers choosing

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its services. The school closure in Sunderland was a direct consequence of parents exercising their rights as consumers. This was a real fear for the head teacher of Woodhouse School, who worried that the school would not be sufficiently financially viable for the MAT to support. The head teacher's concern was based upon the school being seen as a beacon for SEND students but not academic achievement. He felt this was putting many local parents off choosing Woodhouse School. But, as shown in the findings others saw the status as a SEND specialist school as a good thing even though it affected school results negatively in the head teacher's view.

With regard to being able to compete for pupils from the local community, the head teacher at Woodhouse had focussed on teaching and learning in his efforts to develop the school's reputation for outstanding teaching so that parents and carers would choose the school. His interview gives the strong impression that it was also the key focus for the CEO of the MAT and that the head teacher had discretion as to how MAT foci were addressed. However, with regards to John we saw how the head teacher was put in a difficult position by the CEO, such that Joseph felt he had little option but to remove John from his post. Here we see the rhetoric and the realty clashing. In effect Joseph had freedom to choose until the CEO decide to intervene.

The head teacher's focus on teaching and learning might be described as instructional leadership (Horng and Loeb, 2010), and it did not create internal turbulence in itself. It was how it was being driven that was key. Lesson observations and grading of teachers took place at least once per term. Teachers graded as 'poor' at teaching and learning by senior leaders were

obliged to submit to a programme of support. Being put on such a programme created turbulence for teachers who had been classified as good classroom practitioners before, but now found they were deemed to be underperforming. This reported impact on the teachers relates to Kubler-Ross's (2009) bereavement model, in which individuals undergo stages of response, being: denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance. Everyone experiences similar stages, and while some may move through them quickly, others will take more time, or even become stuck in a stage associated with depression. There was no evidence that leaders and teachers were being helped to adjust to new classroom practice criterion. Indeed, the head teacher cited the lack of support as a key reason for relieving John—a senior leader—of some of his responsibilities. The phenomenon of leaders using discretion to avoid and mitigate for future pain is picked up by Cameron and Green (2012), in which leaders are motivated to avoid distress and upset, sometimes resulting in inertia.

The lack of support to help to adjust to new procedures and processes meant that leaders dealt with the internal turbulence. This atomisation of the leader where they are left in isolated can exacerbate the feeling of 'face not fitting in'. It also shows that, in Woodhouse School, a *collaborative* approach where leaders came together to resolve dilemmas was not being utilised to mitigate turbulence. Beabout (2012) argues that leaders need to use collaboration to support leaders dealing with dilemmas and turbulence. Such collaboration can serve to de-escalate the impact of any turbulence.

5.3 Escalation and de-escalation of dilemmas

In this section I discuss how dilemmas move between leaders either escalating or de-escalating in severity of turbulence. One leader takes a decision that then impacts upon other leaders. The decision can either increase the turbulence experienced by others or reduce the severity of the turbulence. This will impact upon how challenging any dilemma is to resolve.

Maria's dilemma was initially tackled with a *collaborative* response, in which she and a colleague had agreed on a strategy to deal with a student's bad behaviour, only to discover the next day that her approach had been overridden by a *linear* response from the head teacher. The head teacher applied the school rules; i.e. he followed procedure that he created. The middle leader felt that her status had been undermined and her power of discretion depleted. This incident involving the head teacher overriding a *collaborative* response with a *linear* one illustrates how the head teacher can dictate and override decisions already taken, thus reducing the opportunities for discretion for his immediate subordinates. It can also indicate the limitations of (DL) because head teachers may not trust leaders to make good decisions. Morrison (2002) argues that DL is a key requirement of an adaptable organisation, which is one with the ability to adjust behaviours quickly in a rapidly changing context. In this case, a lack of DL at Woodhouse School has affected the staff's ability to adjust to its new working arrangements and context.

Despite supposedly having a distributed leadership team, the process of decision making was, in practice, very centralised, and the discretion seemingly afforded to leaders in Woodhouse School was, in reality, solely determined by the head teacher. However, as seen from Maria's critical issue, her response to that situation was to restrict the flow of information to the head teacher and senior colleagues. This response by Maria is an example of Lipsky's (2010) leaders acting as street-level bureaucrats (SLBs).

Dilemmas do lead to paradoxes and 'wicked' problems, where individuals are juggling two, mutually exclusive positions, such as applying two policies where the behaviour policy expects all students to be treated the same and the inclusion policy expects teachers to address students' individual needs. This paradox links to the work of Stacey and Mowles (2016) in that it creates paradoxes for some leaders when they cannot predict or prejudge the consequences of two or more courses of action (Yung, 2013 and Mowles, 2015). This is particular to individuals, because another leader may see dilemmas and paradox differently. Therefore, dilemmas and paradoxes are unique to each leader.

The phenomenon of dilemmas being perceived differently is illustrated by Joseph and John's issue regarding improving teaching and learning. For Joseph, the head teacher, and John, the deputy head teacher, the differences in their assumptions about how to address the need to improve teaching and learning created additional, individual dilemmas for each of them. For Joseph it was how to deal with John, who was not following a *linear* response. For John it was balancing meeting the head teacher's requirements with his own

desire to retain the trust and confidence of his subordinate colleagues. Both the head teacher and his deputy had what might be described as an unresolvable, wicked problem that fits an antinomy paradox (Witzel *et al.* 2016). That is, they were unhappy with the predicted consequences of any of their options. Indeed, there were tiered levels of the paradox, according to the *scale* of the dilemmas. The head teacher was in a resulting state of inertia (Mason, 2008) or paradox paralysis (Stacey, 2011). The inertia remained until the CEO of the MAT forced the head teacher to act. His response then became an *urgent* one. He had initially been grappling with what was essentially a *personal* dilemma as to override John's authority would affect their working relationship. Joseph realised that his own lack of action (inertia) meant the dilemma regarding changing John's role (removing his responsibility for improving teaching and learning) had become an issue that could threaten his status as a head teacher within the MAT. Joseph also felt the improvement of the whole school was under threat, which forced his decision to take over the teaching and learning improvement himself. Again, this illustrates how a decision by a senior leader impacts on the decisions and dilemmas faced by other leaders. Here it cascades downward through the organisation. This shows external turbulence for the head teacher of Woodhouse School impacting upon the response available to him. Here, although discretion was used prior to the turbulence created by the CEO, it soon became a dilemma where discretion was severely constrained. The CEO expected an immediate response and so a *collaborative* approach was not available. John indicated that he was in regular discussion with Joseph regarding teaching and learning

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progress, which may show a level of collaboration, however the intervention of the CEO changed Joseph's approach completely.

Addressing poor classroom practice in Woodhouse School had become *urgent* for the head teacher. But the deputy head was already in the process of trying to resolve the dilemma at a team level – using a *collaborative* approach – because he wanted to maintain links with colleagues as a confidant. He saw himself as a member of the teaching team within the school, not just the enforcer of rules and procedures'. Taking either a *linear* or *urgent* response would have meant a change in leadership style to one of 'setting and expecting actions', which emphasised a rather more hierarchical status. To adopt a dictatorial approach would be to undermine his identity as a confidant, and a buffer between the general teaching staff and the new leadership. The dilemma began as one that affected the working relationship between the head teacher and his deputy and then escalated to the CEO creating a point where an *urgent* response was required of Joseph to maintain his status within the MAT and meet expectations regarding improved teaching and learning.

The line manager of the SEND team Carrie is shown in the Findings chapter choosing not to engage with the dyslexia team and this is a further example of inertia. To engage with this team would have created turbulence for the team and for Carrie. The SEND department in Woodhouse School had become a separate entity within the school and seemed to set its own priorities. Carrie accepted that the SEND department acted essentially without guidance and on their own agenda. This was a team-dilemma for Carrie because her choice of action or no action affected several individuals. In effect, the lead for SEND

used her discretion, and chose *not* to act because the issue was not leading to any dilemmas for anyone else. The SEND department was her responsibility, she contained the issue and so it did not escalate to a *whole school* level dilemma. Paralysis and inertia were the best option for Carrie, as it did not create additional conflict and work.

It is noticeable from the data that the higher up the leadership hierarchy an individual was, the greater the impact upon the school. Leaders often faced dilemmas and paradoxes that impacted across departments or the whole school, many of which were multi-layered. The most senior leaders had school level dilemmas plus dilemmas similar to middle leaders in terms of classroom practice and being in multiple roles. All middle leaders at Woodhouse School had teaching responsibility, and so were exposed to dilemmas and paradoxes derived from classroom practice as well as those concerning leadership. So, if a dilemma was faced by a senior leader and involved issues directly concerning students, then the paradox solely related to that individual, their role and their own value system. Essentially, it was one they alone contended with, and was not likely to impact others. However, the response to other individuals' dilemmas based upon meeting client-needs could, if involving the head teacher, escalate to it being designated an issue where a new policy or directive was created. This would then affect many teachers and leaders in the school.

However, not all dilemmas do escalate and sometimes an *urgent* response *is* the most viable option. In classrooms, for example, when dealing with behaviour or learning issues, the classroom practitioner has no one else

present to take a lead on their behalf, and although they may have a teaching assistant present, there is no time for a *collaborative* approach. In the immediacy of a decision being required, the teacher acts, using sole discretion. The decision made using sole discretion by the head teacher led to internal turbulence cascading throughout the school.

5.4 Cascading turbulence

Turbulence within Woodhouse School primarily cascades downwards from the head teacher to other leaders. Dilemmas and paradoxes in Woodhouse are fluid and move between leaders at different levels within the hierarchy. Turbulence moves from the head teacher to a senior leader and then a middle leader, depending upon prevailing interactions between individuals and the discretion used to address the dilemma. In figure 3 below, I represent how a dilemma, and the response to a dilemma, cascades from one leader to another.

In this representation of cascading dilemmas (Figure 3), we see how external turbulence experienced by the head teacher cascades through the school based upon their response. Once Joseph, the head teacher responds to the dilemma, the turbulence cascades downwards, becomes internal and cascades to all other leaders, then continues on down from senior and middle leaders to classroom practitioners.

Figure 3 (on page 184) indicates how external turbulence from the MAT, to improve classroom practice, identified within the Findings can move through the various layers of leadership. The turbulence is initially experienced by the head teacher, through

senior and middle leaders to class teachers. The head teacher can act as a buffer to reduce the severity of the turbulence experienced or can increase the turbulence felt by others, either intentionally or unintentionally.

In this illustrative figure 3 the external turbulence is made internal directly due to the head teacher's response. The head teacher is, in effect, the gate keeper. The structure of the MAT now containing Woodhouse School means the head teacher needs also to respond as directed by the CEO, who, in this instance, represents the external source of turbulence. In a high stakes accountability system (Stobart, 2007) the head teacher needs to show superiors in the MAT that he is responding to the CEO's directives. The option to block the pressure is not available to the head teacher, who is accountable to the CEO. But, as Lipsky (2010) argues, accountability does not completely eradicate discretion. The head teacher has discretion in *how* he responds to the dilemma, as do the other leaders. But, as indicated in the Findings chapter, a key consideration for all the leaders in Woodhouse School was making sure their faces fit in with the MAT. This meant that they needed to be seen to respond to those to whom they were accountable. The significant factor here is that the *type* of response required was not dictated, but they did need to show a *suitable* response. What complicated things was the lack of clarity around expectations, creating uncertainty, so leaders sometimes found themselves in a state of paralysis.

Figure 3: How a dilemma and response can cascade

Turbulence: External/ internal	Role	Dilemma	Discretion	Response: Can choose *linear*/*Collaborative*/Urgent Response.
External turbulence from MAT to improve Classroom practice	head teacher experiences this turbulence	This is a whole school dilemma	The head teacher has discretion	Urgent Response chosen. Everyone must improve Classroom practice ASAP

Turbulence	Role	Dilemma	Discretion	Response
Internal turbulence	Senior and middle leaders experience this turbulence	Team-dilemma in how to engage with colleagues	To meet new directive or meet the needs of colleagues	*linear* Or *Collaborative*

Turbulence	Role	Dilemma	Discretion	Response
Internal	Class teacher experiences this internal turbulence	Teacher leader dilemma	Meet student needs and their own needs or managers' directives	*linear* Or Urgent response

In figure 3 above, the head teacher utilised an *urgent* response. The head teacher could have adopted a *collaborative* approach or included the most senior leaders into a 'Guiding Coalition' (Kotter, 1996). Adopting a *collaborative* response in partnership with the most senior leaders would effectively be distributed leadership. However, an *urgent* response means that *leadership* of others is not required in the pure sense – simply the

operationalisation of the head teacher's decision. The leaders in this case were, instead, acting as *managers* (Kotter, 2013) and this implies a distributed management team rather than a distributed leadership team.

The head teacher's *urgent* response then became a dilemma for other leaders, who also had discretion in how to respond. These leaders responded using a *linear* approach. They could have called the teams they led together and adopted a *collaborative* approach, but, in the event, they chose to adopt an approach where the head teacher's view on teaching and learning was adopted as quickly as possible. The issue identified in the Findings chapter was the lack of clarity around the details of the desired mode of teaching and learning. This created critical issues for staff as they were unable to identify a way forward and so inertia became evident because leaders were uncertain about expectations and appropriate courses of action.

Figure 3 illustrates how dilemmas cascade, but this is not the full representation of what happened at Woodhouse School, because issues were fluid and flowed in more than one direction. Issues can flow *upwards* too, from classroom practice, to middle leader, and onwards up to senior leaders. As the SEND issue identified by Dave (addressed earlier in this work) illustrates, a middle leader can also act as a blocker to the dilemma moving around the organisation. The leader, Dave, who chose not to deal with a colleague who was not following agreed procedure created inertia. This happened because the discretionary choices available had been equally unpalatable to him, so no action was taken, which made it an antinomy paradox (Witzel *et al.* 2016 This particular internal turbulence had the potential to cascade upwards to the head

teacher where, if parents complained to Ofsted, it could escalate into 'severe' turbulence (Gross, 2004). If the parent or carer of the child with SEND complained to Ofsted or the MAT CEO then it would be external turbulence for Woodhouse School leaders that would create a new set of dilemmas and issues at all levels.

What is becoming clear from the findings is that the turbulence identified is different depending upon the level of leadership. Only the head teacher experienced turbulence originating from outside Woodhouse School. The other leaders experienced internal turbulence (Beabout, 2012) that was intentional or unintentional.

What is also clear is that despite a leadership team that largely fits MacBeath *et al* (2004) conception of DL, there is not an opportunity for sharing leadership decisions. If a leader is responding to the head teacher in a *linear* way, they are, in effect, *managing* the head teacher's decision. Leadership could be shared if a *collaborative* approach was taken. In the school, decisions were sometimes shared, but often when the head teacher made an *urgent* response to a dilemma, the response from other leaders was *linear*. This undermines the rationale for DL, as decisions are not shared, and support is not sought. In effect, we have leaders acting as Kotter (2013) would define managers. Therefore, in Woodhouse School, we see less DL and more distributed management, where the head teacher's decision is operationalised. This restricts discretionary leadership and decision-making, but the manager has some scope for how they put into practice head teacher's decisions.

