How can Character Education programmes support young people to develop their character to promote wellbeing?

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Overarching Abstract

Developing young people's character is believed to promote their wellbeing, helping them to weigh competing priorities in complex situations and act in ways which uphold the interests of themselves and others. There is currently disagreement about the theoretical underpinnings of Character Education and the best way to support young people to develop their character. This thesis aims to explore these issues in more detail.

Chapter 1

This chapter reports on a systematic literature review, synthesising six papers. It explores Character Education programmes, outlining their theoretical underpinnings and reporting their effects on participants' moral virtues and practical wisdom. The majority of interventions were based on mixed theoretical underpinnings but commonly cited trait theories of virtue. Four studies demonstrated improvement in some aspects of moral virtue as a result of Character Education interventions.

Chapter 2

This chapter is a bridging document which links Chapters 1 and 3. It outlines the reasons for choosing Character Education as a topic of study and discusses key considerations informing the design of the empirical research, including philosophical stance, methodology and ethics.

Chapter 3

This chapter reports on an empirical research project which involved 18 secondary school students discussing the process they undergo when making moral decisions. It provides a qualitative exploration of how participants' personal beliefs about the meaning of good character interact with situational factors to influence their moral decision-making. Findings suggest that young people's moral decision-making is influenced by a range of situational factors which are integrated to produce the best possible outcome for self and others. Implications for the design of Character Education programmes and the potential role of educational psychologists in supporting this are explored in more detail.

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Chapter 1. Systematic Literature Review

Abstract

There has been a resurgence in the popularity of Character Education in recent years. The development of moral virtues and practical wisdom is said to promote good character and has been linked to wellbeing. A systematic review of existing research investigated the effects of Character Education interventions on the moral virtues and practical wisdom of adolescents. Given the current diversity in the theoretical underpinnings of existing Character Education programmes, the review also explored the psychological theories underpinning each intervention in more detail. Petticrew and Roberts' systemic review procedure was followed. Six studies were identified for in-depth review. Study quality was assessed using the EPPI-centre Weight of Evidence tool. The review found the theoretical underpinnings, aims and outcome measures employed in each study were diverse. Four studies found a significant effect of Character Education intervention on knowledge and understanding or enactment of at least one moral virtue. The findings indicate that Service Learning and literacy-based intervention programmes seemed to have the most promising impact on the development of moral virtues. No studies explicitly investigated practical wisdom. The possible implications of these findings for the development of Character Education theory and practice are discussed, along with areas for future research.

What are the effects of Character Education on the moral virtue and practical wisdom of young people?

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 Character and wellbeing

Character Education (CE) is a form of Moral Education (ME) with its origins in Aristotelian thinking (Arthur, Kristjánsson, Harrison, Sanderse, & Wright, 2017). It has had a resurgence in popularity in recent years as a result of the virtue ethics movement in philosophy (Curren, 2010). CE is set apart from other forms of ME by its focus on living well, rather than acting out of moral duty and obligation (Althof & Berkowitz, 2006). Developing good character to promote wellbeing is increasingly seen as an aim of CE in both the USA and the UK (Clement & Bollinger, 2017; Department for Education, 2017; Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues, 2017; Walker, Roberts, & Kristjánsson, 2015) and character development has recently been added to England's Ofsted inspection framework (Ofsted, 2019).

1.1.2 Origins of Character Education

CE originates with Aristotle (2009). He argued the way to achieve wellbeing, or 'Eudaimonia', is to develop one's character. Character is conceived of as a disposition to uphold moral excellences known as virtues. Virtues are dispositions that make someone a good person and enable them to perform their uniquely human function of pro-sociality well (Fowers, 2012a). These virtuous habits require unity of thought, feeling and action (Malin, Liauw, & Damon, 2017) and lie in a 'mean' between excess and deficiency (Aristotle, 2009, Bk II, p. 6) which will be different according to the individual and the situation. Therefore, Aristotle highlighted the importance of developing the ability to reason about these habits and to act in rational and logical ways according to the demands of the situation. He called this 'practical wisdom' (Aristotle, 2009, Bk VI, p. 5), defined as the ability to deliberate well about what constitutes a good life. Practical wisdom is said to entail integrating the demands of competing virtues and choosing the best course of action (JCCV, Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues, 2017). Virtue can only be said to be fully developed when combined with practical wisdom (Kraut, 2018).

1.1.3 Towards a psychological theory of character

Despite CE's growing popularity, there is currently no unified psychological or educational theory to guide schools' practice (Curren, 2016; Kristjánsson, 2017; R. White & Shin, 2017). Many empirical studies are criticised for not defining the boundaries between CE and related terms such as Moral Education, Values Education and Social and Emotional Learning (Berkowitz & Bier, 2014). Some CE programmes have adopted Berkowitz & Bier's (2004, p. 73) definition of character as a 'complex set of psychological characteristics that enable an individual to act as a moral agent'. This is a broad definition which has been judged to incorporate a wide range of interventions, as evidenced in Berkowitz and Bier's (2007) meta-analysis detailing what works in CE. Studies in this review include neo-Kohlbergian cognitive theories of stages of moral reasoning, which have traditionally been more associated with ME than CE and focus on the importance of reason. Such disparate approaches have made it difficult to pinpoint what is meant by the term 'Character Education' (Lapsley & Narvaez, 2006).

In contrast, CE programmes in the UK such as 'Knightly Virtues' (Arthur, Harrison, Carr, Kristjánsson, & Davison, 2014) and 'My Character' (Arthur, Harrison, Kristjánsson, & Davison, 2014) have adopted a neo-Aristotelian approach that conceptualises virtues as character strengths. This conceptualisation comes from the Positive Psychology movement and has been hailed as providing an empirical account of virtue (Sanderse, 2015). Peterson and Seligman (2004) outlined twenty-four character strengths they found across all cultures studied in their Values in Action Inventory of Strengths (VIA). These were then combined into six ubiquitous virtues: courage, justice, humanity, temperance, transcendence and wisdom. They claimed the VIA can be used to uncover the character traits that individuals possess.

Subsequent factor analysis studies (McGrath & Walker, 2016; Shryack, Steger, Krueger, & Kallie, 2010) have called into question the universality of the strengths and virtues in the VIA. It seems that if a set of universal virtues exist there is little agreement as to what these might be. A further criticism of trait theories of virtue concerns the variation in virtuous behaviour observed across situations in several studies (Doris, 2002; Szutta, 2012). A range of experiments from social psychology have demonstrated how subtle changes in situational variables can have a significant impact on whether participants act morally or not (Hartshorne, May, Maller, &

Shuttleworth, 1928; Hasegawa, 2016; Isen & Levin, 1972; Milgram, 1974; Schnall, Haidt, Clore, & Jordan, 2008). This renders trait theories of character and their measurement problematic and reinforces Aristotle's (2009) argument that acting virtuously does not entail simply learning a set of virtuous behaviours and applying them indiscriminately; one must also develop the practical wisdom to respond appropriately to a situation.

Although practical wisdom constitutes a key component of Aristotelian Character Education, some argue that practical wisdom is complex and is not a set of skills or procedures that can be operationalised (Lapsley, 2016). Despite this, the JCCV (2017) argue it is not possible to have character without practical wisdom, which they define as 'the capacity to choose intelligently between alternatives' (p. 2). The JCCV suggests that virtue literacy (knowledge and understanding of the virtues) and virtue reasoning (the ability to reason about the virtues) would constitute important components of measurable practical wisdom. Another important feature of practical wisdom lies in applying virtues in a way that is responsive to the situation (Bessant, 2009; Shotter & Tsoukas, 2014). This has led some psychologists to turn their attention to the interaction between person and situation.

Lerner and Callina (2014) emphasise the importance of person-context interactions in understanding character. According to their theory of character development, which is based on Relational Developmental Systems (RDS) theory (Overton, 2015), it does not make sense to speak of virtue in isolation from context. Virtue entails responding flexibly to the situation at hand, rather than responding in the same way to all situations. RDS theories of character therefore stress that any definition of character should be framed in terms of coherence in the application of virtues across situations, rather than consistency (Nucci, 2017).

Clearly, there is a diverse range of theories about the empirical nature of virtue and practical wisdom. Psychological theories of virtue include: the psychological skills underpinning moral behaviour (Berkowitz & Bier, 2004), the cognitive skills underpinning moral reasoning (Kohlberg, 1984), a combination of character strengths coupled with practical wisdom (Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues, 2017), or the ability to make coherent judgements incorporating an understanding of virtue with the demands of a situation (Lerner & Callina, 2014). There is still much empirical work to be done in developing a coherent understanding of the psychological

underpinnings of character in order to inform CE programmes (Curren, 2016; Kristjánsson, 2017).

1.1.4 Assessing the impact of Character Education programmes

US-based studies into the effects of CE interventions have adopted a broad definition of character and a diverse range of outcomes including social and emotional literacy, drug use, behaviour, school attendance and academic attainment (Berkowitz & Bier, 2004; Berkowitz, Bier, & McCauley, 2016; Lickona & Davidson, 2005). Kristjánsson (2015) argues research is needed which focuses specifically on understanding how interventions work to promote wellbeing through the development of virtues. Similarly, the JCCV (2017) argue that CE should focus on the development of other-focused moral virtues and practical wisdom. This formed the focus of the current review.