5.5 Distributed leadership and management

Woodhouse School had a senior leadership team with designated leadership responsibility and they both led and managed. This fits with MacBeath *et al*. (2004) taxonomy (see Figure 2) and indicates formal distributed leadership (FDL). Although FDL is the pattern employed in the school, it is not a reflection of leadership practice within the school. The leaders are mostly implementing the decisions of others, which is management. A critique of MacBeath *et al. (*2004), Harris (2008), Leithwood *et al. (*2006) and Day *et al,* (2010) view of DL, is that they consider titles, the roles given to leaders, the head teacher's view on leadership practice and not the impact decisions have on patterns and practice of leadership. My findings show that decisions – and responses to dilemmas taken by more senior colleagues – restrict discretion, and therefore opportunities for leadership by other leaders, which undermines DL.

As shown in the analysis, if a more senior colleague, such as the head teacher, responds to a dilemma with a *linear* or *urgent* response, then an opportunity for *collaborative* leadership by others is restricted, but not completely curtailed. It can become a matter of following the outlined process as the *linear* or *urgent* response dictates. However, this is dependent upon the next level of leaders interpreting it as such. They could, of course, opt for a different response. Those below Joseph are likely to adhere to the new diktat because there is a concern that their 'face will no longer fit'. This fear of not fitting into the new regime was mentioned by Joseph in terms of meeting the MAT's criteria (that of the CEO), as well as by respondents in the CIT interviews discussed above.

This implies that the distribution of leadership within Woodhouse School did have restrictions because responses were often set by the senior leaders, in particular the head teacher. Because DL was restricted it was more of a pseudo-distributed leadership; in effect, the leaders were only carrying out the instructions given to them. This would indicate management not leadership (Kotter, 2013). Despite literature extolling the virtue of distributed leadership, it remains to be seen how widespread DL really is within schools across England. As shown in this study, researchers need to look at the impact of leadership decisions on patterns of leadership such as DL. It is only through research such as this, where the responses and decisions of leaders are analysed, can one identify if genuine distributed leadership is taking place. Literature such as MacBeath *et al,* (2004), Harris (2008), Leithwood *et al. (*2008) and Day *et al.* (2010) relies upon self-reporting regarding distributed leadership practice, which may present a distorted picture of its adoption and how it is practiced within schools. This study would indicate that DL in schools is complex and that self-reporting by head teachers, which authors like Harris (2008) utilise, is not sufficient to claim it is practiced widely. DL is more than a structure designating roles, but a way of working and sharing leadership across the school. In this study you can see that leadership can be facilitated in others by the head teacher or, indeed, curtailed. In effect, the only type of discretion that leaders in Woodhouse School really had left was in managing the head teacher's decisions. This pattern of leadership would be better described as distributed management. However, whether school leaders acted

as Distributed Leaders or Distributed Managers, they still used discretion as SLBs.

5.6 Managers and leaders as SLBs

The study identifies leaders contending with dilemmas and using discretion, even if they did so within restricted parameters. The 'street-level bureaucrat' (SLB) was a useful concept for understanding how individuals negotiated their pathway through the dilemmas they faced by using discretion. The study shows that regardless of a leader's level within the school hierarchy, there was always another layer of accountability beyond (Bush, 2013) and ultimately this sat outside the school, with the CEO of the MAT. In Woodhouse School even the most senior leaders acted as SLBs and fit Vinzant and Crothers' (1998) view that public servants act as street-level leaders. It was evident that decisions by more senior colleagues could reduce opportunities for leadership. But, opportunities for discretion, which Vinzant and Crothers (2008) argue entails leadership, are ever-present in schools. So, despite opportunities for leadership being curtailed by the discretionary decisions of others, new opportunities do present themselves. The discretion utilised by leaders as they choose appropriate responses then impacts on others in the form of intentional or unintentional turbulence, thus creating new dilemmas. The initial discretionary response itself falls into the three categories of *linear, collaborative* and *urgent,* and so does any subsequent response.

Discretion can mean an action is taken or, as identified in this study, that action is not taken. The lack of action leads to a state of inertia for that individual in

terms of their learning and in resolving an issue for a client. Because the nature of the dilemmas is experienced by the individual, the consequence of any action may or may not have a wider impact. A dilemma for one individual may only impact upon them and those it concerns, such as clients (students), and will not impact hugely on the whole organisation. However, Morrison (2002) contends that an action may be small, but its impact could be very significant in how an organisation emerges from one state to another. I would argue that inertia could stop the organisation developing, which creates rigidity in its systems and processes that then has an impact when it is faced by increased turbulence.

To illustrate, in the Findings chapter, we have a leader (Dave) taking the approach of protecting his preferred identity as a confidant to colleagues by not challenging their poor classroom practice as their line manager. This situation could continue only until the context changed; for example, a parent/carer made a complaint about their child's learning and treatment, or an Ofsted inspection raised concerns about the school's provision. This issue, that was initially at a team level quickly accelerated to a dilemma that would involve the head teacher, and quite possibly the CEO of the MAT. This escalating of the dilemma/issue increased the turbulence as more people were exposed to it. But importantly, the response to such a situation is always likely to be *urgent*, and impact all staff, as new rules are implemented where teachers and leaders at Woodhouse are expected to respond to future dilemmas using a *linear* approach. The new rules instigated might be around teaching, leading others or disciplinary procedures. In Woodhouse discretion

is evidenced not only by the type of response such as *urgent*, *collaborative* or *linear* but also in the action instigated by leaders. The action chosen to create new whole school policies and procedures could create considerable turbulence as the issue is addressed at a whole school level as procedures are changed for all leaders and teachers.

So, we see that a *contained* dilemma becomes one that can cascade upwards if additional turbulence is created internally or externally. In effect, a contained and isolated dilemma, once exposed to others, can become a tipping point (Morrison, 2002) from which the organisation will emerge into a different one as more individuals experience turbulence and address the subsequent dilemmas they face.

What can happen in the hypothetical, but likely, scenario outlined above is that for those below senior level the dilemma becomes one they cannot resolve. They are in a situation where they have little control and are in the hands of those with greater power and authority to act. These individuals are in a situation of trying to keep those above them in the hierarchy content with their work as well as doing their job in line with their own values (Lipsky, 2010) and fluid identities. This could be a paradoxical situation for them, but not for those whose positionality means they perceive the dilemma and available options differently.

This leads to a consideration of how leadership responsibility affects the dilemmas within the school. The literature points to distributed leadership (Harris, 2008; Leithwood *et al*. 2008) as a model for improving school performance by sharing the leadership and that each teacher needs to be an

'instructional leader', focused on classroom practice. But, as already highlighted, the pattern of leadership in Woodhouse School was pseudo-distributed leadership, because in effect, leaders could only adopt a *linear* approach with possibly a minor variance subsequent actions they choose to take. However, the leader still had discretion in how he implemented a policy, even if he had no choice or input regarding the policy's development.

Because of how the individuals responded to dilemmas, where they often referred to someone in a higher position of authority, it undermined distributed leadership and often became distributed management. Accepting that the term distributed management rather than leadership is contested, the data in this study did show that responses to dilemmas undermined opportunities for a *collaborative* approach. I argue that *collaboration* presents a greater opportunity for discretion and sharing leadership and therefore distributed leadership. At best, one could say that roles were distributed as per the taxonomy of MacBeath *et al.* (2004) level one. However, once in post, all decisions tended to be taken from the head teacher utilising either a *linear* or an *urgent* response. This is illustrated where two teachers came to an agreement on an approach through discussion – which is *collaboration* – but this was overruled by the head teacher taking a *linear* approach. This then stifled the leadership of the individuals. This creates, as Cranston (2013) identifies, professional accountability rather than professional responsibility in individuals. From this example we can see individuals taking differing approaches to the dilemmas they faced.

5.7 Dilemmas in relation to individuals

The work of Shapiro and Gross (2013) draws upon the concept of 'positionality theory' to identify how individuals can experience turbulence and dilemmas. Shapiro and Gross's (2013) interpretation of positionality combines the notion of 'standpoint theory' as espoused by Collins (1997) and 'positionality theory' from Kezar's (2000) work. For Collins (1997), 'standpoint theory' is where an individual will experience things from the standpoint of a group. He refers to racial groups and their experiences of institutionalised racism. However, Harding (1997) argues that there are differing views on standpoint theory, 'these multiple standpoints on standpoint theory that are located in different disciplines and other cultures, with different interests, discursive resources, and typical ways of organising the production of epistemologies/methodologies' (*ibid*: 389). In Harding's (1997) view an individual's standpoint is informed by their culture, interests, discursive resources, and the ways in which they, as an individual, develop new knowledge. Thus, arguing that it is likely each individual will experience turbulence differently and interpret the dilemma faced differently because of their unique 'standpoint'. However, it is also suggested by Harding (1997) that because of a *shared* culture, shared discursive resources and shared ways of organising new knowledge within a *group*, leaders experience turbulence not as an individual but as part of that group. In this study, leaders at Woodhouse did not seem to have coalesced into any kind of group with a common culture, interests or-perhaps most significantly- an agreed way of developing new

knowledge, but there is some evidence of sharing interests that informed their practice.

The view of Kezar (2000) regarding positionality is that people have multiple, overlapping identities. This undermines the idea that leaders will always, therefore, respond based upon group interests. In applying positionality to 'turbulence theory', 'it is important to understand the relative situation of individuals in the organisation in a *multidimensional fashion.'* (Shapiro and Gross, 2013: 116). Essentially, Harding (1997) and Shapiro and Gross (2013) are arguing that each individual is not acting in a linear 'easily nested process' (Shapiro and Gross, 2013: 116) and understanding this helps one to account for the severity of the turbulence. This is about more than Russell's (1921) idea of individuals viewing an object, action or experience from their own perspective. Instead it is that their positionality and standpoint can affect how they experience turbulence. Adopting Russell's (1921) view, one can only get a clear sense of an object or action by taking into account other views and perspectives. In Woodhouse School there appears to be little opportunity for taking into account others' views and often the response was directed, or at best, the parameters for action were set, by the head teacher. So, not only was a leader experiencing the turbulence based upon their positionality, but they did not have the benefit of other perspectives in order to develop a response.

In Woodhouse School it is apparent that the level of turbulence experienced, and any sense of urgency was subjective. It is not possible, however, from the data, to quantify when an issue requires a *linear* or *collaborative* or even an *urgent* response because this is in the gift of the leader experiencing the

turbulence and subsequent dilemma as well as how much room for discretion they had. What the data did show is that each leader experienced and perceived different levels of turbulence and subsequent dilemmas. Light turbulence led to minor dilemmas and major turbulence created significant dilemmas. Each leader chose a different response based upon how they interpreted the turbulence and dilemma, and this is the essence of Lipsky's (2010) discretion utilised by client-facing public servants.

The work of Shapiro and Gross (2013) does not unpick how the identity of the leader or, in their terms, lead administrator, affects decision-making. This thesis does address identities and shows how in issues that are classroom-based leaders respond as teachers primarily. This study is further separated from Shapiro and Gross's (2013) work because I consider all leaders within Woodhouse School and not just the lead administrator or head teacher. In this study, leaders were given an opportunity to self-identify. The leaders in Woodhouse School saw themselves as teachers first, then leaders, and finally, managers. Not all leaders chose to identify as a manager, in fact the head teacher and the next senior leader did not. This choice to identify as a teacher first impacted upon how leaders dealt with dilemmas. They often addressed issues as a teacher and were sometimes reluctant to do so as a leader even when situations called for leadership. However, the head teacher was expecting each of his leaders to address most issues from their standpoint as a leader – though as it transpired, this was not entirely clear to them in some cases and in other instances they choose not to lead because if uncertainty. The lack of leadership by leaders in Woodhouse caused the head teacher a

dilemma, i.e. the performance of John. In the head teacher's view John was not showing adequate leadership in the matter of improving classroom practice.

The dilemmas identified were often localised and involved a few individuals. However, the responses to the dilemmas did create more widespread turbulence for others. The dilemmas flowing between the porous levels of leadership within Woodhouse School is identified with cascading (see figure 3). In Gross and Shapiro (2013), light turbulence can ascend upwards through environmental pressures. In this study, the incident discussed in some detail earlier that illustrates this well is the issue of a teacher considered by Dave not to be dealing with a student with SEND appropriately. At the time, no action had been taken, demonstrating inertia that is localised. However, if the parent/carer were to complain about the child's poor treatment, or the teacher who raised the issue were to pass the dilemma upwards to a colleague in a position of authority then it might be propelled upwards. This, then, can move on what started as a localised issue between two teachers and a student. The turbulence can increase depending upon the next leader's response; it can remain localised or become an issue that affects the whole school, because new procedures or checks on classroom performance are instigated.

Turbulence and subsequent dilemmas change as they move between leaders in Woodhouse School. For some leaders an *urgent* response to a dilemma such as improving teaching and learning across the school can evoke, for those in a different position, a *linear* response because they will follow the new guidance. In Woodhouse School failure to improve teaching and learning

grades of teachers is causing turbulence for the head teacher so he adopts an *urgent* response and issues guidelines and new expectations, which others respond to as a *linear* response. This *urgent* response was partially effective as some responded. But some leaders did not respond because it was not a dilemma or issue for them. They had no sense of urgency or indeed recognised the need to change. The inertia within Woodhouse School regarding improved classroom practice led to the turbulence increasing for the head teacher. The end result was another *urgent* response from the head teacher. But the dilemma had also become, for Joseph, the head teacher, one of damaging or not damaging a working relationship with his next most senior leader John. The resolution to the dilemma involved taking John's responsibility for improving teaching and learning away from him. Turbulence regarding teaching and learning had escalated but had also created another dilemma.

5.8 Concluding thoughts

In this chapter, I drew upon the literature review where I presented a typology of three responses to leaders' dilemmas: *linear, collaborative and urgent*. Organisational dilemmas are presented as individual dilemmas that impact upon the organisation (Morrison, 2002). The greater the number of individuals affected, the greater the impact of turbulence within the organisation. The turbulence can affect individual teachers and leaders because the decisions of one leader can create intentional or unintentional turbulence (Beabout, 2012) for others. When several individuals are affected it can become a team dilemma or whole school dilemma. A senior leader's whole school dilemma

affects the whole organisation as it impacts upon all individuals. The extra-organisational and inter-organisational level turbulence is often felt by and initiated by the head teacher, who has a role outside the organisation as a key member of the MAT.

Depending upon whom the dilemma affects and the frequency, the subsequent turbulence will either have a small, almost negligible impact on the wider organisation or a significant impact. Any dilemma affecting the head teacher can have repercussions for the whole school depending upon their response and could therefore create significant turbulence for others.

Many of the issues presented in the findings overlap into issues regarding working with colleagues. It would seem that the need for collegial working is a factor creating turbulence for leaders in Woodhouse School. Leaders want to be seen by others to be colleagues and therefore do not own their leadership roles, which creates inertia. The issue of working with colleagues raises questions about how leaders work together and whether they do function as a team rather than a collection of individuals doing similar work (Cameron and Green, 2012). If they function as a team there is greater opportunity for a *collaborative* approach. How the leaders work together also impacts upon not only how dilemmas are resolved but also how dilemmas are reported, or even if they are reported. If reported upwards the dilemma can escalate or de-escalate depending upon the response of the line manager. If the turbulence and subsequent dilemma is not reported or responded to then inertia happens, which impacts upon the school's adaptation into a school within the MAT.

The dilemmas faced by most leaders, except for those faced by the head teacher, were not directly related to becoming part of a MAT. Several did raise issues regarding new leaders and work practices. It seems the head teacher acted as a buffer preventing or reducing the turbulence emanating from the MAT affecting other leaders. However, there is one area of turbulence and subsequent dilemmas that was created by the MAT. This was related to several interviewees mentioning their face not fitting in. This can be related to the work of Hill *et al.* (2017) who studied the work of 411 leaders of UK Academies and identified leaders moving on staff. Moving on is a euphemism for encouraging staff they deemed not good enough to leave and seek employment elsewhere. This is not unique to MATs but more a consequence of new leadership of the schools in their study.

Leaders did respond in terms of a *linear* response, where they followed procedure and policy, or an *urgent* response, where they chose to act decisively due to a perceived threat to their status or the need to meet students' needs. However, not all discretionary responses were *linear* and *urgent* because when faced with an antinomy paradox, leaders chose not to act resulting in inertia (Mason, 2008). Inertia indicates the individuals in the school are not adapting (Morrison, 2002) to the new regime.

The discretionary choices by leaders shows they had four possible responses from 1) no action, 2) *linear, 3) collaborative* 4) *urgent.* Of these four possible responses, there was very little indication of *collaborative* responses. This reduced opportunities to share knowledge. However, learning was happening at an individual level and, depending upon the individual's sphere of influence,

was having an impact upon the organisation. But this was rather *ad hoc* and piecemeal and did not constitute an approach to resolving dilemmas that allowed for *collaboration* and the co-constructing of new knowledge.

Chapter 6 – Conclusion

6.1 Introduction

This study took place in a period of significant change for school leaders in many countries (Early, 2016) as they adjusted to the need for more accountability and improved outcomes with tight finances. The study shows how individual leaders responded to dilemmas that were created as an English school was integrated into a Multi Academy Trust (MAT). MATs in England are themselves a response to the need to improve schools against a backdrop of a standards-based agenda and greater accountability.

6.2 The aim

The aim of this study is to identify the impact on school leaders of change into a school within a multi-academy trust (MAT). The case study school was undergoing considerable turbulence and the school leaders at both middle and senior level were faced with challenges.

6.3 Principal Research Questions

1. How do school leaders respond to turbulence and any subsequent dilemmas in the context of academisation?

2. To what extent are school leaders able to use discretion when dealing with dilemmas?

3. What patterns of school leadership are associated with school leaders' responses to dilemmas?

6.3.1 Research question 1: How do school leaders respond to turbulence and any subsequent dilemmas in the context of academisation?

At Woodhouse School, turbulence was affecting its leaders, manifesting in the dilemmas they faced. The ways in which the leaders resolved their dilemmas impacted on the scope others at Woodhouse School had to resolve their own dilemmas, i.e. one leader's response could act to constrain the level of discretion that another leader might exercise. In addition, some dilemmas faced by leaders at Woodhouse were significant to them, but not to their colleagues.

Some of the turbulence was related to differences between leaders' spheres of influence. Leaders at Woodhouse with a small sphere of influence (they led/managed a small team) did not have a huge impact on the whole organisation when they responded to internal turbulence; but, leaders with a larger sphere of influence had the capacity to impact the whole school.

However, if a middle leader, for whatever reason, failed to deal with an issue, responsibility for it could be transferred upwards to a leader with a greater sphere of influence (e.g. the head teacher), escalating it into a dilemma that affected the whole school. In this way, internal turbulence in the school could be spread throughout the organisation, depending on how the head teacher used discretion to deal with the dilemma. Thus, a decision by the head teacher can mean the whole school is affected by internal turbulence.

Woodhouse School was becoming a new organisation, one that fitted into a MAT of several schools. This emergence (Morrison, 2002) into a MAT school

was led by the head teacher, and the senior leaders followed his lead and implemented his decisions.

The emergence of Woodhouse, from a local authority school into one within a MAT, is seen through its adoption of the MAT's expectations on staff performance in the classroom and its teaching and learning criteria. These criteria were not universally accepted amongst the staff at Woodhouse, which created dilemmas for leaders. Those leaders who did not adopt the common approach resigned or struggled because they felt their 'face [did] not fit in'. So, the school was adapting, and emerging as a school within a MAT, through a dual process of staff 'turnover' and individual leaders adapting and changing how they worked, in order to accommodate guidance from MAT leaders.

The school leaders responded to turbulence that was both external and internal. The internal turbulence was created by the head teacher as he redefined the common goals of the whole school. This internally created turbulence could be intentional or unintentional. It emanated from interactions with colleagues and students, as well as the head teacher's decisions in response to the dilemmas and issues he faced. A key dilemma was over the question of how to improve student outcomes.

Because the change had been rapid, other leaders were uncertain of the newer expectations, or their own discretional parameters, so they either checked with the head teacher, or did not respond to the issue, resulting in inertia, which disrupted the pace of adaptation and change.

At other times, leaders found they could not resolve an incident and it remained an ongoing issue. In this study an 'incident' is not something that occurs 'in an instant', but over a longer period of time. The literature (Tripp, 2012; Chell, 2004 and Fitzgerald, 2009) assumes that critical incidents happen in an instant. However, in this work, incidents are reported as ongoing issues. Therefore, critical incidents need to be re-conceptualised as 'issues' due to the extended timeframe, and the corresponding dilemmas must be viewed as ongoing and only resolvable over longer periods. For example, a dilemma created by new procedures for teaching and learning can take time adjusting to and is therefore an ongoing issue.

The dilemmas in Woodhouse were often tackled on an individual basis – there was no sharing and little chance to discuss with a 'knowledgeable other'. When a dilemma *was* discussed with a line manager, it was to get clarity over what to do, which indicated a desire for a *linear* response/approach to be imposed. When a leader wanted direction from senior colleagues and it was not forthcoming, then no action was taken. A lack of a response to a dilemma meant it remained unresolved. This case study shows how an original dilemma can escalate into something more significant after a period of inertia. School leaders and teachers were dealing with dilemmas using discretion and making the choice whether to act or not. The leaders at Woodhouse were responding to turbulence created both internally, within the school, and externally by the MAT.

The three available responses of *linear, collaborative* and *urgent* do not guarantee that dilemmas will always be resolved. Inertia can happen because

resolving the dilemma has unpalatable consequences for the leader (the antinomy paradox). The leader may wish to utilise an *urgent* or *linear* response but feel unable to, through a lack of certainty, which can lead to inertia.

Each of the leaders in Woodhouse School experienced turbulence differently. For some, such as the head teacher, it included external turbulence; but for others, it was often internal turbulence, created by the head teacher's response to his external turbulence – mainly the pressure from the CEO of the MAT to improve teaching and learning.

An external factor may require an *urgent* response, and this was often the option chosen by the head teacher at Woodhouse. A head teacher is likely to perceive threats, and therefore adopt an *urgent* response, because of the high-stakes accountability (the fear they could lose their hard-built career). The fear of losing his job and career was paramount in the mind of the head teacher at Woodhouse School and is identified in the findings as a factor in his decision-making.

6.3.2 Research question 2: To what extent are school leaders able to use discretion when dealing with dilemmas?

The discretion available to each leader was dependent upon how a more senior colleague had responded to a dilemma. At Woodhouse, teachers were expected to meet specific outcomes in their lessons; although this was not always clearly articulated to leaders and teachers (in their view). In Lipskian terms, Joseph, the head teacher, used his discretion in choosing how to achieve better student outcomes (improved student outcomes were seen by the MAT and the head teacher as vital for the future viability of the school).

The head teacher's decision/response cascaded down to other leaders, and the directives for meeting the needs of students in the classroom resulted in a *linear* response. The leaders below the head teacher at Woodhouse took the criteria for good classroom practice that the head had set and implemented his decision. It was a *linear* response because all leaders and teachers were expected to follow the new procedure. This kind of directive can reduce opportunities for discretion. However, middle leaders were not always clear on the new teaching and learning expectations, which created unintentional turbulence (Beabout, 2012), for them and those they led/managed. The uncertainty, experienced by both senior and middle leaders, created significant turbulence, and led to inertia because they were unclear on steps required to address new classroom practice criteria. Mason's (2008) view of inertia means taking no action. I propose broadening this to mean that leaders *were* responding and acting, but not effectively enough to have a meaningful impact on the school. This led the head teacher to assume leaders were not acting on his directives, an act of perceived insubordination that culminated in his deputy head teacher being demoted. It could be argued that in a system such as that of English education, policy initiatives arrive thick and fast (Burstow, 2014) and so a 'wait and see' approach is adopted. This enables the leader to assess more fully the best response. The key point is, however, that the leader has chosen what action to take, or indeed, if no action is the best option. Either way, she/he has exercised discretion. From the literature, discretion is seen as a means for SLBs to resolve dilemmas using initiative (Lipsky, 2010; Evans, 2016; Gilson, 2015). In Woodhouse School, discretion was used, but it did not

result in the dilemma being resolved, resulting in a postponement of the decision, and ultimately, inertia. Decisions were postponed until a more suitable time for leaders where the results and consequences of any decision would be clearer.

In Woodhouse School, dilemmas, and any available discretion, were bound by the context of each individual leader and the level of turbulence experienced. Often the turbulence was internal, and leaders could either use discretion, and come to their own decision, or use their discretion to follow what they interpreted as the expected response set by senior colleagues. Lipsky (2010) would argue that the latter is not a use of discretion in terms of meeting the needs of clients, but it is in terms of the SLB (leader) meeting the needs of the organisation, and their own needs, in terms of remaining in a job. When leaders felt they could not meet the needs of senior colleagues, they decided to resign. Schools such as Woodhouse, that are financially constrained, cannot afford to lose leaders and teachers, because recruitment is so expensive and suitable replacements are not always available.

The impact on Woodhouse School of leaders being unable to use discretion was, in some cases, extreme, because when they felt compromised in meeting their conception of doing a good job for clients, they resigned. This kind of thing can happen when leaders can no longer carry out their role as they would prefer; or, as Lipsky (2010) terms it, their ideal conceptions. The invisible stress – which can be considerable – placed upon leaders who feel that their discretion is tightly restricted, goes some way towards explaining the responses of Woodhouse School's leaders. Evans (2016) shows that leaders

have a sense of professionalism that is demonstrated by their imperative to meet client needs, whether directly or indirectly, so they use discretion. However, for leaders at Woodhouse, this professional imperative was sometimes countermanded by a perceived threat to their own positions within Woodhouse School. Lipsky (2010) tends to think only of front-line workers being those in client-facing roles. But in Woodhouse, all leaders are client-facing and respond as SLBs.

However, discretion, although a useful concept, does not fully account for the behaviour of client-facing leaders' work in Woodhouse School. Their roles were, in fact, much more complex and multi-faceted. These school leaders were acting as SLBs while contending with their own value systems, identities, decisions by others, and accountability, as discussed in Lipsky (2010), Thomas (2013) and Bush (2013). Discretion is seen by Lipsky (2010) as a means for SLBs to cope with the challenges they face but he does not consider the impact upon other workers and leaders. The data from this research shows how individuals who were in client-facing roles used discretion and addresses the impact of the leader's use of discretion upon colleagues and other leaders; which is different from Lipsky (2010), Loyens and Maesschalck (2010), and Evans (2016).

A significant difference in discretion as used by leaders in Woodhouse and that identified by Lipsky (2010), is that it was not always being used to address client needs. At times, it was utilised to maintain the 'status quo'. Discretion, in this work, is shown as a means for leaders to survive in an organisation, as well as addressing their values, which sometimes coalesced around meeting

client needs. In short, in this case, leaders were using discretion in three different ways: to meet the needs of clients, colleagues, and senior leaders.

The research demonstrated that middle leaders, might, at any moment, have their choices overridden by more senior colleagues with a different approach, leaving them feeling undermined. It also showed that leaders do not always choose to act, leading to a state of inertia. But in Woodhouse School, the reason for any inertia was uncertainty about the head teacher's expectations and how their actions would be perceived by senior leaders. The uncertainty reflects the antinomy paradox of Witzel *et al* (2016), where options are felt to be unpalatable. However, the antinomy paradox does not fully account for paralysis through uncertainty or an unwillingness to get the decision wrong.

6.3.3. Research question 3: What patterns of school leadership are associated with school leaders' responses to dilemmas?

The school had a structure – on paper – that reflected *pragmatic* DL, as defined by MacBeath *et al.* (2004), which is where leadership responsibility is designated in response to external pressure. However, in practice, it was little more than a structure for identifying responsibility and accountability for performance. The leaders were implementers of decisions, which is how Lipsky (2010) views front-line workers in street-level bureaucracies (SLBs). At Woodhouse, all leaders were, at times, acting as state-agents because they were implementing the organisational goals set by the head teacher. He, in turn, was responding as a state-agent in relation to directives from the CEO.

Leaders were 'free' to carry out the head teacher's directives as they saw fit but would be held to account if targets were not met. So, using Kotter's (2013)

definition of a manager, a more accurate picture of the leadership pattern in the school would be 'Distributed Management', in that the designated leaders were expected only to operationalise the head teacher's goals. The school leaders did not even represent a 'guiding coalition' (Kotter, 1996) as they were simply carrying out orders and not contributing to their construction.

The head teacher at Woodhouse was acting as an SLB in response to external turbulence from the MAT. When the head teacher used discretion to meet the needs of the more senior CEO of the MAT, he also responded as an SLB. So, in this study, even the head teacher who, relative to the other leaders at Woodhouse, was the most senior, functioned as an SLB in line with the definition emerging from the literature review.

In a Lipskian interpretation of an SLB, workers have clients. But at Woodhouse, the head teacher was balancing the needs of three sets of clients: the students, their parents/carers and also his fellow leaders/teachers. In this study, it emerged that the head teacher, in endeavouring to meet the needs of other leaders, was prioritising the needs of colleagues over organisational demands. This meant that, at times, he delayed making decisions that would impact negatively on colleagues until it became an urgent matter that could affect his status/job. The head teacher had a dilemma when balancing his priorities between the needs of his deputy and the demands of the organisation, which resulted in a period of inertia as he delayed a difficult decision. Eventually, after intervention from the CEO, he acted, which resulted in a negative impact for John, the deputy head. This indicates how dilemmas can cascade and change. Not only had the head teacher's decision impacted directly on the deputy head

teacher, but the positionality of each leader in the cascade affected how the dilemma was experienced. As this instance shows, the turbulence went from an external source, the CEO of the MAT, via the head teacher, into internal turbulence for John, the deputy head teacher.