1.1.5 Aims of the current review

Given the variety of theoretical approaches to CE and the diverse range of psychological conceptualisations of virtue and practical wisdom, the aim of the review was both to explore the theoretical underpinnings of CE programmes and to investigate their effects on moral virtue and practical wisdom. The focus on character and virtue as the intrinsic aims of CE reflects the growing focus on wellbeing as an important aim of education in the UK (Walker et al., 2015). Developing an integrated understanding of current CE approaches could help to inform future directions for study.

Adolescents were selected as the target population for the review because adolescence has been highlighted as an important period in moral development (Lickona, 2014; Walker, Thoma, Jones, & Kristjánsson, 2017) and because 61% of secondary school teachers surveyed believed more explicit moral education was needed in schools (Arthur, Kristjánsson, Walker, Jones, & Sanderse, 2015).

The review question comprised two parts. The first focused on how character and virtues were conceptualised by CE programmes and the second focused on the effects of CE interventions on participants' moral virtues and practical wisdom. Review questions:

a) How are character and virtues defined within CE programmes?

b) What are the effects of the direct teaching of CE on the moral virtue and practical wisdom of adolescents?

1.2 Method

Petticrew & Roberts' (2006) systematic review stages were combined with components of the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) checklist (Liberati et al., 2009). This meets the Methodological Expectations of Cochrane Intervention Reviews (2013) and helped structure each stage of the review. Table 1 shows how PRISMA items were incorporated into the review process.

1.2.1 Defining the review question

Scoping searches were undertaken between July 2017 and November 2017. As discussed in the introduction, CE was identified as the area of interest. The effect of CE on moral virtue and practical wisdom was selected as the focus.

Table 1 Systematic review and PRISMA checklist

Systematic review stages (Petticrew & Roberts, 2006)	**Items taken from PRISMA checklist (Liberati et al., 2009)**
1. Clearly define the question that the review is setting out to answer.	
2. Determine the types of studies that need to be located in order to answer your question.	Eligibility criteria
3. Carry out a comprehensive literature search to locate these studies.	Information sources; Search
4. Screen the studies found, using inclusion criteria to identify studies for in-depth review	Study selection
5. Describe the included studies to 'map' the field, and critically appraise them for quality and relevance.	Data collection process; Data items; Risk of bias in individual studies
6. Synthesise studies' findings.	Summary measures; Synthesis of results; Risk of bias across studies; Additional analysis
7. Communicate outcomes of the review.	

1.2.2 Locating studies

Eligibility Criteria

The population of interest was adolescents, defined as young people aged between 13 and 18. Only studies using the term "Character Education" and employing direct

teaching were included. The outcomes of these studies had to relate to moral virtue or practical wisdom. Studies published from 2007 onwards were included. No limits were applied for language or country.

1.2.3 Literature search

Information sources

Electronic databases were searched between November and December 2017 on PsycInfo (Ovid), British Education Index (BEI, EBSCO), Scopus; and Educational Resource Index and Abstracts (ERIC, EBSCO). Search terms were created for ERIC (shown below in Table 2). These were then adapted according to each electronic database's Controlled Vocabulary or Thesaurus (see Appendix A). Electronic database searching yielded 178 papers.

Table 2 Electronic database search terms

Character education	**Adolescent**	**Practical wisdom/moral virtue**
"Character education"	DE[1] "adolescents" DE "Middle school students" DE "Early adolescents" DE "High school students" DE "Junior high school students" DE "Secondary school students"	DE "Moral development" DE "Moral values" Virtue* "Practical wisdom" Moral reasoning Moral judgement Character Phronesis

Reference lists of the most relevant papers were hand-searched by title and key words to check for relevant publications, yielding three papers.

Publications from the JCCV were hand-searched. This yielded one paper. The Journal of Research in Character Education was also hand-searched from 2007 (Vol. 5*(2)*) to the latest available publication in 2017 (Vol. 13*(1)*). This yielded two papers. Newcastle University's electronic library catalogue was searched for grey literature. Relevant titles were selected for further screening. This yielded four papers. An advanced search of government documents on Google yielded one paper. The total number of papers after the initial search was 189. Duplicates were removed, leaving 166 papers for further screening.

[1] DE denotes words or phrases searched using database Thesaurus.

1.2.4 Screening

Study selection

166 papers were screened by title, abstract and key words according to inclusion criteria as shown in Table 3:

Table 3 Study selection inclusion criteria

Criteria	Description
Population	Adolescents (ages 13-18) were the target population. However, studies with a mix of age-groups including but not limited to the target population were retained.
Intervention	Only interventions called “Character Education” (not ‘Moral Education’ or ‘Values Education’) and entailing direct teaching related to moral virtue or practical wisdom were selected. No limits were placed on the length of the intervention.
Comparison	Studies both with and without a control or comparison group were included due to the difficulty in separating some populations of students from others within and between school settings.
Outcomes	Only studies listing outcomes relating to moral virtue or practical wisdom were selected.
Setting	Interventions all took place in educational establishments.

The number of records excluded following screening was 139, leaving 27 articles. These articles were read in full and the eligibility and inclusion criteria applied. Six studies were taken forward for in-depth review. The process of study selection is outlined in Figure 1.

1.2.5 Describing and appraising studies

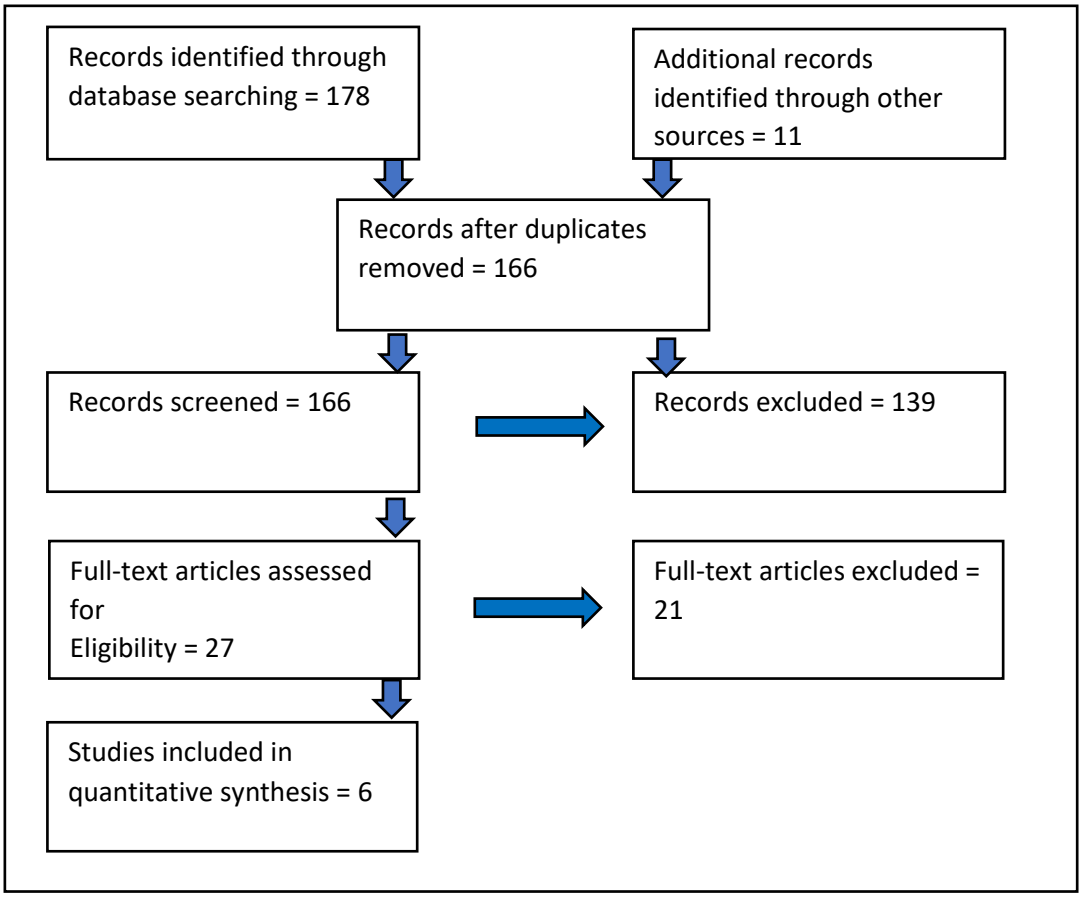
Data collection

The remaining six studies were analysed according to their aims, participants, setting, design, theoretical underpinnings, intervention, outcome measures and findings (See Table 4). Some studies used mixed methods. However, there was not enough qualitative data relevant to the review question to perform in-depth qualitative analysis. Relevant qualitative findings were analysed alongside quantitative measures.

Weighing the quality of evidence

Studies included in the in-depth review were analysed in detail using the EPPI-Centre Weight of Evidence tool (2007) (See Appendix B). This analysis informed judgments of the weight of evidence of each study using Gough’s (2007) Weight of Evidence criteria (See Table 5).