Joseph, the head teacher at Woodhouse, as he responded to dilemmas, used discretion to meet subordinates' needs, as well as his own and those of the MAT. This aligns with Evans (2016), who argues that leaders use their own sense of professionalism when exercising discretion. In Woodhouse School, the dual role of leaders, who are at the same time teachers, makes a unique case for those in schools being studied outside the binary leader/manager versus worker position of Lipsky (2010). A key advancement of SLB thinking in my study is that it showed a leader facing the considerable challenge of being required to meet the competing needs of multiple clients.

DL, as conceptualised by MacBeath *et al.* (2004) and Leithwood and Louis (2012), was not evidenced, because if the head teacher had decided on an *urgent* or *linear* response to turbulence and dilemmas, then opportunities for other leaders to use discretion and *collaboration* would be curtailed. The lack of *collaboration* would then go on to affect the opportunities for shared and distributed leadership by denying staff the chance to take advantage of another leader's expertise. What was left, in this case, was an organisation with differing roles, implying various levels of leaders, but real opportunities for DL being constrained. In the event, the head teacher saw the school as being in a precarious position, and often executed an *urgent* response that led to others adopting a *linear* approach. This is closely aligned to Kotter's (1995) approach

to change, which can be implemented in a *linear* way. Where Joseph's strategy differed significantly from that of Kotter (1995) is that his 'guiding coalition' was undermined by his response to his dilemmas, and his directives were unclear and misunderstood. Directives not being understood, of course, is often an indication that communication in general may be ineffective, and indeed, the lack of *collaboration* between leaders at Woodhouse meant there was no opportunity for the development of a shared understanding of issues and no room to develop group-sourced, considered responses.

The other senior leaders were not acting as a 'guiding coalition' (Kotter, 1996) that contributed to the common goal, but were following the head teacher's response in a *linear* way, and merely operationalising his decisions. This does not constitute *collaboration* (Beabout, 2012), where leadership dilemmas are resolved together. Neither is it DL (MacBeath *et al,* 2004; Harris, 2008 and Leithwood *et al.* 2008); again, because there is no sharing of leadership to resolve dilemmas. And finally, it is not leadership as defined by Kotter (2013), but management. The senior leaders below the head teacher were, in fact, acting as state-agents. This kind of scenario can still improve the outcomes for students (clients), of course, but it should be understood that as state-agents their response was informed by a need to adhere to organisational directives first, as opposed to citizen-agents, who put the client's needs first.

Leaders at Woodhouse School did not work collaboratively. In fact, acting as state-agents undermined the notion of DL (MacBeath *et al.* 2004). They were cascading the head's *urgent* responses. The effect of the *urgent* response from the head teacher was a *linear* response by senior and middle leaders who

interpreted his directives as policy and new procedure. The overall outcome was that leaders at Woodhouse School had a distributed responsibility to implement but not lead.

This work has shown that, when faced with dilemmas, the head teacher at Woodhouse School either responded in an *urgent* or a *linear* way, which constrained opportunities for leadership by other leaders. So, as I showed in the literature review, DL can be facilitated or curtailed by a head teacher. At Woodhouse School however, it was *undermined* by the head teacher, who only ever responded to internal and external turbulence with *urgent* and/or *linear* responses. When *collaboration* happened between two or more leaders it was overruled by the head who took an *urgent* response. The head teacher overruling decisions not only undermined colleagues but also the basis of DL. There are, of course, times when doing so may be the right response but the consequences of overruling others must be understood by the head teacher in terms of how others' scope to enact leadership is supported or constrained.

In Woodhouse School, the head teacher's *urgent* and *linear* responses not only undermined the distribution of leadership, but also his own change agenda, because leaders were not given an opportunity to make sense of his expectations and therefore develop their responses as leaders. They were often implementing the head teacher's *urgent* and *linear* responses. The constraining of DL then impacted upon the adaptation into a school within a MAT. The impact on Woodhouse adapting to being subsumed within a MAT was because decisions taken solely by the head teacher were too easily

misinterpreted. The lack of clarity regarding Joseph's decisions was because shared understanding was not developed, therefore undermining DL.

On the other hand, it may be the case that distributed management can be useful as it creates stability (Shapiro and Gross, 2013) during a rapid period of transition. Stability has three key ingredients: steadfastness in relation to certain forces acting upon it; flexibility in the face of change; and, discernment to yield appropriately if the need arises. The third point from Shapiro and Gross's (2013) concept of stability leads us to consider a point of chaos. The chaos discussed in Mason (2008) and Morrison (2002) is seen as positive, because a school is tipped into a state of collapse or renewal. The school's regeneration into a newer, fit-for-purpose state is facilitated by chaos induced by turbulence. The stability outlined by Shapiro and Gross (2013) is not the same as inertia. Inertia is not dynamic. Stability is important, as it enables the organisation to resist turbulence. At Woodhouse, turbulence was evidenced, and the head teacher created stability as a means of protection others against severe turbulence and chaos that might have overwhelmed his school, resulting in its decline and not the hoped-for renewal. So, contrary to the view of Morrison (2002), and advocates of DL, such as MacBeath et al. (2004), a lack of shared leadership could be interpreted as the head teacher shielding others from turbulence.

Leaders at Woodhouse School were SLBs because they exercised discretion in client-facing roles. When leaders act as SLBs, it affects how they carry out their roles, which has an impact on the pattern of leadership. The fixed, binary idea of roles (being either client-facing, or non-client-facing) indicated in the

literature is not true for leaders in schools, because they do interact with clients such as parents, pupils and outside stakeholders. Therefore, it is problematic to try and describe school leaders as either leaders or teachers for this study, as so many within Woodhouse School were in dual roles. To be a teacher is to be a leader with ever-increasing degrees of responsibility. This is a view supported by Vinzant and Crothers (1998) regarding street-level leadership, where they argue that workers sometimes need to utilise leadership. But, an extension of the works of Lipsky (2010) and Vinzant and Crothers (1998) in this study is that, for leaders at Woodhouse, there is a relationship to a client. In fact, they have different types of clients, not just service users, to consider. In contrast, the literature on school leadership (MacBeath *et al.* 2004; MacBeath, 2009; Harris, 2008; Day *et al.* 2010) sees a leader in a school as having one role – that of a leader – in relation to colleagues. The literature on DL does not see the leader as having any other function other than to lead others, which contrasts with Woodhouse, where they had more than one role to undertake.

6.4 Contribution to the field of educational leadership

Although the study is set in an English school, the work can contribute to debates in any organisation facing turbulence and can apply beyond national boundaries. The literature on DL in schools reflects an interest in this pattern of leadership in the UK, North America, Mainland Europe, and Australasia. It could, for instance, be applied to my own university, where rapid change is taking place.

This study contributes to the field of educational leadership in five broad areas.

1. Patterns of school leadership

2. The development of street-level bureaucracy theory to encompass school leaders

3. The identification of turbulence and how a leader's decision can impact upon turbulence in schools

4. The debate around leadership dilemmas and paradoxes (Murphy, 2007)

5. The development of CIT as a qualitative tool in case studies.

6.4.1 Patterns of school leadership

Applying the theories of Lipsky (2010) and Loyens-Maesschalck (2010), whose focus is on 'workers' rather than 'leaders', throws light on patterns of leadership in Woodhouse School. The study aligns with Lipsky (2010) in that teachers were client-facing workers who utilised discretion in carrying out their roles. However, it also seems to support the criticism of Lipsky's (1980) work by Loyens-Maesschalck (2010), who identifies accountability and new managerialism as a restraint upon discretion. Because, at times, leaders were not always able to choose a course of action but they were, in contrast to Loyens and Maesschalck (2010), able to use discretion in areas not already subject to the head teacher's diktats. What we see in Woodhouse School is leaders' discretion reduced but not completely prevented.

My research interrogates the use of the term 'distributed leadership' to describe the pattern of leadership in schools (Harris, 2008; Day *et al,* 2010;

MacBeath *et al,* 2004; Bush and Glover, 2014). In Woodhouse School, there were instances from participants' responses that suggested leadership was shared (distributed), but often those in leadership positions were carrying out diktats from a more senior leader. I argue that the pattern of leadership in Woodhouse School would be better described as 'distributed management'.

At Woodhouse School the responses of leaders and teachers to dilemmas and antinomy paradoxes provided created fertile ground for 'opportunistic and cultural distribution' identified by MacBeath *et al.* (2004); but this opportunity was missed, and DL was restricted to distributed management. Put simply, in Woodhouse School there was a pattern of *management* rather than *leadership*. It also illuminates the problems surrounding research into leadership that relies too heavily on self-reporting from the leaders themselves. This challenges international literature on the merits of DL. This study indicates that leaders themselves can undermine the functioning of DL by their decisions and actions.

The work identifies leaders in Woodhouse School carrying out roles as teachers – frontline workers. This is in contrast to the literature of school leadership (Harris, 2008; Day *et al,* 2010; MacBeath *et al* 2004 and Bush and Glover, 2014) which separates school leaders from teachers. In Woodhouse School, the leaders had to teach; and, according to their testimony, they identified as teachers first, and leaders and managers second. So, any study of school leaders will need to consider the multiple roles/identities of school leaders.

6.4.2 The development of street-level bureaucracy theory to encompass school leaders

This study contributes to our understanding of how leaders and workers function when presented with competing needs from clients, the state/organisation and colleagues through the development of street-level bureaucracy theory. Although originating in the USA, and adopted here for a UK context, SLB theory might be applied in any environment that would benefit from understanding how workers and leaders respond to competing or conflicting demands that require a leader or worker to use discretion.

SLB, as outlined by Lipsky (2010), has been applied to teachers, but not to leaders in schools, who are shown in this study needing to use professional judgment to resolve dilemmas. In this case study, the 'binary leader/manager v worker' approach adopted by Lipsky (2010) was not applicable. Even those with significant responsibility were also in client-facing (teaching) roles and were, at times, obliged to exercise discretion in making decisions as leaders and teachers. The data reveals that all the leaders saw themselves as teachers first, leaders second, and managers third, and these multiple exposed them to a greater range of dilemmas.

The most senior leaders were the most likely to contend with whole school dilemmas, whereas those mainly responsible for a single department had fewer whole-school dilemmas but would feel the impact of senior colleagues' responses to dilemmas higher up. All levels of leaders responded to dilemmas using discretion wherever permissible.

This study begins to identify how leaders had to use discretion to balance the competing needs of the organisation, their colleagues and their clients. To do this, they acted as both 'state-agents' and 'citizen-agents' and colleague-agents. The data showed that leaders swapped between a leadership role and that of a teacher to resolve dilemmas.

In Lipsky (2010) SLBs have client needs to address under constraint from leaders. In Evans (2016) it is 'leaders as SLBs' because they also have a sense of professionalism and desire to address client needs. In Maynard-Moody and Musheno (2000), leaders can be seen as acting as citizen-agents or state-agents. Yet none of the above look at leaders attempting to navigate colleagues' needs. In this work I have identified that leaders in Woodhouse are acting as citizen-agents meeting client needs, state-agents meeting organisational needs and colleague-agents where they attempt to meet the needs of fellow leaders and teachers. A significant impact on the workload of leaders at Woodhouse was juggling the needs of the organisation, colleagues and clients (parents/carers and students). This develops the binary state-agent or citizen-agent dichotomy to a triad including colleague-agents, where leaders considered the needs of fellow teachers and leaders.

6.4.3 The identification of turbulence and how a leader's decision can impact upon turbulence in schools

'Turbulence' describes the disruption and disturbance experienced by organisations and the people within them during periods of change and transition. This work contributes to the understanding of how turbulence may be cascaded through the organisational ranks of a school. It does this by

identifying how each Woodhouse leader's decisions – and use of discretion – impacted upon the next leader or subordinate within the school. It develops upon Shapiro and Gross (2013), who assume that turbulence spreads laterally, like ripples, by suggesting instead that turbulence cascades downward. The idea that leadership decisions might cause turbulence to cascade aligns with Beabout's (2012) view that turbulence can be created internally. Although, Beabout (2012) does not sub-classify decisions and responses but talks of decisions generally. Whereas, this work does identify the nature of the decision such as *linear, collaborative* and *urgent* and how each of these can impact upon subsequent leaders' scope for discretion and the impact this has on internal turbulence. As the turbulence cascades down, the leadership response becomes more linear as the opportunity for discretion diminishes.

In this case study, the head teacher was using 'intentional turbulence' (Beabout, 2012) to disrupt existing practice and improve classroom practice. However, this led to 'unintentional turbulence' (Beabout, 2012), which disrupted the adaptation into a school within a MAT. The unintentional turbulence was created by the lack of clarity regarding expectations, and how to meet them, in terms of improved teaching and learning.

The study shows that turbulence can be utilised by leaders to foster change, as argued by Kotter (1996). But Kotter (1996) does not discuss transformational change in terms of intentional turbulence. This work does not show if a particular change model, such as Kotter's (1996), is effective, but it does indicate leaders need to be aware that the turbulence they create can have intended and unintended consequences, and that internal turbulence can

foster change and adaptations. It also shows that creating internal turbulence, with mechanisms in place for sharing expertise, increases the challenge presented by dilemmas to such an extent that inertia and misunderstandings regarding new process exist side by side.

6.4.4 The debate around leadership dilemmas and paradoxes

The study contributes to work on dilemmas and paradoxes in organisations (Murphy, 2007; Stacey, 2011; Shapiro and Gross, 2013 and Witzel *et al.* 2016) because it identifies instances where leaders were unable or unwilling to choose between equally unappealing options, which is the Witzel *et al.* (2016) antinomy paradox. These options may be unappealing because the leader is uncertain about the consequences of a decision for them and for others, resulting in inertia (Mason, 2008). The inertia of an individual may lead to a whole school's inertia. This impacts upon how the school emerges (Morrison, 2002) and how it adapts to its new context, which, in this case, is being part of the MAT. If the inertia is located within one individual or team, it will depend upon that individual's/team's sphere of influence as to how detrimental it becomes for the school. The greater the sphere of influence, such as that of a head teacher or deputy head teacher, the greater the likely impact of any inertia.

This assumption that inertia and a lack of action is detrimental to a school (Morrison, 2002), is contested by Rumelt (2017) who claims from his research of businesses, that a poor strategy can result in the business failing and that a bad strategy is sometimes worse than no strategy. It therefore follows that

inertia may sometimes be the best choice. Inertia could also be seen as an element in maintaining stability within an organisation that enables the school to resist overwhelming turbulence.

It can be argued that paradoxes are to be expected in any organisation and to assume all dilemmas and difficult choices must be resolved does not aid leaders navigating competing needs. This is particularly the case in Woodhouse, where leaders were juggling the needs of clients (parents/carers and students), colleagues and the school. This meant that leaders in Woodhouse School needed to act as citizen-agents, colleague-agents and state-agents in order to maintain equilibrium when faced with dilemmas and paradoxes.

6.4.5 The development of CIT as a qualitative tool in case studies

The research approach of an *instrumental case study utilising CIT* has been beneficial in understanding patterns of leadership. And, as is intended with an instrumental case study, it has wider resonance beyond the subject of the study. CIT allowed for a unique insight into how these school leaders saw dilemmas and either acted or remained inert. In the study, leaders in some cases referred to the same issue but from differing perspectives. It became apparent that each person perceives dilemmas through their own, individual lens, and what may seem unpalatable to one leader will be regarded as manageable by another. The ability to unpick a dilemma from differing perspectives proved invaluable to understanding how leaders navigate state-agency, citizen-agency and my own category – colleague-agency.

The research has indicated that, although using CIT is valid, the identification of incidents needs to be rethought, as 'incidents' can be ongoing over a longer period of time. The original research using CIT, by Flanagan (1954), identified incidents as short, sharp occurrences, as it focused on issues regarding a flight. However, in an organisational context such as a school, it needs to be re-developed to be Critical *Issues* Technique, because the individuals within organisations are not just faced with incidents happening in an instant or brief timeframe, but ones that are ongoing or lasting over longer timeframes. The initial incident might happen in an instant but the ongoing dilemma results in the incident becoming an issue over time.

Of interest from this work is the impact of conducting CIT research on the individuals at Woodhouse School. I would like to conduct a follow-up study looking at how reflecting upon incidents (Tripp, 2012) has, or has not, impacted upon how leaders view their role and their use of discretion. This may well mean starting with the premise that the CIT interview was the critical point that initiates reflection.

6.5 Limitations of the study

The study utilises Critical Incident Technique (Tripp, 2012), an accepted approach to collecting data to identify the work of individuals (Flanagan, 1954) in organisations (Chell, 2004). Critical Incident Technique was adapted to involve two phases of interviews. The phase one Interview aimed to build a picture of the school and how individuals identify themselves within it, which enabled a deeper understanding of the context (Thomas, 2013). The phase

two Interview, which was the critical incident interview, concentrated on incidents identified by leaders at Woodhouse School. The time between the two sets of interviews was beneficial because changes occurring at the school became more pronounced during the interim and allowed for a range of incidents to be explored.

The need for a CIT log was identified from the work of Chell (2004) and Shapira-Lishchinsky (2011) because their reliance on an individual's ability to recall salient events was a concern. I too recognised the danger that interviewees might only remember the most recent incidents. I was aware that I was interviewing busy practitioners *in situ* and time with each interviewee would be limited. I planned to use the CIT log as an '*aide memoir*'. A critical incident log had worked successfully in a pilot study, but in my study, it was not taken up as expected by many of the participants: only two of the twelve submitted theirs.

However, all the respondents in the sample used the structure of the CIT log in the phase two interviews to present their critical incidents and issues. A key element was to have a log to ensure better recall of incidents over time, and this was successful. However, utilising the CIT logs as an additional data source to interrogate was not. I would, however, use critical incident logs in future research as they did aid participants' recall of issues, but I would want to develop them further into a data source. In order to do this I would need to adopt a different approach to their collection/submission. This is because, despite every effort being made to contact participants by leaving self-envelopes for each participant and leaving my email address, the response

was disappointingly low. Because of the lack of returned CIT logs, I chose not to use them to inform the CIT interviews.

6.6 Practical Implications (recommendations) for educational leadership

The practical implications from this research can be applied to the development of my subject knowledge of organisations, such as schools, undergoing change. At my current HE institution, leadership education is an under-developed, but growing, area of interest, and is being taught across several undergraduate and postgraduate programmes. I can see implications for developing leadership capacity on the courses we currently offer to schools and organisations.

The research I have conducted has given me an insight into how I might develop curricula for my HEI's leadership development programmes. Future leaders would, in my opinion, benefit greatly from being trained in tackling dilemmas. Indeed, it should be a part of any curriculum for teachers and leaders in schools. The case study school, along with other schools, could consider utilising coaching as an additional means of developing individuals' skills in addressing dilemmas. These skills should develop as the leader is exposed to a greater range of dilemmas, which the ASCL report (2019) recommends as a means to developing ethical leadership in school leaders. However, it must be noted here that a key issue is that the ASCL report on ethical leadership in schools adopts (without identifying it as such) a citizen-agent stance. This is at odds with my work arguing that the dilemmas presented to leaders are not only from citizens but colleagues and the state.

The input from the university should be combined with practice. Schools need to ensure teachers are exposed, not only to opportunities to address dilemmas utilising technical expertise, but they should be theoretically informed as well. School leaders need to be aware of how to deliver change, and how to apply it to their context. Woodhouse School would need to look at opportunities for sharing new learning and co-constructing knowledge. Collaboration between leaders can be utilised to address issues and dilemmas at different levels. Collaboration can be where all within the school are involved, or as Kotter (1996) suggests, a guiding coalition. Woodhouse School's guiding coalition must be able to contribute ideas and thoughts in order to function as a DL team. However, at present, all dilemmas are seen as requiring an *urgent* or *linear* response. It is important that leaders understand the impact of their decisions on democratic leadership structures such as shared or distributed leadership.

Leaders in schools need to develop an awareness of how the decisions they take have an impact upon others. This is particularly true of DL, which is prevalent in English schools, but at Woodhouse, it had been allowed to diminish to simply being a management structure that denoted where accountability lay. Often the decisions made by more senior leaders' impact on the discretion others have. This impact is particularly noticeable if the head teacher makes *linear* decisions based upon what they see as priorities, without allowing others an opportunity to contribute. A head teacher who takes a critical response or *linear* response is, in effect, undermining the leadership of others.

Distributed leadership needs to be separated from distributed management. It might be useful for head teachers to consider distributed management as a stepping-stone to distributed leadership as those given responsibility begin to develop and demonstrate capability.

Schools need to look at developing professionalism, so that individuals are trusted to make the right decision at the time. To do so involves seeing all workers as potential leaders in a public service environment (Vinzant and Crothers, 1998). But any training and development needs to develop an understanding of the position of leaders in schools in particular, who, uniquely among organisations, have multiple roles. At one moment they will be classroom practitioners engaged in dilemmas, and in another, in their designated leader/manager role, they will be dealing with different dilemmas. At Woodhouse School, all leaders, including the head teacher, teach. I am not able, from this research, to identify if this is the case for leaders in all English schools.

Leadership training and academic awards need to be developed so that all school leaders, and those aspiring to school leadership, are aware of the impact upon colleagues of turbulence. Internal turbulence needs to be understood as intentional, unintentional and opportunistic. Training needs to develop leaders' awareness that externally driven turbulence can be mitigated or multiplied by their response. Leaders need to be aware that their responses to external turbulence can cascade, create or mitigate internal turbulence. Leaders also need to be aware that inertia through not addressing dilemmas can create turbulence for others. Also, that inertia is an indication of being

overwhelmed (not having the skills) and/or not having clarity regarding options and consequences.

Leaders need to be trained in how to develop and grow systems for effective *collaboration* in order to respond to turbulence and the dilemmas they are confronted with. The leaders in Woodhouse School frequently tried to grapple with dilemmas alone as they saw this as part of being a leader. If they understood impact of their responses to dilemmas on others in the school and that the quickest way of changing others might be to have all constituent parts involved in developing a way forward, then they may have acted differently he addresses some dilemmas. Involving all within a school creates the common goal and gets 'buy in' from colleagues.

A word of caution is required because it must be accepted that not all dilemmas can be responded to using a *collaborative* response. But there is an opportunity to facilitate a greater use of shared expertise and dialogue so co-construction of new knowledge can take place, which increases the likelihood of new policy and procedures being understood and enacted. The leaders in schools need to consider the scale of the dilemma and what response would be appropriate and the consequences for others. The findings in this research have helped develop my understanding of the dilemma's leaders face, and how they can respond.

6.7 Contribution to my professional knowledge of leadership and research

A combination of the results and conclusions of this study and the research skills I have acquired through conducting it will inform my teaching of my subject specialism. The research has already impacted upon how I view my role in my present institution; as I too, find I am an SLB in a client-facing role, delivering a service to clients, with a personal conception of what doing a good job is, which, at times, contrasts with my line manager's. It is important for me to develop my thinking of SLBs regarding state-agency, colleague-agency and citizen-agency in order to fully understand the complex world educational leaders inhabit.

The research I have conducted has developed my *phronesis* (tacit knowledge) as a researcher (Thomas, 2011) and (Birmingham, 2004), which will inform my teaching and research action or *praxis* (Thomas, 2011; Thomas 2016; Birmingham, 2004 and Macklin and Whitefield, 2012). I have built upon my technical (*techne*) skills of how to conduct case studies, deploy critical incident technique and use interviews as a data collection method. I have also added to my existing knowledge of thematic analysis and using Nvivo software to aid qualitative data analysis. This increased technical ability is enhanced by my theoretical understanding of research.

I have, not only gained new knowledge around dilemmas for teacher leaders, but also learned how to progress my research further, including developing an approach I will take in the future. I would like to expand this project by

understanding how the research itself did, or did not, impact upon the school and its leaders.

The main learning has come from my development as an academic, while at the same time, becoming more acutely aware of my specific learning difficulty – dyspraxia. This was diagnosed whilst on the doctoral programme and led to much soul-searching and questioning of my capacity. This soul-searching has not finished, and I am developing some work from my experience as a registered disabled worker and student. This work, related to my dyspraxia *and* being a researcher/teacher, is looking at 'Academic Ableism' (Dolmage, 2017) which addresses how HEI's are set up to meet the needs of the able majority and thus make achievement for those with a disability challenging. Undertaking work on academic ableism will aid my understanding of how to ensure I meet the needs of all students. It has been fascinating, and helpful, coming to a better understanding of myself as a learner.

This thesis has contributed greatly to my development as a practitioner, and also as a tutor of students, who I feel benefit from my greater comprehension of the research process. This new understanding leads to a personal aspiration to develop writing and research on SpLD in academia.

I am acutely aware that, as a practitioner, I need to develop my *praxis* from the *techne*, *episteme* and *phronesis* developed in this work. I have begun this journey and already presented aspects of my research at three different conferences. The next step is to develop my writing of journal articles based upon, and learning from, this research. I have become a reviewer of the international Leadership and Organization Journal to gain an understanding of

how research is developed from submission into an article. The next step is to write an article on how policy is delivered in organisations utilising the lens of SLB and citizen-agent.

I also intend to develop my thinking around distributed leadership and *collaboration*, because I see a link to Wieck's (1995) work on 'sense making' in organisations. I presented this in a paper at a recent conference and it was well received. My understanding of the theory of leadership and how it was enacted at Woodhouse School, has developed my understanding of how and when to utilise aspects of leadership), which has developed my tacit knowledge.

Lastly, I intend to write an article on being a dyspraxic academic, undertaking a doctorate utilising auto-ethnography. Auto-ethnographic research is an area for my personal development, and it will help me continue to adjust to having an SpLD and working in a competitive, academic environment.

6.8 Future research

I intend to explore new avenues, but I need to be aware of my working context, which impacts on opportunities for research. I have already presented aspects of this work at an International Dilemmas Conference and a Critical Management Studies conference and I intend to write articles and devise further presentations from this research. However, I would like to continue to expand my learning by developing new research.

With regard to the development of new research in the short-term, I am looking at three projects, two of which adopts a similar research approach developed

in this thesis and another which is a development of activity theory. First, I intend to use critical incident technique with a group of Special Educational Needs Coordinators, who are working closely with students and parents as clients, as well as teachers, senior colleagues and other professionals, such as educational psychologists and social workers.

I would then like to look at how local politicians learn from incidents and dilemmas as they contend with the demands of meeting their political party requirements and those of residents. I spent eight years as a local councillor and became very aware of the pressures of juggling resident needs, the party needs (nationally and locally), as well as those of the council as an organisation, all against a backdrop of challenging policy from national government and difficult finances. To this end, I have become a member of the Political Studies Association to help build a research network.

My final research idea will look at what happens when one organisation takes over another. Woodhouse functioned as an 'activity system' (Morrison, 2002; Staber, 2013; and Stacey, 2011). However, in Woodhouse School not all actors worked in common ways to meet commonly agreed outcomes, which undermined the effectiveness of the activity system in achieving its objectives. Some leaders, who were at the school before it became an academy, were working to pre-academisation priorities and processes. Those leaders had the most difficulty adjusting to the new ways of working. Newer leaders, and those who had adapted, were working to the new rules according to their own perception of them. But the lack of *collaboration* at Woodhouse prevented opportunities for sharing understanding of the new rules and processes

throughout the newly emerging institution. Consequently, the two activity systems were not effectively merged into one overriding system. This key point was not apparent at ground level and was leading to misunderstandings and unintentional turbulence, hindering emergence into the MAT.

Each leader was responding according to their own histories and priorities, which falls within Engestrm's (1999b) Five Principles of Activity Theory. The lack of *collaboration* affected the assimilation of leaders to newer ways of working and created unresolved tension because there was no opportunity to create new knowledge. These tensions are part of the evolutionary process for Engestrm (1999b), however, the tension created such severe turbulence for individuals at Woodhouse School that they left or intended to leave. Or, as Engestrm (1999a) identifies, tension impacted on the internalisation of new knowledge and ways of working by school leaders at Woodhouse School. In this study it has been shown that the responses by more senior leaders, plus a lack of *collaboration*, impacted upon how leaders internalised new ways of working.

The work can contribute to thinking of schools as activity systems and how leaders adapted to new ways of working. The significant element is that the change to newer ways of working was messy and inconsistent, and was hindered by reduced opportunities for *collaboration*, where new knowledge could be socially constructed. The lack of *collaboration* impacted on how quickly leaders adapted from the pre-academisation ways of working to new procedures.

In the medium-term, I could develop these two lines of research in order to consider how an individual's identity affects their leadership and responses to dilemmas. I could draw conclusions between the identity and dilemma through the lens of their biography, which can be a useful tool for career and work history.

This proposed research into leaders of SEND and local leaders (elected representatives) might lead to further enquiry into 'sense making' (Weick, 1995), which can be linked to opportunities for working together and 'sense giving' (Maitlis and Christianson, 2014). This might involve leaders outlining their visions and giving others a chance to make sense of the new rules, policies or expectations.

In the long-term I want to investigate ethical leadership, which Northouse (2016) identifies as a new and growing area. I also intend to employ the same two fields – of education and local political representation – to look at ethical leadership and extend my tacit knowledge from the work in this study on turbulence, dilemmas and leadership.

I am interested to understand a possible link between antinomy paradox and the psychology models of Kubler-Ross (2009). In her work, individuals go through stages when dealing with loss (bereavement) or significant challenges. The stages might explain the inertia as temporary whilst the individual moves through the five stages she identifies.

The focus on how individuals in organisations respond will inform my research into schools as activity systems. I am yet to develop a greater understanding

of how leaders' internalisation in relation to the external impacts upon activity system thinking.

All future research will develop my tacit knowledge, which will further inform both my practice and research in an ever-increasing cycle. This will develop me as a practitioner within the lecture room as well as a leader and consultant to school leadership teams.