Figure 1 Study Selection Flow Diagram
(adapted from Liberati et al., 2009)



1.2.6 Synthesising Findings

Findings of the studies were synthesised by comparing the theoretical bases of their approach, aims, study designs, outcome measures and the weight of evidence judgments given to each. Based on this, decisions were made about the strength of evidence put forward in each study. From this, suggestions were made about implications for future research.

Table 4 Characteristics of in-depth review studies

Study	**Aims**	**Participants & Setting**	**Design**	**Theoretical basis**	**Intervention**	**Outcome Measures**	**Findings** (***** = significance or effect size not reported due to insufficient data)
Arthur, Harrison, Burn, and Moller (2017)	To explore how schools implement CE and to explore how effective teachers and pupils believe CE progs. have been.	Teaching staff (n = 20) Primary (Y6) and secondary (Y8 and Y13) school pupils (n= 459). Birmingham UK. 2 secondary schools; one primary.	Case study – mixed methods.	Aristotelian Virtue Ethics. Character = set of personal traits that inform motivation and guide conduct. Goal of CE = development of virtue and practical wisdom.	Year-long taught CE programme based on the JCCV Framework for Character Education in Schools (2013), varied according to setting.	<u>Quantitative</u> Moral judgment scores on Ad-ICM to assess virtue reasoning. Moral self-relevance measure. <u>Qualitative</u> Discussion included details about impact of CE on students.	<u>Quantitative</u> Mean Ad-ICM scores***:** Secondary school 1: 49%; Secondary school 2: 52% (Comparison from previous study of Y10 pupils = 43%) Moral self-relevance: Moral virtues identified as more important than performance virtues. Top 3 virtues in both secondary schools: respect, responsibility and gratitude. <u>Qualitative</u> Students use/understand language of virtue. Pupils appreciate how virtues pertain to their own lives and can spot application in lessons. Virtue awareness does not always translate into behaviour.
Billig, Jesse, and Grimley (2008)	To find the effect of a Service Learning approach to CE on students' character.	568 middle school and 427 high school students (840 participants; 155 controls). Mean age: 14.2 years. 38 teachers in 15 schools. Philadelphia, USA. 15 middle and high schools.	Quasi-exptl: schools following Service-Learning CE = matched with control schools.	Unclear. Character = disposition to enact prosocial behaviours (altruism, empathy, caring, ethical behaviour; academic engagement; persistence; valuing school; efficacy; civic engagement and citizenship).	3-year Service Learning programme based on 11 Essential Elements of Service Learning and incorporating connections to CE.	<u>Quantitative</u> 57-item student survey pre- and post-test. Scales = Caring and altruism, School community, Citizenship and civic engagement, Valuing school and Respect).	<u>Quantitative</u> Statistically significant differences between participants and controls on subscales: School community: **p < .001*** Citizenship and civic engagement: **p < .01*** Aggregate subscales score: **p < .001*** Non-significant differences: Valuing school: p = 0.074 Respect: p = 0.059

Study	**Aims**	**Participants & Setting**	**Design**	**Theoretical basis**	**Intervention**	**Outcome Measures**	**Findings** (***** = significance or effect size not reported due to insufficient data)
Long (2014)	Explore effects of integrating CE into a history curriculum on students' character.	120 high school students aged 15-18. Georgia USA. One urban high school, 5 history classes	Exptl; 4 classes randomly allocated to CE class and 1 to control.	Mixed: Character as set of psychological skills. Stages of moral development. CE through historical storytelling *and* virtue and ethical goodness	4 history lessons incorporating CE through historical storytelling and discussion of related ethical dilemmas.	Quantitative Commitment to Ethical Goodness (CEG) Scale (Narvaez, Bock, & Vaydich, 2008) administered to students pre- and post-test.	Quantitative No significant differences. No pre- to post-test difference in CEG Scale scores for participants (p=0.33) or controls (p= 0.74).
Pike, Lickona, and Nesfield (2015)	To investigate the effects of Narnian Virtues prog. on: U'standing of the 12 Narnian virtues; application of the virtues to everyday life; personal ethical responses to the novel.	160 primary and secondary students aged 9-14. Yorkshire, UK. 5 schools. 7 classes: 2 x Y5/6 2 x Y7 2 x Y8 (1 Christian ethos school; 1 village school) 1 x Y9 (diverse urban school)	Pilot study. Quasi-exptl design. Pre/post-test within-subjects.	Neo-Aristotelian approach. Virtues as traits. Linked to Positive Psychology and character strengths. Virtues = universal. Purpose of Character Education = to become good by upholding universal moral laws.	6-week CE programme developed around a CS Lewis novel with activities based on virtues (different programme for each year group).	Quantitative Q'aire 1: virtue knowledge, self-reported virtues, personality self-ratings. Q'aire 2: knowledge and understanding of virtues Qualitative Journal analysis, focus groups and semi-structured interviews.	Quantitative: (*Results given for Y7 & Y8 only; additional data taken from Francis, Pike, Lickona, Lankshear, and Nesfield (2018)*). Q'aire 1: Statistically significant increase in knowledge of Narnian character virtues: (**p < 0.001, d = .338 (small))[2].** No significant change in virtue or personality self-ratings. Q'aire 2: Increased mean scores in from pre- to post-test.***** Qualitative Students related scenarios in novel back to their own lives e.g. temptations of social media. Students individually selected virtues they wanted to work on. Parental engagement identified as important. Virtues referred to most = self-control, humility, hard-work and fortitude.

[2] d= Cohen's D: small= 0.2, medium= 0.5 and large= 0.8

Study	**Aims**	**Participants & Setting**	**Design**	**Theoretical basis**	**Intervention**	**Outcome Measures**	**Findings** (***** = significance or effect size not reported due to insufficient data)
Seider, Novick, and Gomez (2013)	To investigate the effects of CE progs aimed to develop either moral or performance character.	653 middle-school students aged 10-14. USA. 3 inner-city 'Charter' middle schools.	Quasi-exptl. Compared students on the two CE progs.	Mixed: Character as set of moral and performance strengths. Character as psychological characteristics that enable individuals to function as competent moral agents.	Over one school year: 2 schools followed Advisory Programming intervention aimed at performance character; 1school followed Ethical Philosophy Programming intervention aimed at moral character.	<u>Quantitative</u> Self-rating scales on: *Moral Character Strengths (*Academic integrity; Ethical Identity; Social Responsibility) and *Performance Character Strengths (*Community; Courage; Perseverance)	<u>Quantitative</u> No significant difference between groups in: Ethical Identity, Courage, Social Responsibility (p>.05). Statistically significant differences between groups in: Perseverance (Advisory Programming > Ethical Philosophy, **p= .02; d = .20 (small)**). Community connectedness (Advisory Programming > Ethical Philosophy, **p = .05; d = .20 (small)**). Academic integrity (Ethical Philosophy > Advisory Programming, **p = .005; d = .17 (small)**).
Seroczynski, Johnson, Lamb, and Gustman (2011)	To investigate the effect of a literature-based CE programme on virtuous behaviour in 'delinquent' youth.	22 male and 7 female adolescents aged 14-18. 2 teachers. Indiana USA. Juvenile Justice Centre in a midsize city.	Quasi-exptl: compared students rated by teachers as engaged or not engaged with CE i'vention prog.	Mixed: Combines Aristotelian and Thomist theories of virtue with Kohlbergian stages of moral development. Purpose of CE = moral development and virtuous behaviour.	Academic day-treatment programme. Semester-long programme developed around a Harry Potter novel with activities based on virtues.	<u>Quantitative</u> Adapted version of Youth Virtues Scale (Cawley, Martin, and Johnson (2000)) – self and teacher ratings. Index of Self-Esteem (Hudson, 1992). Sociomoral Reflection	<u>Quantitative</u> ***(Employed p value of 0.1 due to small sample size)*** YVS: Statistically significant difference between engaged and disengaged groups' post-test teacher-reported virtuous behaviour scores (**p=.03**). Statistically significant difference between engaged and disengaged groups' self-reported fidelity (**p=.08**) and charity (**p=.04**). No statistically significant differences in: fortitude, hope, justice, prudence and temperance.

Study	**Aims**	**Participants & Setting**	**Design**	**Theoretical basis**	**Intervention**	**Outcome Measures**	**Findings** (***** = significance or effect size not reported due to insufficient data)
						Measure Short Form (SRM-SF) (Gibbs, Basinger, & Fuller, 1992), based on 4 stages of moral reasoning <u>Qualitative</u> Analysis of weekly class discussions and diary entries.	SRM-SF: No significant differences between pre- and post- scores between groups. <u>Qualitative</u> Latent content analysis: Key points from discussions: Students gave examples from own lives of times when they had to break the rules to uphold a virtue. Students identified some virtues among the things they wanted for themselves in the future.

Table 5 Weight of Evidence of review studies
(adapted from Gough, 2007)

	Weight of Evidence			
	A Soundness of studies (internal methodological coherence)	**B** Appropriateness of the research design and analysis	**C** Relevance of the study to review question	**D Overall weight, taking into account A, B and C**
Arthur, Harrison, et al. (2017)	Low	Low	Low/Medium	**Low**
Billig et al. (2008)	Medium	Medium	Low/Medium	**Medium**
Long (2014)	Low	Low	Low	**Low**
Pike et al. (2015)	Medium	Medium	Medium	**Medium**
Seider et al. (2013)	Low/Medium	Low/Medium	Low/Medium	**Low/Medium**
Seroczynski et al. (2011)	Low	Low	Low/Medium	**Low**

1.3 Review Findings

1.3.1 Theoretical approaches

The studies included in this review reflect the concerns that exist in the field more widely in relation to the wide variety of theoretical underpinnings of CE (Berkowitz, 2012). Theoretical approaches varied between and even within studies. Virtue-based approaches to CE (Arthur, Harrison, et al., 2017; Pike et al., 2015; Seroczynski et al., 2011) stemmed from a philosophical virtue ethical stance, which was related by Pike et al. (2015) and Seider et al. (2013) to psychological theory through Peterson and Seligman's (2004) concept of character strengths. These contrasted with neo-Kohlbergian approaches to CE which focused more on the rational processes underpinning moral development (Long, 2014; Seroczynski et al., 2011). Lapsley and Narvaez (2006) argue that a narrow and behaviourist focus on developing virtuous behaviours in the USA has led to the conflation of virtue development and moral duty and has made the unique task of CE unclear. The UK-based studies both made explicit reference to virtues as specific traits (Arthur, Harrison, et al., 2017; Pike et al., 2015), reflecting the predominant neo-Aristotelian approach to CE in the UK (Arthur, Harrison, Carr, et al., 2014). One USA-based study did not offer clear theoretical underpinnings; three made some reference to stages of moral development. The vast differences in theoretical stances and related differences in

studies' aims, designs, intervention strategies and outcome measures make it difficult to produce a meaningful synthesis of the reviewed studies.

1.3.2 Study design

Designs varied across studies. Five studies used an experimental or quasi-experimental design. There was considerable variation in the function of the group used for comparison across each of these studies. One study had an experimental design in which participants were randomly allocated to the intervention or control condition (Long, 2014). Four studies used a quasi-experimental design. Billig et al. (2008) used a matched control group. Seroczynski et al. (2011) created a control group by retrospectively splitting the experimental group into two according to participants' level of engagement with the intervention. Engagement level was judged on the amount of work participants completed and their level of involvement in class discussion, as judged through subjective observation. Seider et al. (2013) compared two Character Education interventions with a different focus, whilst Pike et al. (2015) used a within-subjects pre-/post-test design. The remaining study used a case study design (Arthur, Harrison, et al., 2017), which did not allow for comparison with matched controls.

1.3.3 Interventions

Interventions also varied across studies. Duration of interventions ranged from four lessons to three years. Some interventions had more taught components. For example, Pike et al. (2015) and Seroczynski et al. (2011) investigated the effect of taught intervention programmes based on novels which were specifically aimed at developing knowledge and understanding of virtues. Similarly, Long (2014) and Seider et al. (2013) also investigated the effect of taught intervention programmes. These were based on exploring the actions of prominent historical or literary figures and how they demonstrated character. There were taught elements to the interventions described by both Arthur, Harrison, et al. (2017) and Billig et al. (2008). However, these were less formal. Arthur, Harrison, et al. (2017) described three schools' different 'taught, caught and sought' (p.17) approaches to CE, rather than focusing on the effects of a specific intervention programme. Billig et al. (2008) investigated the effects of a Service Learning programme which entailed students

organising community service projects and reflecting on these. The interventions in all studies incorporated time for students to reflect on and discuss moral issues.

1.3.4 Outcomes and effectiveness

It is important to note that the way in which character was operationalised and measured varied in each study, contributing to the difficulty in making comparisons between studies. Some studies used ratings of behaviour as a measure of virtue, either through self-report (Arthur, Harrison, et al., 2017; Pike et al., 2015), or a combination of self-report and teacher-report (Seroczynski et al., 2011). Seider et al. (2013) and Billig et al. (2008) investigated self-reported character strengths or prosocial behaviours, which could be linked to moral virtues as they measured moral motivations and actions. The Moral Self-Relevance questionnaire (Patrick & Gibbs, 2012) used by Arthur, Harrison, et al. (2017) asked participants to identify which values are most important to them and therefore could also offer a measure of motivation. Long (2014) used the Commitment to Ethical Goodness scale (Narvaez et al., 2008), which measures ethical focus and motivation.

Some studies used measures which focused on moral reasoning, which might be likened to Aristotle's (2009) cognitive component of virtue. Arthur, Harrison, et al. (2017) used the Adolescent Intermediate Concept Measure (Ad-ICM,Thoma, Derryberry, & Crowson, 2013). They claim it gives a measure of virtue reasoning and that this is an important component of both virtue and practical wisdom. This is the only mention of practical wisdom across all the studies. Seroczynski et al. (2011) used the Sociomoral Reflection Measure-Short Form (Gibbs et al., 1992), which has its origins in the Kohlbergian cognitive developmental domain. This was intended to give a measure of stage of moral development, based on whether participants' responses matched pre-determined moral judgments.

None of the studies used outcome measures that captured all three components of virtue put forward by Aristotle (cognition, affect and action). Measures focused on self-reported action do not address the cognitive processes or feelings behind participants' reported moral virtues. Those focused on ethical motivation or knowledge and understanding of virtues do not address action. Pike et al. (2015) highlighted the important difference between knowing about virtues and choosing to act on them. Therefore, although each study's outcome measures are in some way

connected to virtue, none were able to offer a comprehensive assessment of all three components (Aristotle, 2009) of moral virtue.

Where possible, statistical significance and effect sizes are quoted for each study. It was not possible to calculate effect sizes for every study or for every data set within studies due to insufficient data. Effect sizes can provide important information which cannot be determined from statistical significance alone, about the magnitude of an intervention's effect (Sullivan & Feinn, 2012). However, although according to the American Psychological Association (2001, p. 25) 'it is almost always necessary to include some index of effect size or strength of relationship', care must be taken about using effect sizes to compare interventions with different theoretical bases, procedures and outcome measures (Coe, 2002; Glass, McGaw, & Smith, 1981), as is the case in this review. Whilst effect sizes may show the magnitude of the effect of interventions within individual studies, comparisons between studies should be made with caution.

Significant differences in some outcomes relating to moral virtue were found in four studies (Billig et al., 2008; Pike et al., 2015; Seider et al., 2013; Seroczynski et al., 2011). Billig et al. (2008) found an overall significant difference in pre-/post-test scores between the experimental and control group participants in two of the five subscales ('Citizenship and civic engagement' ($p<.01$) and 'School community' ($p<.001$) and in their 'Aggregate' scores ($p<.001$) across the five scales. However, it should be acknowledged that scores decreased from pre-test to post-test on all subscales for both groups, which the authors put down to having administered the post-test surveys at the end of term. Pike et al. (2015) found a significant difference in participants' knowledge and understanding of the 12 virtues taught in the Narnian Virtues programme from pre- to post-test ($p<.001$). The magnitude of this effect was small ($d=.338$). They also found an increase in mean scores on Questionnaire 2 which tested participants' definitions of the virtues and their explanations of how one develops good character. However, no figures or statistics are provided in the report to evidence this, making it a less reliable finding. Seider et al. (2013) found statistically significant differences between moral CE and performance CE students on three of the six character trait subscales; 'Academic Integrity' ($p=.005$, $d=.17$); 'Perseverance' ($p=.20$, $d=.20$) and 'Community Connectedness' ($p=.05$, $d=.20$).

However, the magnitude of all three effects was small and there is no information provided about each intervention group's level of fidelity to the programme, or the extent to which the programmes may have overlapped in their content. Seroczynski et al. (2011) found statistically significant differences between teacher-reported overall gains in virtuous behaviour from pre- to post-test for students judged to be 'engaged' in the intervention (p=.03). Having set a p value of 0.1 due to small sample size, they also found significant differences in students' self-reports of fidelity (p=.08) and charity (p=.04) between the 'engaged' and the 'disengaged' students' self-ratings post-test. However, as discussed above, allocation to the 'engaged' or 'disengaged' condition was somewhat arbitrary, making it difficult to draw firm conclusions about the intervention's effects on moral virtue. It is also important to note that sample size varied throughout the programme due to young people leaving the centre, therefore it is not clear exactly how many participants were involved in pre- and post- test data analysis. This calls the validity of these findings into question.

Arthur, Harrison, et al. (2017) found combined mean scores of Year 7 and Year 12 students on the Ad-ICM (Secondary School 1 = 49%; Secondary School 2 = 52%) were higher than those achieved in previous CE research with Year 10 students (43%). The authors do not quote statistical significance levels. When broken down by year group in School 1, mean Ad-ICM scores for Year 7 were 40% and mean scores for Year 12 were 54%, suggesting there could be a significant effect of age on virtue reasoning ability. On the Moral Self-Relevance questionnaire, students in both schools rated moral virtues more highly than performance virtues, suggesting CE may have increased students' motivation to enact moral virtues. However, it is difficult to draw conclusions from this without a control comparison group as it may be that all young people naturally value moral over performance virtues, given humans' innate prosociality (Daniel, 2007).

Long (2014) found no significant difference in participants' scores on the Commitment to Ethical Goodness (CEG) scale from pre- to post-test. This may be due to the short duration of the intervention. It may also be that the CEG was not the most appropriate outcome measure. As Pike et al. (2015) found, gains in the short-

term are more likely to relate to knowledge and understanding of the material presented on the programme, rather than changes in motivation or behaviour.