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Appendices

Appendix 1 Critical Incident log

Critical Incident Log

This log is to act as an Aide Memoir of incidents you have encountered in the period of investigation. It is acceptable to bullet point content, as a follow up interview will address issues raised. Remember to **ensure your writing is anonymised** (no names). You can use terms such as parent 1, parent 2 or colleague or student 1, 2 or three. You may however want or need to identify something about them that is relevant such as English teacher 1 for example.

What is a critical incident?

Critical incidents are those that cause us to think and reflect, which leads to learning about ourselves or others (individuals and organisations), how we learn (both cognitive and experientially) and how we relate to others. Most critical incidents are not at all dramatic or obvious but commonplace events that occur routinely in education and/or professional practice. What makes them 'critical' is that they've caused us to think and reflect at this particular time. This could include (but is not limited to) any of the following situations:

- When you felt you had done something well...

- When you made the wrong decision...

- When something went better than expected...

- When you lacked confidence...

- When you made a mistake...

- When you really enjoyed working with someone/ a group...

- When you had a feeling of pressure...

- When you have responded adversely, e.g. to someone you're expected to work with...

- When you realised you did not know enough...

- When you felt unsupported...

- When you took a risk and it paid/ didn't pay off...

- When an occurrence turned out differently than you expected...

- When something challenged the way you normally think about things...

However, you don't have to have been an active participant in a critical incident. It's okay if you were an observer to some action. It may not even be a piece of action but something you've seen written, something you've experienced such as a lesson, a training event or a meeting.

A choice where there is neither a right nor wrong answer. A dichotomy is two opposing choices/views and a paradox is two contradictory choices or views that are unresolvable

In the log below are some numbered headings with prompt questions to help guide you in keeping this log. Do not feel you have to answer every question every time. Also do not feel that you need to write extensively. After the log is an example of a brief log. This log is to act as an 'Aide Memoir' for you in follow up interviews and for me to analysis the range of incidents experienced.

1. Account of the incident What happened, where and when; who was involved? What was your role/ involvement in the incident? What was the context of this incident, e.g. what led to the incident? What was your intent and focus at this point?	2. Initial responses to the incident What were your thoughts and feelings at the time of this incident? What were the responses of other key individuals to this incident?	3. Issues and dilemmas highlighted by this incident Note any dilemmas related to this incident that you experienced Outline any values and/or ethical issues which are highlighted by this incident? What took you by surprise or happened in a way you didn't expect?	4. Outcomes Were there any outcomes of this incident for the various participants? Including yourself Are there ways in which this incident has led (or might lead to) changes in how you think, feel or act in similar situations? Have your thoughts and feelings changed now about this incident?	5. Learning What have you learned, e.g. about yourself, your role/s colleagues others involved in the incident or the school? What future learning needs have you identified as a result of this incident? How might these be achieved?
Incident 1				
Incident 2				
Incident 3 there will be more in the eventual pilot once this is given the okay.				
Example: The Critical Incident log is referring to a taught session the student experienced on a social work course in Scotland.				

Account of the incident - During the third Problem Based Learning Group I found myself feeling very frustrated and began disengaging from the group.	Initial responses to the incident - I initially could not understand why this was.	Issues and dilemmas highlighted by this incident - After the session I reflected on what was making me feel this way and realised that it was because things were not moving fast enough for me. I felt the group were spending too much time on one issue and were not able to move on.	Outcomes - I decided I would not allow myself to leave the session feeling this way again but would share it with the group and suggest ways of moving the discussion forward.	Outcomes - I decided I would not allow myself to leave the session feeling this way again but would share it with the group and suggest ways of moving the discussion forward.

Adapted from: Evaluation of an Innovative Method of Assessment: Critical

Incident Analysis January 2005

Appendix 2a – Interview 1

(Transcriber's note: did not put in the intro conversation. The key is Interviewer – I: Interviewee – R. Also, where there is (**Bold)** in the middle of an answer, this is where you have acknowledged what is being said but without a definite interruption).

I: Thanks for agreeing to take part in this research. This is the first interview, ehm, and you've agreed to informed consent, excellent. So, job description?

R: I'm Faculty leader at **** School for Technology.

I: Years in teaching, how long have you been teaching?

R: Oh, my goodness gracious me I have taught for 16 years.

I: Years in this school?

R: 8, this will be my 8th year.

I: Your 8th year yep oh right OK with that. So, highest qualification?

R: Erm a degree, Honours Degree.

I: Excellent. Now we get on to the ones where there's slightly more to say. Erm what's the purpose of education for you?

R: Erm I would say the purpose of education for me is really to first of all to help guide students to, to their future really and erm give something back that I got actually from education to be honest with you. I think I had a good guidance into where I wanted to go and everything, and I think they steered

me in the right direction, and I'd like to give that back. I'm there to be sort of a supportive, supportive role.

I: So what do you mean by support, what would you mean by supportive role, what does that mean for you?

R: Well, well in, a lot, a lot of students weren't as privileged as what I was as a child and I think if I can pass on some of those things that I've learnt and nurture students in a way to guide them if they are if they are less em if they haven't got the opportunities that I've had then maybe I can help them to get those opportunities.

I: Yeah and I assume those opportunities in terms of are like careers and em.

R: Yeah.

I: Good, OK, yeah. So why did you become a teacher?

R: I've always wanted to teach, from a very young age. Before I did my GCSEs, I knew that I wanted to be a teacher.

I: Unusual.

R: Yeah.

I: So, you straight through university straight to teacher training?

R: I did yes.

I: Oh right. Why do you choose to gain promotion?

R: Erm fulfilment I think, I think I was ready to go on to the next step and I think I was ready to, erm to take on those challenges.

I: And what did you see those challenges as being?

R: Ooh erm, developing the curriculum for a start, and actually getting it into em what we would call today's em world, em keeping up with innovation and things and technologies em and obviously steering the curriculum to best suit the students and em there was something else I was gonna say I've completely forgotten what it was, oh management of staff, getting them to go where I want them to go and to be you know to create an excellent working environment for both students and staff alike.

Guess that you've had very different answers haven't you from everybody or have they all been similar?

I: Any further aspirations to lead or teach in other ways or teach elsewhere or?

R: I would like to be an outstanding teacher, overall to be continuously outstanding for me now. Erm, maybe to become a lead practitioner.

I: And when you mean by lead practitioner how do you see that role?

R: That will be em guarding teaching and learning em across the school to improve it to outstanding. (Pause) One thing I will say is, erm had, as, as a mother, I think because I've had children and they're still quite young, I think my aspirations would have been slightly different had I not had children 'cos I was quite career driven to begin with, and that, I've taken a step back from that now so I've kind of hit the I've hit the place where I think I'm gonna be comfortable at with having children as well and that lead practitioner is

something that has stemmed from that role had I not had the mother role I would have gone probably for something different, there you go.

I: Right, how do you see your role in the school and what is your key focus?

R: My key focus is to erm at the moment it's to try and improve the GCSE results. Erm we've had a few years where we've had people go off erm long term sick and we've had lots of erm cover and things like that come in so we've sort of hit a low at the minute, so the idea is that we try to improve that over the next few years.

I: Do you consider yourself to be a teacher, a manager or a leader, and why?

R: A combination, I think it's a combination. Number 1 I think I'm a teacher 'cos I still do a lot of teaching, Em I think it's key I think it's very important to have your feet in the classroom as well so em otherwise sometimes I think you lose what teaching is about and what's important to teachers. I'm a manager because I manage support staff, i.e. I've got a technician and leading, in that I'm leading where I want the faculty to go and I'm leading by good practice and ideas and keeping up to date with everything in em the education system.

I: Now why did you choose to say you're a manager because of support staff and you didn't use, you didn't refer to teachers? Was that just a phrase or were you just deliberately excluding teachers?

R: I do manage them, I think, I think I am very I'm very lucky in that the teachers that work beneath me I usually use the on a par but, they're all very

good at what they do and I don't have any problems with managing them probably so that's probably why I've just kind of left them out. I say I say what I want, and they go off and do it absolutely fantastically and I never have any worries that you know I check up and it's all done so if you see what I mean.

I: Yes, good, no I just wanted to be clear on that point

R: Had it been a different scenario where was people in there that I needed to be managing all the time then that's a yes so I mean I'm managing the other people all the time but they you know they're doing very well so.

I: What aspect of your role takes up the most time?

R: OH, Paperwork.

I: And what do you mean by paperwork?

R: I would say ehm it would be planning, and it would also be reviewing.

I: And when you mean reviewing do you mean reviewing students' work or schemes of work?

R: Reviewing staff and where the faculty is at.

I: Ah.

R: That would include ehm looking at each other's marking or me looking at their marking to make sure that's OK, doing drop-ins, lesson observations and being able to review that and bring that up and look at areas of improvement so you can, self-evaluation that's what it would for the faculty.

I: You haven't mentioned being a form tutor, are you a form tutor?

R: I am a form tutor yes.

I: And does that have any impact?

R: I think as a faculty leader I think it would be good to not be a form tutor, because I think sometimes you, you need to be chasing things up that have happened maybe in other classrooms, **(yeah)** and as a as a leader you need to be picking those up so and sometimes you're stuck in that **(yeah, yeah)** it you know I do like being a tutor but sometimes if there's if students haven't turned up to detentions and they're from other subject areas, then I need to be going in and picking those up during the morning so.

I: So, what's the leadership structure of the school and where do you see yourself fitting in?

R: I would class myself as a middle leader, and you've obviously got the senior leadership team above me.

I: And who is below?

R: who's below? The teachers.

I: So, where does the head of house fit in?

R: Level with me.

I: But when you're thinking in terms of like head of department, that would be someone below you?

R: Below me yes. There aren't that many heads of department in the school there's more well it might be starting to change now but there's more err heads of faculty.

I: Room for a Faculty system OK.

R: We haven't got any heads of department in my area.

I: Who are you accountable to?

R: Mr. *** who's my line manager, who's the deputy head.

I: And no one else?

R: Em and it would be my head of house as well em Mr. ***.

I: Can you act with discretion in your role? And what I mean is do you have some choices about what you do and how you do it?

R: Yes.

I: And what aspects?

R: The curriculum

I: Yes

R: Ehm in house, although there is a structure for discipline for the students, we're able to, to do that within our own faculties and set that as we wish so, for example it might be em we'd decided within the faculty that if it's three homeworks on the trot that aren't handed in although ehm subject staff will give detentions, it would be an automatic detention with me,**(right)** as well as what the school would be as well so we sort of add things in so there's that type of thing. Ehm what other things could I act with discretion? Ehm I can't think now I think that's it for the minute, I might come back to that one.......I think contact with home as well quite often I feel as though I'm able to just, unless obviously there are certain circumstances where you can't, I do feel as

though I'm able to contact have contact with parents and carers as and when I wish.

I: So what would be the strengths of the school at the moment?

R: It's quite a small school em which I think has a nurturing approach for the students, Ehm another strength would be the behaviour actually, behaviour in the school's very good, em, I think we have a good sense of community, I think all in all there's quite good provision in terms of what the school looks like, you go, you know it's got a nice feel about it, it's well kept it's well maintained. Ehm I can't really comment at the minute on the structure of staff and things because obviously it's being changed, do you see what I mean? So I can't really comment on that….. I mean in the 8 years that I've been here there's been a lot of change so.

I: What would be the weaknesses for you?

R: Lack of a sixth form, so I don't think students have focus on their achieve, well they haven't got an eye well sometimes they tend to go towards ah I'll just get a level 2 or a level 1 in something so I've only got to get Es and Fs to get into college, whereas I think if they've got the aspiration there of other sixth formers and then you know then it's almost guides and dangles a carrot slightly into where they should be going. So it's aspirations yeah. Em, the other thing I would say is a downside is because it's a small school, I think that the there's more pressure put on staff because of workload. There's more work load generally for members of staff I came into the job from a very big school thinking, oh it's gonna be really easy, but because I'm the only person in my

area you have to do absolutely everything you can't spread that work load across anybody else. Ehm and also I would say maybe the provision of extra-curricular activities, sometimes GCSEs are the most important thing, ehm in the eyes of outside ehm and obviously for students ehm and obviously teachers as well but I think sometimes that overrides giving the younger students an opportunity to actually em enrich themselves.

I: So, there's only one of you and if you've got to run a club then it's gotta be a GCSE club rather than a year 7.

R: Yeah.

I: OK I understand. Opportunities?

R: Opportunities with regards to

I: Well could be yourself, it could be the school, it could be the students it's.

R: What Bad Opportunities or goods opportunities?

I: Good opportunities.

R: Ehm are we looking at myself here?

I: You can do.

R: I think the opportunities the good opportunities for the school is now that we've joined with the ****I I think there's opportunities to ehm, for a start go up in the career ladder, but also to be able to share resources more fully with em with other schools and it's almost given me a sense that we're slightly larger

now so I can collaborate with other members of staff rather than it just being me.

I: Do you have someone from the other school coming in?

R: Yes, we have a new assistant here teacher that's starting in September who's in charge of technology across all key stages including primary school.

I: Is that's across the whole academy trust?

R: The whole of the academy yeah.

I: Threats?

R: I can't really see any threats.

I: That's fine.

R: I'm quite comfortable at the minute. Apart from having to prove yourself to another new head teacher, I would say so you feel as though you're starting at the bottom and you've got to prove yourself again and I've been here quite a few times with new head teachers.

I: You've had several new heads, have you?

R: Do you see what I mean, and you always start at the bottom and you've gotta prove yourself again ehm so that's the only thing I would say. It's not really a threat it's just I've got to do it again.

I: OK finished there. Any questions for me?

R: Nowhere is this where is this leading to? With regards to

I: Well hopefully I'll get a doctorate out of it eventually, that's for me personally. The other thing that I'd like to get from this is I'd like to actually get a better understanding so I can apply it in different contexts, not just schools, but you know in councils or other organisations, about how people learn from particular challenges

R: Right.

I: And actually how that learning then informs their actions. But I don't see their actions as being em value free.

R: Yes.

I: So when people are making decisions and they're in a dilemma, one person's dilemma may not be another dilemma for somebody else because you've got different sets of values

R: Yeah.

I: And different sets of aspirations. So that's what I'm looking at. How does someone who's got that theory and that knowledge come together to make that decision and get it right and how's that somebody else has got the same and get it wrong. Yeah? That's what I'm looking at.

R: Yeah, cool. Thank you.

I: No problem. OK so as I say you can get a chance to when I do get around to typing all these things up you can see what it is that's been, we discussed.

R: Yeah.

I: Em obviously when you look at the transcript, you'll see bits and you'll think, ooh I thought I said it better than that, or did I really say that? But it gives you

R: I think I rambled actually.

I: No, you'll find that I ramble when I'm asking the questions so it's not, it's a two-way street there so you just go through and say yeah no what I was trying to say was

R: Right OK Yeah.

I: So maybe the fact that you weren't as clear as you thought you were.

R: Yeah.

I: So that's what it will be. Yeah? Is that all right?

R: Yeah.