Qualitative data from Arthur, Harrison, et al. (2017), Pike et al. (2015) and Seroczynski et al. (2011) provides further detail about the effects of interventions on moral virtue. Young people in Arthur, Harrison, et al. (2017) described the impact CE had on their understanding and application of virtues. CE led to shared use of the language of virtue between staff and students, suggesting an effect on the cognitive component of virtue. Students engaged regularly in self-reflection and this helped them reason about their behaviour outside school. Pike et al. (2015) and Seroczynski et al. (2011) describe discussions with students about how the virtues they were learning about through the novels apply to their own lives. Students in all three studies were able to apply a combination of virtues to everyday situations to consider how they might think or behave when faced with a dilemma. Seroczynski et al. (2011) also report discussions with participants about situations where virtues conflict with one-another and they have broken a rule to uphold a virtue they valued more. These descriptions offer real-life accounts of the application of moral virtue, which take into account the influence of situational factors and what happens when a situation raises competing virtue demands, something the quantitative ratings scales could not do. Although not explicitly linked with practical wisdom in the studies, it could be argued that the idea of applying virtues to everyday situations and weighing competing virtues is suggestive of some form of practical wisdom.

1.3.5 Key Findings

The aim of the current review was to investigate the effects of CE interventions on the moral virtues and practical wisdom of adolescents and to gain an understanding of the theoretical approaches underpinning CE programmes.

Four studies found evidence of some effect of CE on outcomes related to moral virtues. Billig et al.'s (2008) Service Learning and Pike et al.'s (2015) Narnian Virtues programme were judged to have the highest weight of evidence of the reviewed studies. Both had a within-subjects design which allowed for comparison of scores relating to moral virtue from Time 1 to Time 2 and used strategies to try and control for the effects of extraneous variables. Both found significant effects of their intervention programmes on outcomes associated with moral virtue. However, these

findings should be interpreted with caution. Both studies relied on participants' self-report, which can be an unreliable measure (West, 2014). It was not possible to calculate an effect size for Billig et al. and the effect size of the results in Pike et al. was small. It is also important to be clear how each study defined and operationalised virtue. The significant effect of CE in Pike et al. related to participants' increased knowledge of virtues, whilst the significant effect in Billig et al. was found in relation to reported behaviour. Neither measure could be said to incorporate the cognitive, affective and behavioural aspects believed by Aristotle (2009) to be crucial for virtue. However, the findings of these studies offer tentative support for the use of community-based Service Learning programmes or novel-based programmes in developing some aspects of cognition and behaviour associated with moral virtue.

None of the quantitative measures in the studies showed the interaction between virtues and situational factors highlighted by Lerner and Callina (2014) and none mentioned practical wisdom. Qualitative data from Pike et al. (2015) and Seroczynski et al. (2011) offers some evidence of young people weighing virtues according to the demands of the situation and suggests a more nuanced view of character which warrants further exploration.

1.4 Discussion

1.4.1 Limitations

Some of the data included in the analysis was for students who were under the age of 13. This was because the target population of 13-18-year-olds was often part of data sets which included younger children and it was not possible to separate the findings by age group. Age may have had a significant influence on the findings, given that adolescence has been identified as a key period in character development (Lickona, 2014; Walker et al., 2017). In addition, although attempts were made to match control groups to experimental groups on variables such as age, gender, ethnicity and attainment, it is difficult to control for other variables beyond the scope of the intervention, such as school ethos and home life. It is also not possible to know the long-term effects of the interventions of the reviewed studies because none of the studies used follow-up measures to calculate the sustainability of reported gains in moral virtue.

Limitations in relation to the difficulties in synthesising and making comparisons between vastly different studies have been discussed throughout this review. The difference in theoretical underpinnings, aims, interventions and outcome measures of each of the studies made it difficult to draw reliable comparisons between them. This is an important finding which highlights a lack of coherence in definitions of character and understandings of the purpose of CE. The reviewed studies focused mainly on quantitative outcome measures, which tended to capture knowledge or behaviour in relation to moral virtue. To adopt outcome measures which isolate one of these components of character seems reductionist and gives a definitive measure or score which may not reflect an individual's response in all situations. It seems that a focus on measurement and quantification (Walker et al., 2017) may have led CE down an objectivist path which has served to develop measurable components of character and ignore more subjective aspects.

1.4.2 Conclusions

Overall, the findings of the review serve to highlight the complexity inherent in operationalising concepts relating to character and in finding valid and reliable ways to measure the effects of CE interventions empirically. The studies offer some evidence that CE interventions can have a positive effect on the development of either knowledge of moral virtues, motivation to act according to moral virtues, or morally virtuous behaviour. However, greater clarity is needed as to the theoretical underpinnings of CE and which component(s) of moral virtue are being addressed by given outcome measures. The outcome measures quoted in the review do not seem to offer a satisfactory way of dealing with the theoretical complexity underpinning the concept of character. Furthermore, the outcome measures do not seem to offer a credible way of accounting for the mediating effect of the situation on morally virtuous thoughts, feelings and behaviour. If CE is to be effective in supporting young people to develop their ability to act in the right way at the right time for the right reasons, both research and practice need to be able to confidently address these complexities.

1.4.3 Recommendations

Further research is needed to address the limitations highlighted in this review. The age range covered by the reviewed studies is large and includes participants at

different stages of adolescence, which could mask differences in development of character and virtue. If moral virtue and practical wisdom do develop with age, as Aristotle (2009) argued, then it is possible that adolescents of different ages do not have the same understanding of virtues or hold the same priorities. This warrants further investigation.

Further practical considerations about judging the effectiveness of CE programmes relate to the duration of intervention. Further investigation could provide more information as to the optimal length and frequency of CE interventions and the post-intervention sustainability of any gains made.

The findings of the review suggest CE programmes based on Service Learning or based on novels where the protagonists face ethical dilemmas could offer promising ways of developing some thoughts, feelings and actions associated with moral virtues. More research is needed to further explore the effects of CE interventions on all three aspects of virtue, rather than selecting outcome measures that focus on one.

Finally, there is a need for greater clarity about the theoretical basis of character adopted by both researchers and practitioners and how this informs the aims of CE interventions and the outcomes prioritised. The reviewed studies suggest a heavy weighting within existing research towards quantitative data. In attempting to quantify and measure virtue, we risk missing the complexity of the interaction between personal understandings of virtue and the situation. Qualitative research is needed to explore the interaction between virtue and situation and the effect this can have on moral decision-making. This is further explored in the empirical research reported in Chapter 3.

Chapter 2. Bridging Document

2.1 Aims

The purpose of this chapter is to outline how the main findings from my literature review generated the questions explored in my empirical research. I consider the potential contribution of the research to the field of Character Education (CE). I also outline the philosophical underpinnings of my research and how these influenced my methodology. Issues arising during the research and the way in which I reacted to these are explained, particularly in relation to the political and ethical implications of making empirical judgments about how to define wellbeing and morality. Reference is made throughout to my own axiological stance and how this influenced the decisions and interpretations I made throughout the research process.

2.2 Why Character Education?

I began with an interest in how educational psychologists could support schools to promote mental health and wellbeing. I was drawn towards a salutogenic (Antonovsky, 1979) approach to mental health and wellbeing, which emphasises promoting mental health and wellbeing over avoiding mental illness. Current CE is centred on the idea of ‘ “the flourishing pupil”–in contradistinction, for example, to…the “emotionally vulnerable pupil” ’ (Walker et al., 2015, p. 81). I believe CE positions young people as active constructors of their own value systems and decision-making capabilities. CE focuses on becoming a good person and living a good life and it is acknowledged that this is more complex than simply adhering to a set of predetermined moral duties or regulations (Aristotle, 2009; Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues, 2017). Rather than possessing a collection of individual virtues, De Caro, Vaccarezza, and Niccoli (2018, p. 296) emphasise the importance of being oriented towards ‘the good’ overall. To know and enact the good is not to uphold moral virtues unquestioningly in every situation, but to recognise the nuances in different situations and adjust thoughts, feelings and behaviour accordingly. This emphasises the importance of taking ownership of one’s values and becoming an autonomous decision-maker (Arthur, Harrison, Kristjánsson, et al., 2014). I believe CE has the potential to equip young people with critical skills in thought, feeling and action that will enable them to develop their own personal understandings of the good and navigate the complexities of moral decision-making as they become older.

2.3 Philosophical Stance

It is important to note that many have argued that psychologists should not be involved in issues relating to wellbeing (Fowers, 2012b). There are concerns Psychology will 'cease to be a value-free science as soon as it starts to study virtue and character' (Sanderse, 2016, p. 449). However, Kashdan, Biswas-Diener, and King (2008, p. 228) argue psychologists have a justified 'place at the table' in discussions about 'the good life'. It is difficult to set out a psychological theory of character without looking to philosophical theory (Lapsley & Narvaez, 2011, p. 529). This section therefore explores how my Pragmatist stance influenced my approach to the research. Interrogating my philosophical stance in more detail raised questions for me and led me to adapt my empirical theories and approaches as the research went on.

My Pragmatist stance has been largely influenced by Dewey. Dewey has been described as a Naturalist (Kirby, 2008; Maull, 2013). He saw nature as a 'moving whole of interacting parts' (Dewey, 1929, p. 232) which is constantly changing (Vaesen, 2014). Pragmatists believe all knowledge is contingent and is true as long as it contributes to better outcomes (Morgan, 2014). Through experience, we develop habits of action that help us know what to do in everyday situations (Rosiek, 2013). However, because the world is constantly changing, we are frequently presented with situations for which our habits do not prepare us; in these situations, we need to engage in inquiry to find the best course of action (Dewey, 1938).

As my thinking about character developed, I began to see obvious parallels between these Pragmatist ideas and Aristotle's (2009) ideas about character. These parallels have been highlighted by psychologists, Narvaez and Lapsley (2014). Aristotle described virtues as habits but acknowledged that habits would not suffice in every situation and at these times we would need to employ practical wisdom to discern the best course of action. This is similar to Dewey's (1938) logical inquiry, which is also employed to meet the demands of situations when habits may not suffice. However, the philosophical underpinnings of the theories differ in a way that has important implications for empirical definitions and operationalisations of character.

Although both Aristotle and Dewey have been described as Naturalists (Hoy, 2000), Aristotle's Naturalism was based on the teleological belief that flourishing is the

ultimate goal of human existence (Maull, 2013). However, Dewey rejected the foundationalist notion of a telos; he believed our understandings of what is right and good can only come through our lived experience and considering how we can better it (Maull, 2013). This distinction is important because Dewey's stance implies there is no objective understanding of what is right and good (Lapsley, 2016). This does not mean that there can be no understanding of what is right and good, simply that these understandings of what is right and good come from our transactions with others in the community (Biesta, 2014), rather than from antecedent moral principles. Based on this Pragmatist view, it does not make sense to think of virtues as traits that can exist within individuals; the good can only be realised in transactions with others.

As my ideas progressed throughout the research, my Pragmatist stance led me to favour psychological theories of character emphasising the interaction between person and context, such as those of Lerner and Callina (2014) and Nucci (2017). Whilst these stances satisfied my philosophical stance, they meant rejecting trait theories of virtue, which seem popular based on the findings of my literature review. It has been argued that virtue is what distinguishes CE from other forms of ME (Lapsley & Narvaez, 2006). Without virtue I was not sure whether I still had grounds for studying character as a separate discipline. This was particularly difficult given that the concepts of wellbeing, virtue and practical wisdom all started as philosophical, not psychological concepts. However, as Shotter and Tsoukas (2014) point out, CE is about becoming good and not simply about knowing what goodness is. Therefore, my empirical investigations should centre on this notion of becoming good. This is not simply about applying reason, as suggested by Kohlberg's (1984) moral stage theory. Wisdom in action requires the ability to tailor moral thought, feeling and action to the demands of the current situation in order to make wise and informed decisions (Arthur, Harrison, Kristjánsson, et al., 2014). Sometimes these decisions cannot be reduced to pure reason alone. It is about developing an understanding of the good relevant to one's context and enacting this flexibly through balancing competing demands in the situation (Aristotle, 2009; Dewey, 1946). Fesmire (2003) argues only character can address such questions in sufficient levels of complexity. This led me to consider more closely the concept of practical wisdom and how it might be explored empirically. It seemed logical to me that this should be

done by developing a qualitative understanding of person-context interactions, as discussed further in Chapter 3.

2.4 Developing my empirical research question

The literature review findings reinforced assertions by Curren (2016) and Kristjánsson (2017) that there is currently no dominant psychological theory underpinning CE. Each study in the literature review conceptualised character and virtue, and thus enacted CE, slightly differently. Most studies made some mention of virtues or character strengths. Some also referred to measures of moral reasoning that have been associated with a more rational, deontological stance to moral development, such as the Ad-ICM (Thoma et al., 2013) in Arthur, Kristjánsson, et al. (2017) or the Sociomoral Reflection Measure-Short Form (Gibbs et al., 1992) in Seroczynski et al. (2011). The results of the systematic literature review highlight the diverse range of theoretical assumptions underpinning CE and go some way to explaining why CE and Moral Education are often conflated (Lapsley & Yeager, 2013).

Four studies found a small effect of CE on at least some aspect of moral virtue, although two of these were judged to have low weight of evidence. The other two were judged to have medium weight of evidence. I was surprised to find that all the studies employed at least some quantitative measurements of virtues/character strengths and that data was collected mainly through self-report rating scales. None of these outcome measures considered the influence different situations might have on individuals' knowledge and understanding or enactment of virtues. No studies mentioned practical wisdom, despite this being a key component of Aristotelian theory on character which has inspired many modern-day Character Education programmes (Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues, 2017; Kristjánsson, 2017).

The aim of the empirical research was therefore to develop a qualitative understanding of the interaction between personal understandings of virtue and situational factors in moral decision-making. Although some have argued for a stage model of character development in which practical wisdom might not be expected to develop until adulthood (Burnyeat, 1980; Sanderse, 2015); others have argued that the ability to integrate beliefs about the good with the demands of the situation is constantly developing and therefore individuals possess practical wisdom from an

early age (De Caro et al., 2018; Sherman, 1989). I agree with the latter view. Rather than seeking to operationalise practical wisdom and determine whether an individual possesses it, I began from the assumption that everyone has practical wisdom in different stages of development and research should focus on what decision-making processes entail at different stages of development. A qualitative exploration of the ways in which young people incorporate their understandings of the good with the demands of the situation could help to inform the development of CE programmes which are tailored to the needs and concerns of young people.

2.5 Methodology

The purpose of pragmatic inquiry is to produce knowledge of practical value (Dewey, 1938). I wanted my research to be of practical value to the participating students and to their wider school community. Goldkuhl (2012a) outlines three different forms of Pragmatism in social sciences research: functional (knowledge *for* action); referential (knowledge *about* action); and methodological (knowledge *through* action). I think my research best fits under the umbrella of referential Pragmatism. I wanted to better understand *how* adolescents go about applying their understanding of the good when faced with moral dilemmas in order to help teachers design and deliver CE lessons and character-based discussions.

I adopted a constructivist Grounded Theory (GT) methodology because it seemed to fit most closely with Dewey's (1938) ideas about building on existing knowledge and contributing to general practice. Grounded Theory is a 'systematic and flexible way of collecting and analysing qualitative data' which offers an interpretive analysis of data and makes the study of action central (Charmaz, 2006, p. 2). Whilst traditional GT emphasises the importance of inductive theory development and instructs the researcher not to apply preconceived theories (Glaser, 1998), Goldkuhl and Cronholm (2010) reject the idea that we should construct a theory based entirely on the data. 'In a pure inductive abstraction…there is an obvious risk of knowledge isolation' (Goldkuhl & Cronholm, 2010, p. 188). I therefore referred to the existing literature in the final stages of theory development to inform my GT.

Whilst GT could offer a contribution to general practice, I also wanted to consider the impact of the research on local practice. I therefore incorporated principles of Practice Research into my GT process. Practice Research is a form of Action

Research which emphasises the need to combine local practice interests with research interests applicable to the general population (Goldkuhl, 2012b). I wanted to give participants some ownership over the data so it could inform future planning for CE in that context. I took an early version of my emerging theory back to participants to seek feedback, as recommended in Charmaz (2006). I also asked them how they wanted to use the data moving forward. This fits with Goldkuhl's (2012a) *functional* Pragmatic research which emphasises *knowledge for action*. Discussing the research findings with the participants was intended to help them begin to consider how the findings might be applied either by them as individuals or by the school community more widely.

I followed Charmaz's (2006) basic GT procedure. Data collection and data analysis occurred simultaneously, with early stages of analysis helping to refine questions and highlight areas of focus for subsequent interviews. I wrote memos throughout each stage of the process, which helped me to focus codes, to begin to identify categories and to start to develop theories about the relationships within and between categories. As a novice researcher, structure was important to help guide my analysis (Charmaz, 2006). Therefore, I used Corbin and Strauss' (1990) Axial Codes and Glaser's (1978) Theoretical Codes as a guide to inform my ideas at the relevant stages of coding, though I did not adhere strictly to either. The research was an iterative process, with new data and codes prompting me to revisit and refine emerging codes and categories throughout. Towards the end of the data analysis process, once some fairly clear categories had emerged, I began to combine these ideas with existing ideas in the literature, as recommended by Goldkuhl and Cronholm (2010). I generated my final theory through a process of mapping, theoretical sorting and combining memos, integrating ideas from relevant literature.

2.6 Ethical considerations

The research received ethical approval from Newcastle University. Participants were given an information sheet, as well as the opportunity to attend a briefing session outlining the research process and purpose in more detail. Written consent was sought both from participants and their parents and they were regularly reminded of their right to withdraw from the study at any time. All participants were given a

pseudonym in order to maintain confidentiality. Their data was securely stored, with all identifiable information kept secure.