I: 'cos I don't want to misrepresent what anyone's said, and it may be that I've read something that you've said, when it's been written out, and interpreted it a certain way and say well actually if you read that and that you can see that I did mean it like that OK so I'll change my analysis is that all right?

R: Yeah does that come directly to me or does that go to?

I: No one else sees it. The only person that sees HoC3 is you.

R: Right OK cool.

I: And you won't see anyone else's.

R: Right, lovely.

I:	I think 'cos that's part of the informed consent. Right so when I come back in September for the other ones, I can show you, this is what I've come up with so far, you can question it or change bits or we can discuss bits. Is that all right?

R:	Yeah, no problem.

I:	'cos I'd rather get to what the person really meant than misinterpret what the person has said. Is that OK?

R:	Yep no problem, so I'll see you in September.

Appendix 2b – Interview 2: CIT Interview

CIT Interview John (08.01.16)

(transcriber's note: did not put in the intro conversation. The key is Interviewer – I: Interviewee – R.

I: Right, so if you'd like to outline ehm … either an incident or several incidents you've had to contend with this academic year.

R: Ehm … I suppose really the main incident which I've had, which I would refer to as being a critical incident was something which happened to me rather than I had any sort of well I would call control on instigated. On reflection I suppose I did instigate it but … err etc. which is the fact of a meeting which I had with the head teacher ehm where we discussed roles and responsibilities and then from that there was a change to my responsibility within the, within the school and my role. Ehm and that came about from … from my point of view, from nowhere and so that's what makes it, to me, a critical incident because therefore I had to think on my feet and reflect on what I had, sort of thing.

I: So, there was no prior warning about what the meeting was going to be about or you hadn't got any indication that something was going well or not?

R: Ehm … we'd had … I was … (???) we had a discussion about, about the main aspect of my role, which was Teaching and Learning and discussed the fact that … ehm … teaching and learning wasn't moving as good as we wanted it to as a school, but that's something that we'd discussed on numerous occasions. It was something which, which, which we had discussed, and it was

commonly agreed … ehm … or it was or it was the common thought. It wasn't a case of the fact that your leadership's not happening, the fact that, or my impression was that, as a school it was not happening and not necessarily the fact of being part of my job description it wasn't happening. Ehm, I'd had various letters from various people within the organisation congratulating me on the hard work that was being done, etc. etc. so therefore, from my point of view … yes it wasn't moving as quickly as we wanted it to as an institution but it wasn't necessarily moving as quickly as we wanted it to because of the fact it was something I was or wasn't doing that was the impression I had. We'd had a conversation ehm … about the fact that … ehm … the head teacher was going to take on the lead of this, which was, which was understandable, which was a strategic decision ehm, I completely understood, I completely agreed with it etc. and that we would be working together on it. Ehm, so I was asked to go away and think about what our new approaches would be, where we could go next. Went away, worked on that over the weekend; to have a meeting early the next week, which didn't occur. We then did have another meeting with … ehm … another colleague and myself and the head teacher and at that point was told the fact that my role was completely changing, which was a shot out of the blue so I, I thought that there was a change, yes to the leadership of it **.** I understood strategically why that was happening, thought I was taking an active part in this, had gone away and rehearsed what we needed to do next, to have a meeting and then just to say it was something different so … that was the critical thing

I: Yeah, and I can see that. Now when I … I mean … can I just, I've got to unpick what you mean by colleague, because for some people when they use that term colleague they mean someone from Burnt Mill Academy (no, right)

R: It was the, the Assistant Head

I: An Assistant Head here?

R: The Assistant Head here.

I: I can't recall discussing a Teaching and Learning aspect, so was that a part of your role at that time, or was that just from September?

R: No, when I had, when I initially … the advert for the job which I applied for was for the Teaching and Learning curriculum, right. I joined the school under the previous head teacher. That's what my role was. That continued through, so the main aspect of my job has always been teaching and learning. So, improving teaching and learning is the crux of it so when we had … when I had the discussion with 'S' about the fact of it, it wasn't progressing where … and which I'd had a number of discussions about it. I always came back to – I can't get to it. You know what I mean, because of things such as safeguarding and other things that I had to do, etc. If you … I mean I'd had a discussion with him about the fact of whether or not I was the right person to do the safeguarding if you wanted teaching and learning to progress, etc. etc. etc. . Ehm … so it was common knowledge that we weren't moving at the distance and speed we wanted to but from my point of view, I thought there were realistic reasons for why that was the case. … As I say, when we got to the

change which happened, and that was a meeting between, where 'A' the Assistant Head, myself and 'S' was there and our roles were discussed … ehm … at that point something completely different to what I expected was said. I came out of there and when you look at the fact of what you want out of critical incident, you know the critical incident, you know that's where that all comes from and then reflecting upon the fact of well why has that been said reflect on the fact of how I was feeling, reflect on the fact of what my way forward what, what my way forward is professionally and personally, and that's why I chose sort of the crux of things, it ticks the after box(?)

I: So how have you started to unpick this, and how have you started to make sense of this, or have you not and have you just parked it to one side and cracked on with all the other things?

R: I mean … I've got to say, I mean, when it initially happened I sat through the experience of the meeting and didn't say anything **or** respond. Ehm … and sort of went back to a reptilian sort of thing you know, and chose to just be invisible to be quite honest and to get through this experience and go away and think. Ehm … reflecting on my long drive home, ehm, as to why this had happened, what had happened, what this meant … ehm … and decided that we had three days before the end of the academic – not the academic year, three days to Christmas and ehm, therefore not to voice my concerns and keep my mouth shut until I had calmed down enough personally not to say some … professionally, which would be not helpful. This was a, this was a professional thing, not a personal thing ehm … I don't believe for one second that the relationship that I have with the Head has changed or anything like that, it … it

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… personally this is a professional decision, a strategic decision, I understand why the decision has come forward in a certain regard but it hurts sort of thing. Ehm … so when I reflected over the holidays as to why this had come about I can understand completely why it's come about with regards to we need to get results. One way to get results in teaching and learning is the teaching staff need to improve. They're not improving at the pace it needs to. All of that, all of the boxes I can tick, I can understand, I can comprehend. The fact that now things which have been put in place, to me for more rapid improvements are things which I was told I couldn't do. Err, things I was told that, not now, later … ehm … that certainly is my thought process on the fact of what's happening to be quite frank. Ehm … I've been given, in my role now, ehm, something which I have professionally tried to – not to avoid – **(laughs)** I've ticked that box several years ago and thought I'd ticked it, so I've now got pastoral behaviour. Ehm … I have no interest at all in pastoral bar the fact of the wellbeing you know the safeguard side … it's not my interest at all, but thought, no actually I've got to look at this from a positive, which is the fact that this is an experience which I would never have chosen to put myself in so therefore I need to actually do some … do something positive with it. So I have sort of put my toys back in the pram and sort of decided the fact that I have actually, on reflection, been forced to … as with the safeguarding … take on responsibilities and roles which I wouldn't necessarily have taken. Moving forward … ehm … I've told the Head I'm leaving … ehm … but between now and then it will give me experience of something which I would have chosen not to get so, I do see it as being … there are positives to it. But it's not for me.

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I: How much latitude were you allowed in your teaching and learning leadership role to implement things and drive change forward, or was it a case it was always, it had to be err … counter-signed?

R: Err … the (pauses) I was basically allowed to do whatever I wanted to until I came to do it. So the description would have been the fact that, you know, I could pretty do much as I wanted ehm … or we would discuss things, etc. ehm … the Head or whoever would raise that fact of what needed to happen ehm … or there would be a deadline for that and normally a day or two days before that I would get completely different instructions or it would be whatever was gonna be prepared had already been prepared in a different format etc. so, to be quite frank, it got to the point where we'd have a discussion, I'd put forward what I wanted to do – is there actually any point in it action and that because I know two days before I'm gonna get a different version or … etc. and I think that's part of my reflection of why I haven't really necessarily … I have been frank with the Head but I haven't probably been as frank as I possibly could have been because I don't think it necessarily serves a purpose apart from me sounding bitter and twisted, if you know what I mean . So, when I've reflected on what's happened here with it, it has been … my wife teaches as well and she's … err … err … err … an Associate Principle at a school, so we've talked this through on the level and it is that idea about the fact, as you say, that reflection to reflect on the fact that actually, reflecting personally what do I think? Reflecting professionally, what can I do and what should I do? And they are two different animals.

I: How you are getting feedback from different people about yourself as a professional and a person and about your career aspirations, and actually, that's making it a sticky situation

R: Yes, well because, up until … up until the incident I had been led to believe, I inferred from what had been said, the fact that I was doing the job that I had been asked to do, that I was doing a good job … ehm … it then manifests itself that I obviously hadn't. When I challenged the situation with regards the fact that if I'm not doing a good job I don't ever get a reply, we talk around it so we never get a yes or we never get a no. But yes, personally this hurts … a lot … ehm … professionally I feel as if I'm … it's been portrayed to the staff that was a hole that I've filled … because nothing's been said apart from, you know, he's no longer doing this.

I: So when it comes to the impact of who's being asked to relinquish (?) their role, it's been you and not those people?

R: Mmm, mmm. I still line manage them. Ehm … I don't go up to the same meetings that they go to ehm, but I still have to line manage them. Ehm …

I: And they're still in those roles?

R: They're still in those roles

I: What learning … how are you going to think about the way you will function in your new role in the light of what has happened to you in this role?

R: Yeah. I think I need to be far more directed with the fact of when I am unhappy or when I see potentially … potentially there's going to be an issue; so in the past where … in this occurrence, where we've agreed something and

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that has been changed I haven't necessarily stood up at that point and said 'no sorry, this is what we agreed. I'm quite happy for you for it to be changed if you're line manager, you're my boss then you have the prerogative to make that change. But this is what we agreed'. And I think that's what I haven't done, so the fact that I haven't challenged … in the right way. I haven't challenged that fact that actually you're saying this is my job, you're saying the fact that this is what we're gonna do. You agreed with what my methodology is and what my direction is now you're changing it, now you're micro-managing the situation Ehm, and I think that's what … I need to, I need to learn from this as to be more … not objectionable … but to raise the fact of 'am I right, am I wrong? If you tell me that I'm wrong then just tell me I'm wrong and then, and then I can do something with it. I think that's really the main thing.

I:	So there is issues there about the communication, there's issues about the accountability; and who actually has responsibility and how that works forward. Now, with this other issue that your role of line managing

R:	At present it's not because of the fact that we're very new into the change. Ehm, I think I'm going to have to be far more reliant on my personal relationship that I have with them rather than my professional relationship and work … and have to rely on the fact of hopefully they know who I am, what I am and what I stand for; what my value system is rather than necessarily anything else ehm, which … because of the work relationship I have with them at present is fine but longer term wouldn't be in my opinion because of … you start to run professionalism, you know what I mean and, and, and that sort of side of it and I would, I would worry about that. Not the fact that I don't want to

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be their 'friend' (in inverted commas) but it's the fact that I work with these people and at the end of the day I know the fact that if they're not doing … they're not pulling their weight I need to challenge them, the same as they need to challenge my thinking; and I don't think you can do that necessarily on a basis of one of personal rather one of professional

I: Yeah, yes, but it's also part of the fact that if you're challenging them about their role, about their impact on teaching and learning

R: I don't really know because I'm not involved in that

I: So how's it working in terms of you working with the group internally and, I assume you have to liaise with people at Burnt Mill?

R: Ehm … well I think in some ways that, that again is the crux of one of the issues, the fact that, I mean, I, I think I mentioned this last time when I spoke to you. I don't necessarily appreciate, understand where we as an organisation fit into the wider Trust and therefore where I as an individual fit into the wider Trust so most of the dealings that I'm having with these … with anybody outside is almost a sort of …. liaising with them necessarily rather than directing them because the fact that when you direct, what I've found when I direct, they don't do and there, but there's no repercussion, there's no avenue for me to … . It's all a bit of a sort of learner, really.

I: So it, so it …

R: I'm finding this, I'm finding this, I'm just twisting but I'm not. I've thought about how I've arrived here if it makes sense…..I think that there has been, there has been a while but when you have one part of the organization, which

is significantly larger than the others it's a powerful advantage … it just pulls rank effectively or that what seems to … appears to happen, but again you're on the outside looking in. You don't necessarily know that's actually what happens, but … that's the (peach?) of it. So therefore it does become organic and it does become this evolving thing, but I don't think that was necessarily meant to be from the onset.

I: So, do you find yourself in more than one … role, or acting as more than one persona in different situations?

R: No and I think that's probably where it's not working. I think I've taken … I think, when I look backwards, I think I've probably taken a slightly more simplistic view and worked on having always worked in an institution which is an institution and it's all in one place and everybody knows you the way you are with within the structure etc. I think I've operated in that same way ehm … and it doesn't work here. It doesn't, it doesn't work for the fact that … I don't think it's necessarily that you need to be masquerading as something else, but I think the fact that you need to in some ways mirror what they are seeing … ehm … I think the leadership and management style here is different from the leader and management style within other schools within the Trust, within the Trust and I think the fact that in order to get the best for people you may need to revert to what they are expecting to see. So where their home institution is, they tend to see a more abrupt or a more abrasive or a more directed approach then maybe to get what you want out of them you have to mirror that, ehm, and I think that is potentially where I took the brunt ...

I: How do you unpick what the different organizations want and how you are expected to behave in those …?

R: Because there's the other side of the fact that you're only … because we stand, geographically slightly removed from the rest, where the rest of the Trust is you don't … you're not as heavily involved, or potentially you could be if you were geographically closer because of the logistics, more than anything. So therefore a lot of what you are perceiving as happening, or perceiving as the direction of the Trust is perception, it is hearsay and is their party, you're not immersed in it so therefore it does become a challenge to work out the fact of, is actually that's how the behaviour is or is that just the fact of someone's happy there or someone's not happy there or whatever, so and you're picking up various sort of nuances, not necessarily being immersed in it yourself and seeing first hand, actually this is what it's about. …Yeah, in, whether he, not say a better person, but someone behaving in a different way or carries it in a different way would get any further, I don't know and you don't know. You can reflect on what it is and you can change, but what I would say is the fact that it does give me an opportunity to … develop and explore areas which I have chosen to ignore, to one side a long time ago, for instance therefore, so there are benefits, there are positives to it, but it has taken four weeks to get there.

End of interview

Appendix 2c Coding of first interview using thematic analysis

I used Fereday and Muir-Cochrane (2006), Saldana (2009) and Braun and Clarke (2006) to develop an approach to coding analysis.

Thematic analysis uses extended phrases or sentences rather than simple codes. In my view one could develop the phrases into codes by adding this as an additional step.

Braun and Clarke (2006) argue that thematic analysis should be seen as a method of analysis in its own right rather than a tool within grounded or phenomenological analysis. They also argue that thematic analysis can be inductive 'Bottom up' or theoretical/deductive 'Top down'. Fereday and Muir-Cochrane (2006) argue that it can be both. This emphasis on both ensures data is fully engaged with. The use of the term 'emerged from the data' implies an inductive approach. However according to Braun and Clarke (2006) this is often not discussed or expanded upon by researchers. Braun and Clarke (2006) also argue that analysis adopts a constructivist epistemology if one 'seeks to theorize the sociocultural contexts, and structural conditions' (*ibid*: 85).