When designing and undertaking the research, I tried to remain alert to the ongoing ethical dimensions inherent in the research process (Ramcharan & Cutcliffe, 2001). When designing interview questions, I was conscious that it is important to consider the ethical ramifications of asking people to discuss dilemmas which could bring up painful thoughts and feelings for them (C. Marshall & Rossman, 2016). To address this, I gave participants a questionnaire prior to the interviews to determine the kinds of situations they felt would commonly cause them a dilemma. I used this information to develop the dilemmas I presented to participants in the interviews. I based dilemmas on hypothetical characters and asked participants to choose one of three dilemmas they felt most comfortable to explore. I remained sensitive to participants' reactions during the interviews and focus groups, adjusting my comments and questions accordingly. I took care to report data sensitively and to maintain participants' anonymity, respecting requests not to include some comments in the analysis.

I also considered the wider ethical implications presented by the research. Some of the philosophical considerations outlined in the discussion above also raise ethical issues. One important consideration is the power relations inherent in educating for character. Ecclestone (2012) criticises CE as a form of state control. Although neo-Aristotelian CE cites its main aim as flourishing (Kristjánsson, 2017), Lapsley and Narvaez (2006) highlight that some CE programmes have adopted behaviourist approaches, which often attempt to instil non-negotiable moral codes in pupils (Smith, Cowie, & Blades, 2015). Such approaches teach passive external conformity (B. White, 2015), rather than developing an intrinsic motivation to enact moral virtues and promote wellbeing. In the UK, government-commissioned research into character has highlighted its benefits in terms of attainment, behaviour and employability (Cullinane & Montacute, 2017). The government's current approach to CE lists among its aims to 'set (young people) up for success in further study and the world and work' (Department for Education, 2019). These examples illustrate Ecclestone's (2012) warnings about state control and highlight the importance of making both school staff and students who are participating in CE programmes aware of their intended purpose. I wanted my research to focus on the intrinsic

benefits of CE and I think it is important to continue to foreground this. Educational psychologists could play a key role in supporting teachers and young people to understand the aims and theoretical underpinnings of CE, moving away from behaviourist notions of character as compliance towards more nuanced understandings of context-sensitive autonomous moral decision-making.

Another important ethical consideration was whether psychologists should make value judgments about what constitutes the good life (Fowers, 2012b). My Pragmatist stance, according to which fact-value distinctions are arbitrary, implies moral relativism. A morally relativist stance is difficult to maintain for several reasons. Firstly, Welch (2011) argued that if no form of morality is better than any other, then there is no need for CE because we would not know what to teach. I would counter this argument by repositioning the purpose of CE as being to equip young people with the ability to make decisions about what constitutes a good life and helping them to develop the practical wisdom to enact this understanding of the good. I do not refute the idea that it is possible to develop an understanding of the good but I believe this understanding arises naturally from an individual's interactions within their social context, rather than from a supernatural telos. This belief is likely to be in direct conflict with the beliefs of those who believe morals are universal, or those whose religious belief places a god or gods as the source of understandings of what it means to be good. I was mindful of the need to respect these beliefs.

In my opinion, beliefs about the nature of morality and what it means to uphold the good are fundamental. It is impossible to avoid taking a stance on this. It is important to be aware of one's stance, but equally it is not the role of psychologists to define the good. Moral relativism appeals to me in this sense because it leaves room for people to discover and express their own understandings of the good. The empirical research therefore intended to focus on decision-making processes, rather than on judging whether participants' beliefs and actions should be considered morally right or wrong.

Chapter 3. Empirical Research

Abstract

There have been many attempts to develop psychological understandings of Character Education in recent years. Social cognitivists have rejected trait theories of virtue in favour of relational theories that emphasise person-situation interactions. The current research used a Grounded Theory methodology to explore the ways in which personal virtue beliefs and situational factors interact in young people's moral decision-making. This ability has been likened to the Aristotelian notion of practical wisdom. Eighteen secondary school pupils aged between 12 and 15 took part in semi-structured interviews focusing on their beliefs about what it means to live a good life and how these interact with situational factors to inform their response to moral dilemmas. The findings suggest the extent to which young people apply personal understandings of virtue to their moral decisions depends on a range of interconnected situational variables, which vary according to the context in which the dilemma presents. The study concludes that a focus on developing young people's ability to reflect on their understandings of virtue and how these vary according to the situation offers a promising focus for Character Education interventions. Implications for educational psychology practice and for future research are discussed.

Practical wisdom: A Grounded Theory of the interaction between young people's personal understandings of the good and salient situational factors in moral decision making.

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 Context: The origins of Character Education

The concept of practical wisdom originates from Aristotle's (2009) work on character. Aristotle's theory of character is associated with a virtue ethical understanding of morality which emphasises the importance of promoting individual and collective wellbeing over acting out of a sense of moral duty (Kristjánsson, 2014a, p. 49). According to Aristotle (2009), practical wisdom is needed, along with virtue, in order to develop the good character required to live a good life (see Chapter 2, p. 23 or further discussion of 'the good'). Aristotle believed a person of good character possesses prosocial habits of moral excellence, known as virtues, which help them to act in the best interests of self and others (Daniel, 2007). Practical wisdom has been conceived of as a kind of meta-virtue which enables us to weigh the demands of competing virtues alongside the demands of a situation in order to act in the way we judge to be right in that particular context (Arthur, Kristjánsson, et al., 2017, see Chapter 1, p. 2 for further details). The constructs of virtue and practical wisdom form the basis of the neo-Aristotelian approach to Character Education (CE), which seems to predominate in the UK (Arthur, Harrison, Kristjánsson, et al., 2014; Curren, 2010).

3.1.2 Beyond trait theories of character

Developing a psychological understanding of the Aristotelian concepts of virtue and practical wisdom have proved difficult (Lapsley, 2016). Attempts to offer an empirical exploration of character development led some researchers to adopt a trait conceptualisation of virtue (Sanderse, 2016), which has been criticised for failing to reflect the complexity of real-life applications of virtue (Doris, 2002, see Chapter 1, p. 3 for details). Theories of character as a set of virtues that exist independently of context are therefore judged by some psychologists to be meaningless (Callina & Lerner, 2017; Lapsley & Narvaez, 2006; Nucci, 2018). A social cognitive perspective proposes an alternative theory that character is found in interactions between person

and context (Lerner, Vandell, & Tirrell, 2017; McGrath, 2017; Nucci, 2018). People will behave differently depending on context, making it difficult to define character in terms of consistent beliefs, behaviours or traits (Nucci, 2018). Character is a 'system that enables the person to engage the social world as a moral agent' (Nucci, 2017, p. 14), not a collection of virtues. An empirical understanding of character which can take into account the complexity of these interactions is needed.

3.1.3 An empirical understanding of practical wisdom

Taking a social-cognitive approach, character entails having an understanding of how to live a good life and being able to adapt this understanding to do what is right for oneself and for others in a given situation (Callina et al., 2017). This ability to apply 'the right capabilities in the right manner for the moment' (Narvaez, 2018, p. 456) has also been called ethical expertise and has been equated with Aristotelian practical wisdom (De Caro et al., 2018; Narvaez & Bock, 2014). According to De Caro et al. (2018) ethical expertise comprises having a good understanding of what one believes to be good and applying this understanding flexibly according to the features of the specific situation one finds oneself in. Narvaez and Bock (2014) apply dual processing theory to their theory of ethical expertise, incorporating both intuitive and deliberative processes in the application of moral virtue. They liken intuition to Aristotle's virtue habits and deliberation to practical wisdom.

Dual processing theory offers a social cognitive understanding of the way in which people make decisions. According to this theory, through experience, individuals build schemas, which are knowledge structures stored in memory and consisting of values, traits, goals, and behavioural scripts (Cantor, 1990). Virtue schemas are knowledge structures and memories which relate to our understanding of what it means to be good and lead a good life (Lapsley & Narvaez, 2004). Through a combination of biopsychosocial processes, we build a set of moral schemas that form our individual understandings of what it means to be a good person (Narvaez, 2018). We gradually develop the declarative, procedural and conditional knowledge needed to become ethical experts (Narvaez & Bock, 2014).

Although not traits, virtues can still have a role to play in developing ethical expertise. De Caro et al. (2018) argue it does not make sense to separate moral virtues from practical wisdom:

> '*When one is virtuous, what one really possesses is the single virtue of practical wisdom, understood as ethical expertise – the other virtues are descriptive of such virtues in each different moral field*' (p. 294).

Ethical expertise, which might also be called practical wisdom or virtue, entails incorporating all virtues into one satisfactory action. Individual moral virtues might be thought of as tools that help us to think and talk about the good and to make practically wise decisions. This suggests that the focus of CE should be developing practical wisdom, rather than developing individual virtues.

3.1.4 Person-situation interactions in moral decision-making

There are several potential pitfalls in investigating practical wisdom and it is argued by some it cannot be quantified or codified empirically (Lapsley, 2016; MacIntyre, 2007). There are multiple definitions and understandings of practical wisdom both within and across disciplines (Lapsley, 2019). However, its constitutive and integrative functions are commonly cited (Darnell, Gulliford, Kristjánsson, & Paris, 2019; Kristjánsson, 2014b; Lapsley, 2019). The constitutive element is the ability to notice that a situation is ethically relevant and the integrative function involves weighing and adjusting competing understandings of the good in complex situations. This integrative function highlights the importance of understanding how personal and situational factors interact in real-time decision-making (Wang, Batanova, Ferris, & Lerner, 2016). Real-time decisions must incorporate the important factors in 'here and now situations' and not simply impose 'antecedently known eternal principles' (Wren, 2014, p. 15). Developing an understanding of the integrative processes involved in moral decision-making could help elucidate the ways in which 'here and now' factors influence interpretations of the good in real-life situations.