I have adopted Braun and Clarke's (2006) step-by-step process but with Fereday and Muir-Cochrane's (2006) use of both the inductive and deductive to ensure the data was fully engaged with and coded. I have also included an adaption of Fereday and Muir-Cochrane's (2006) Coding Manual.

Step 1: Familiarisation

This involved taking notes at the time of interview. This was done in 'soundnote' (a Mac based application) and a pdf is created that identifies at what time that particular statement was made. I listen back to the whole recording paying attention to key items identified in the notes. The recording was then transcribed and read through.

Step 2: Generating initial codes

This is in the transcript.

Step 3: Searching for themes

Create a thematic map.

Step 4: Reviewing themes

- Vision

- Teaching and Learning

- Follow beliefs

- Student achievement

- Student life chance

- Enforcer

- Accountability

- Visible

- Walk the talk

- Desire to lead

- Ability to lead

- Like subject

- Like teaching

- Like students

Step 5: defining and naming themes – Coding Manual adapted from Fereday and Muir-Cochrane (2006)

Obviously once all interviews are looked at these codes might change/ increase in number/shrink in number.

Code 1	
Label	Vision
Definition	This is the vision for the school (Kotter, 1996)
Description	This is the ability of the teacher/leader to create a unifying easily understood vision that others buy in to
Code 2	
Label	Teaching and learning
Definition	Effectiveness of teaching and learning
Description	How good are teachers at delivering good lesson that engage the students and enable the students to reach their potential
Code 3	
Label	Follow beliefs
Definition	The teacher/leader beliefs regarding the purpose of education
Description	This is what the teacher/leader sees as the core of what teaching is for it encompasses what is right and wrong for them
Code 4	
Label	Student achievement
Definition	Good student grades
Description	Students achieving their potential but importantly hitting targets showing development at the school in line with national expectations
Code 5	
Label	Student life chances
Definition	Students having the skills to adapt to a world of work
Description	Enabling students to not only fulfil potential but enable them to have a good quality of life.

Code 6	
Label	Enforcer
Definition	Enforcer of school rules
Description	This involves ensuring others are accountable for their actions and follow rules. This applies to teachers and students

Code 7	
Label	Accountability
Definition	This is who the teacher/leader is accountable to
Description	This is about being accountable for your work and those that you lead including the students. It is also about who you are accountable to and from what aspect of your role

Code 8	
Label	Visible
Definition	Being seen
Description	This involves being seen and approachable. It also links to being a role model

Code 9	
Label	Walk the talk
Definition	Being able to do what you are asking others to do
Description	Teachers like to know that those who lead can actually do the job as well. As a leader you must set an example for others to follow. You must behave appropriately and achieve good results from students and lesson observations

Code 10	
Label	Desire to lead
Definition	Awareness that one wants responsibility and promotion
Description	This is where the teacher/leader shows a willingness to take responsibility for actions and leading others. This is a pre-requisite of MacBeath et al. (2004) Taxonomy of Distributed Leadership. In particular cultural and opportunistic distributed leadership

Code 11	
Label	Ability to lead
Definition	Having leadership skills/qualities
Description	This is belief that one can and does lead. It is about the individual feeling they are a leader or developing further leadership capability

Code 12	
Label	Like subject
Definition	Enjoy curriculum specialism
Description	This is someone who not only loves their subject but imparts the love of their subject to others
Code 13	
Label	Like teaching
Definition	Likes all aspects of teaching not just being in the classroom
Description	Enjoys engaging and challenging others to achieve
Code 14	
Label	Like students
Definition	Compassion for students
Description	This is the ability to see students as individuals and show you care for their welfare

Step 6: is producing the report

This is the outcome from this phase of the research.

Appendix 3a Consent Form to conduct research

Information for UEL sponsored research for the participant school head teachers

University of East London

Stratford Campus, Water Lane, London E15 4LZ

University Research Ethics Committee

If you have any queries regarding the conduct of the programme in which you are being asked to participate, please contact researchethics@uel.ac.uk

The Principal Investigator

Dr Gerry Czerniawski

Cass School of Education and Communities

Stratford Campus

Water Lane

Stratford

London E15 4LZ

Tel: +44 (0)20 82232221

Email: g.czerniaski@uel.ac.uk

Consent to Participate in a Research Study

The purpose of this letter is to provide you with the information that you need to consider in deciding whether to give permission for school leaders to participate in this research.

Project Title

Investigation into how leaders in a recently academised school deal with organisational dilemmas

Project Description and Background

This research will look at how leaders in schools learn from dilemmas and paradoxes. In this work a paradox is unresolvable dilemma.

Aim of the research

The proposed case study will investigate school leaders' responses to organisational dilemmas and how this contributes or inhibits professional learning. The case study will lead to further understanding of how school leaders and teachers develop and learn in complex systems. Leadership will be investigated from a perspective of individuals and their interactions in relation to others highlighting their interdependencies, learning and challenges faced by teachers and leaders in a rapidly changing education environment.

Methodology and Methods

Research Plan Overview and Proposed timescale:

Stage 1: Identify leaders and gain participant informed consent. Critical Incident logs will be explained.

Stage 2: The leaders will be keeping a brief log in the form a critical incident log. The focuses will be on dilemmas and paradoxes that constitute critical incidents. Critical incidents are an opportunity to learn without the risk of harming others.

Stage 3: The semi-structured interviews take place. It will also enable identification of interdependencies and structure of organisation.

Stage 4: analysis of interviews

Stage 5: analysis of Logs. Each set of data will be analysed sequentially.

Stage 6: a further interview in light of themes and issues identified in the critical incident logs will take place.

Stage 7: analysis of interviews. This will involve identification of new themes and gaining deeper and richer data on previously identified themes within the critical incident log analysis. This interview will identify new dilemmas.

Stage 8: a further set of interviews will take place to address how effectively leaders were able to implement newer learning and did they face further dilemmas and paradoxes.

Stage 9: analysis of interviews.

Stage 10: drawing conclusions.

Confidentiality and Anonymity

During the project the principal researcher and the individual participant will only see interview data.

Participants selected for interview and keeping of a critical incident log will be fully and anonymised. Names and institutions will be kept confidential and anonymous and participants' privacy will be respected. The participants will have an opportunity to address any misconceptions in data collected before final write up.

Ethics

This project has been approved by the University of East London Research and Ethics Committee.

Data Protection

Confidentiality of data will be protected, although the confidentiality of information provided is subject to legal limitations. All data generated in the course of the research will be retained in accordance with the University's Data Protection Policy. Interview files and transcripts will be stored electronically, and password protected with access only to the principal researcher.

Limits of confidentiality

Limitations of confidentiality may apply where disclosure of imminent harm to self-and/or others occurs. Confidentiality applied is subject to legal limitations.

Withdrawal from Project

You are not obliged to take give permission for your school to take part in this study and are free to withdraw at any time and to withdraw any unprocessed data previously supplied. All unprocessed data will be destroyed securely. Should you choose to withdraw your school from the research you may do so

without disadvantage to yourself and without any obligation to give a reason. All individual participants also have this right. A decision to take part in the study or to decline participation will not affect students' academic progress.

Dissemination

It is anticipated that the research findings will be primarily used as part of my doctoral thesis. The work may then be disseminated via conference presentations, education seminars (for example, schools and local authorities) and academic articles.

Further Information

If you have any further questions about this research, please do contact Dr Gerry Czerniawski (Principal researcher) Tel: +44 (0)20 82232221 Email:g.czerniaski@uel.ac.uk

Concerns arising during the research

If you have any concerns about the conduct of the researchers or any other aspect of this research project, please do contact researchethics@uel.ac.uk

UNIVERSITY OF EAST LONDON

Consent to Participate

A case study into school leaders' responses to organisational dilemmas

Principal Investigator: Dr Gerry Czerniawski, Cass School of Education and Communities

Stratford Campus, Water Lane, Stratford, London, E15 4LZ.

Tel: +44 (0)20 82232221 or Email: g.czerniawski@uel.ac.uk

I have the read the information leaflet relating to the above programme of research, which will take place in the school and have been given a copy to keep. The nature and purposes of the research have been explained to me, and I have had the opportunity to discuss the details and ask questions about this information. I understand what it being proposed and the procedures in which my staff and children will be involved have been explained to me. In particular, I note that:

Participation is voluntary and participants have the right to withdraw at any time or can withdraw any unprocessed data at any time.

The consent from will be securely stored away from the data, and data will be stored electronically, and password protected.

Each participant will be asked to keep a log for a period of one-half term six or seven weeks depending upon the school timetable. The log will contain critical incidents for them when carry out their role as school leaders.

Each participant will be interviewed twice once at the start of the study and once at the end of the study.

Anonymised transcripts may be used in any resulting publications.

The sample size is small and the researcher will take particular care in transcription and dissemination to ensure that organisation and participants will remain anonymous and will not be able to be identified in any way.

The findings will be disseminated via academic journal articles, at academic and professional conferences, and at education seminars.

I understand that my school's involvement in this study, and particular data from this research, will remain strictly confidential. Only the researcher involved in the study will have access to the data. Limitations of confidentiality may apply where disclosure of imminent harm to self-and/or others occurs.

It has been explained to me what will happen once the research has been completed.

I hereby freely and fully consent for staff in my school to participate in the study, which has been fully explained to me. Having given this consent I understand that I have the right to withdraw my school from the research at any time without disadvantage to myself and without being obliged to give any reason.

Participant's Name (BLOCK CAPITALS)

………………………………………………………………….

Participant's Signature

……………………………………………………………………………..

Investigator's Name (BLOCK CAPITALS)

JOHN MACKLIN

Investigator's Signature

Date: …………………………

Appendix 3B Individual Consent form

Information for UEL sponsored research for the participant

University of East London

Stratford Campus, Water Lane, London E15 4LZ

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Dr Gerry Czerniawski

Cass School of Education and Communities

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Water Lane

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Dissemination:

It is anticipated that the research findings will be primarily used as part of my doctoral thesis. The work may then be disseminated via conference presentations, education seminars (for example, schools and local authorities) and academic articles.

Further Information:

If you have any further questions about this research, please do contact Dr Gerry Czerniawski (Principal researcher) Tel: +44 (0)20 82232221 Email: g.czerniaski@uel.ac.uk

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If you have any concerns about the conduct of the researchers or any other aspect of this research project, please do contact researchethics@uel.ac.uk

UNIVERSITY OF EAST LONDON

Consent to Participate

A case study into school leaders' responses to organisational dilemmas

Principal Investigator: Dr Gerry Czerniawski, Cass School of Education and Communities

Stratford Campus, Water Lane, Stratford, London, E15 4LZ.

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I will be asked to keep a log for a period of one half term 6 or 7 weeks depending upon the school timetable. The log will contain critical incidents for me when carrying out my role as a school leader.

I will be interviewed twice once at the start of the study and once at the end of the study.

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It has been explained to me what will happen once the research has been completed.

I hereby freely and fully consent for staff in my school to participate in the study, which has been fully explained to me. Having given this consent I understand that I have the right to withdraw my school from the research at any time without disadvantage to myself and without being obliged to give any reason.

Participant's Name (BLOCK CAPITALS)

……………………………………………………………………….

Participant's Signature

…………………………………………………………………………………..

Investigator's Name (BLOCK CAPITALS)

JOHN MACKLIN

Investigator's Signature

Date: …………………………

4 September 2014

Dear John,

Project Title:	**A case study into school leaders' responses to organisational dilemmas.**
Researcher(s):	**John Macklin**
Principal Investigator:	**Dr Gerry Czerniaski**

I am writing to confirm the outcome of your application to the University Research Ethics Committee (UREC), which was considered at the meeting on **Wednesday 23rd July 2014**.

The decision made by members of the Committee is **Approved**. The Committee's

response is based on the protocol described in the application form and supporting

documentation. Your study has received ethical approval from the date of this letter.

Should any significant adverse events or considerable changes occur in connection with this research project that may consequently alter relevant ethical considerations, this must be reported immediately to UREC. Subsequent to such changes an Ethical Amendment Form should be completed and submitted to UREC.

Approved Research Site

I am pleased to confirm that the approval of the proposed research applies to the

following research site.

Research Site	Principal Investigator / Local Collaborator
London	Dr Gerry Czerniaski

Approved Documents

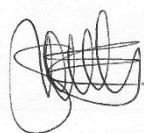The final list of documents reviewed and approved by the Committee is as follows:

Document	Version	Date
UREC Application Form	2.0	4 September 2014
Coursework/Exams Certificate	1.0	20 June 2014
Information Sheet for Head Teachers	1.0	20 June 2014
Consent Form for Head Teachers	1.0	20 June 2014
Information Sheet for participants	1.0	20 June 2014
Consent Form for participants	1.0	20 June 2014
Sample interview guide	1.0	20 June 2014
Target data	1.0	20 June 2014
Probing vs Leading questions	1.0	20 June 2014
Risk assessment	1.0	20 June 2014

Approval is given on the understanding that the UEL Code of Good Practice in Research is adhered to.

Please ensure you retain this letter for your records, as you may be asked to provide evidence of ethical approval for this study in the future.

With the Committee's best wishes for the success of this project.

Yours sincerely,

Catherine Fieulleteau

Ethics Integrity Manager

University Research Ethics Committee (UREC)

Email: **researchethics@uel.ac.uk**

John Richard MACKLIN

ResearchUEL

Dear John

Application ID: ETH1920-0055

Orginal title: A case study into school leaders' responses to organisational dilemmas

New project title: Turbulence, dilemmas and leadership: A case study of an English School after academisation

Lead researcher: Mr John Macklin

Your application to Research, Research Degrees and Ethics Sub-Committee meeting was considered on the 21st of October 2019. The decision is:

Approved

The Committee's response is based on the protocol described in the application form and supporting documentation.

Your project has received ethical approval for 2 years from the approval date.

If you have any questions regarding this application please contact your supervisor or the secretary for the Research, Research Degrees and Ethics Sub-Committee meeting.

Approval has been given for the submitted application only and the research must be conducted accordingly.

Should you wish to make any changes in connection with this research project you must complete 'An application for approval of an amendment to an existing application'.

Approval is given on the understanding that the UEL Code of Practice for Research and the Code of Practice for Research Ethics is adhered to.

1

Any adverse events or reactions that occur in connection with this research project should be reported using the University's form for Reporting an Adverse/Serious Adverse Event/Reaction.

The University will periodically audit a random sample of approved applications for ethical approval, to ensure that the research projects are conducted in compliance with the consent given by the Research Ethics Committee and to the highest standards of rigour and integrity.

Please note, it is your responsibility to retain this letter for your records.

With the Committee's best wishes for the success of the project.

Yours sincerely

Catherine Hitchens

Research Integrity and Ethics Manager

Ethics ETH1920-0055: Mr John Macklin