Models of decision-making across varied disciplines acknowledge this interaction between personal beliefs and situational factors. For example, Sternberg's (1998) theory of wisdom outlines decision-making as a complex process of balancing interests of self and others with situational factors in order to promote the common good. Sternberg also highlights the mediating role of personal values in this process.

Similarly, Crossan et al.'s (2013) model of ethical decision-making acknowledges the interaction of both virtue and situational factors in the decision making process. Although these models acknowledge the interaction between situational factors and virtue, they do not offer contextual explanations of which virtues or situational factors are typically influential or how they interact.

3.1.5 Practical wisdom in adolescence

Adolescence is highlighted in the character development literature as an important period of moral development (Hardy & Carlo, 2011; S. A. Hardy & G. Carlo, 2005). There is evidence that adolescents are particularly susceptible to the influence of situational factors in their general judgment and decision-making (Albert & Steinberg, 2011). Therefore educators must appreciate that '…what counts as virtuous behaviour for a teenager may not be so for a mature adult' (Arthur, Kristjánsson, et al., 2017, p. 50). If character educators are to effectively support students to develop practical wisdom, they need to understand what influences their decisions about the good.

Quantitative self-report studies suggest adolescents' moral action is affected by situational factors, for example peer group norms (Killen, Rutland, Abrams, Mulvey, & Hitti, 2013; Mulvey & Killen, 2015; Piehler & Dishion, 2007) and the threat of verbal and physical aggression (Mulvey & Killen, 2016). However, such studies are often based on predetermined judgements about the morally acceptable course of action (Reilly & Narvaez, 2018), with many studies of morality judging adolescents' decision-making according to adult understandings (Garrigan, Adlam, & Langdon, 2018). They do not explain why or how participants arrive at their decisions or the personal understandings of virtue that inform their decisions.

Dahl, Gingo, Uttich, and Turiel (2018) conducted a qualitative exploration of how adults and adolescents reason, analyse and evaluate moral problems. Rather than evaluating participants' final decision, these qualitative accounts offered participants the opportunity to explain their moral judgments and demonstrated the complexity with which adolescents reasoned about moral dilemmas. Although the dilemmas posed in the study have been criticised for being based on a 'never-in-a-lifetime' scenario (Killen & Mulvey, 2018, p. 112), this method marks a clear step towards

understanding how personal beliefs about the good and situational factors combine in moral decision-making.

3.1.6 Aims of the research

The current research sought to offer a qualitative account of adolescents' moral decision-making, exploring how personal understandings of the good and situational factors were combined in the decision-making process. The research sought to explore the complexities inherent in moral dilemmas young people judged to be relevant to their own lives. It offered the opportunity to understand moral decision-making from adolescents' point of view and to consider the role education could play in supporting the development of practical wisdom.

3.2 Method

3.2.1 Participants

The research was undertaken in a secondary academy in the North East of England. The school is part of an academy chain with a strong Christian ethos focusing on the development of character. Character is also embedded throughout the school's curricular and extra-curricular activities and its behaviour management policy.

I met with the school's Vice Principal to discuss my ideas for the research and to gain an understanding of the school's priorities in relation to CE. We agreed I would explore pupils' views about character and virtues and how they apply these in their decision-making. Opportunity sampling was used to recruit participants. I briefed two Year 8 and two Year 10 classes on what the research would entail. Eight Year 8 students and twelve Year 10 students consented to take part in the research (see Appendix C and Appendix D). These students then attended a more detailed briefing. The final number of participants was eighteen, as two Year 8 students withdrew from the research.

All Year 8 participants were girls. Four held no religious beliefs; two held Muslim beliefs. Of the Year 10 students, three were boys and nine were girls. The boys held no religious beliefs. Five girls held no religious beliefs; one held Muslim beliefs; two held Christian beliefs; and one held both Muslim and Christian beliefs. One Year 10

student had joined the school in June 2018; the other students had all attended since the beginning of Year 7. See Table 6 for further information about participants.

Table 6 Participant profiles

Pseudonym	Age	Year Group	Gender	Religious beliefs
Jesse	12	8	Female	Muslim
Alex	14	10	Male	Atheist
Riley	14	10	Female	Non-religious
Rory	14	10	Female	Muslim/Christian
Sky	12	8	Female	Muslim
Elena	12	8	Female	Non-religious
Ash	14	10	Female	Muslim
Jordan	14	10	Female	Non-religious
Bob	15	10	Female	Non-religious
Charlie	14	10	Female	Non-religious
Ellis	14	10	Female	Non-religious
Robyn	12	8	Female	Non-religious
Morgan	14	10	Female	Christian
Jamie	14	10	Male	Non-religious
Sam	14	10	Female	Christian
Billie	14	10	Male	Non-religious
Millie	12	8	Female	Non-religious
Phoenix	12	8	Female	Non-religious

3.2.2 Methodological approach

Adopting a Pragmatist world view (as discussed in Chapter 2, p. 27), I selected a Grounded Theory (GT) methodology. The methodology was based on Charmaz's (2006, p. 6) key constructivist GT principles of 'examining processes', 'making the study of action central' and 'creating abstract interpretive understandings of data'. Charmaz (2006) acknowledges the importance of grounding the theory initially in the data but also within existing literature, a practice which is central to Multi-Grounded Theory, an emerging form of GT which also influenced my approach (Goldkuhl &

Cronholm, 2010). GT was combined with a Practice Research methodology which emphasises the need to combine local practice interests with research interests applicable to the general population (Goldkuhl, 2012b). Previous research has adopted a similar approach (Teram, Schachter, & Stalker, 2005), taking GT data back to participants and giving them the opportunity to comment on emerging findings and discuss how they might take the data forward in their context.

3.2.3 Procedure

Questionnaires

In the detailed briefing session, participants were asked to complete a questionnaire exploring the kinds of moral dilemmas they commonly face in their daily lives (See Appendix E). A broad definition of 'moral' similar to that of Dewey (1967) was adopted, according to which all actions which may impact on another person were considered moral. Dilemmas were taken from the 'Good Character' website (Denison, 2018), which contains a series of dilemmas specifically designed for discussion with young people. These dilemmas were grouped to create twelve overarching themes for the questionnaire (see Appendix F). Participants' responses (see Appendix G) were used to generate fictional moral dilemmas to discuss in the interviews. The scenarios judged most likely to pose dilemmas for young people were bullying/falling out with friends; alcohol and drug use; and peer pressure. I developed dilemma scenarios for the individual interviews based on these themes and using Denison's (2018) dilemmas as a basis. I used the website 'Storyboard That' to create comic strip versions of each scenario to make the stories more accessible for participants (see Appendix H).

Interviews

Individual interviews were conducted in a private room in school over a period of four weeks, with four to five interviews taking place each week. The interviews were semi-structured, starting from broad, open-ended questions (Charmaz, 2006; Gillham, 2000, see Appendix I). I prepared some possible follow-up questions but remained alert to interesting leads throughout the interview (Holstein & Gubrium, 1995). Some questions were based on 'sensitising concepts' (Blumer, 1954) from existing CE theory and research and thus explored participants' understandings of

moral virtues such as ‘honesty’, ‘respect’ and ‘integrity’ and of the concepts of ‘right’ and ‘good’ (see Appendix J). Some questions were based on Dilemma Analysis (C. Marshall, 2006); participants were given hypothetical dilemmas and asked to explain their thought process in arriving at a judgment about what the character should do in the situation. Follow-up questions and discussions explored participants’ answers in greater depth and included discussion of examples from their own lives. Some adjustments were made to questions following the first round of interviews as explained below (see Appendix K). Interviews lasted between 25 and 45 minutes and were audio-recorded. Each participant selected a pseudonym at the beginning of the interview to maintain their anonymity. Pseudonyms were used to refer to participants throughout data analysis and write-up. Participants were given the opportunity to read the transcript of their interview before their data was incorporated into the analysis (See Appendix L).

Focus Groups

All participants opted to attend a focus group following the individual interviews and initial phases of data analysis. Focus groups were used for theoretical sampling as part of on-going data analysis and ‘member-checking’ (Charmaz, 2006, p. 11). I shared an early model (see Appendix M) of the emerging theory with participants and sought their feedback. Taking into consideration that ‘…individuals in groups do not speak or answer questions in the same way as they do in other settings’ (Kidd & Parshall, 2000, p. 294), I held separate focus groups for Year 8 and Year 10 participants. I also asked participants to discuss their ideas in smaller groups and write them down before feeding back to the group. This fed into subsequent stages of GT analysis, but also allowed participants to develop more ownership over the data and to begin to determine how it could best be used to serve their local practice context. We agreed to share the findings with the school’s Senior Leadership Team. Participants were debriefed following the focus group (see Appendix N).

Ethical considerations are addressed in Chapter 2 (p.31).

3.2.4 Data Analysis

Data collection and analysis occurred simultaneously. I used NVivo 12 software to analyse my data, as recommended by Hutchison, Johnston, and Breckon (2010). I

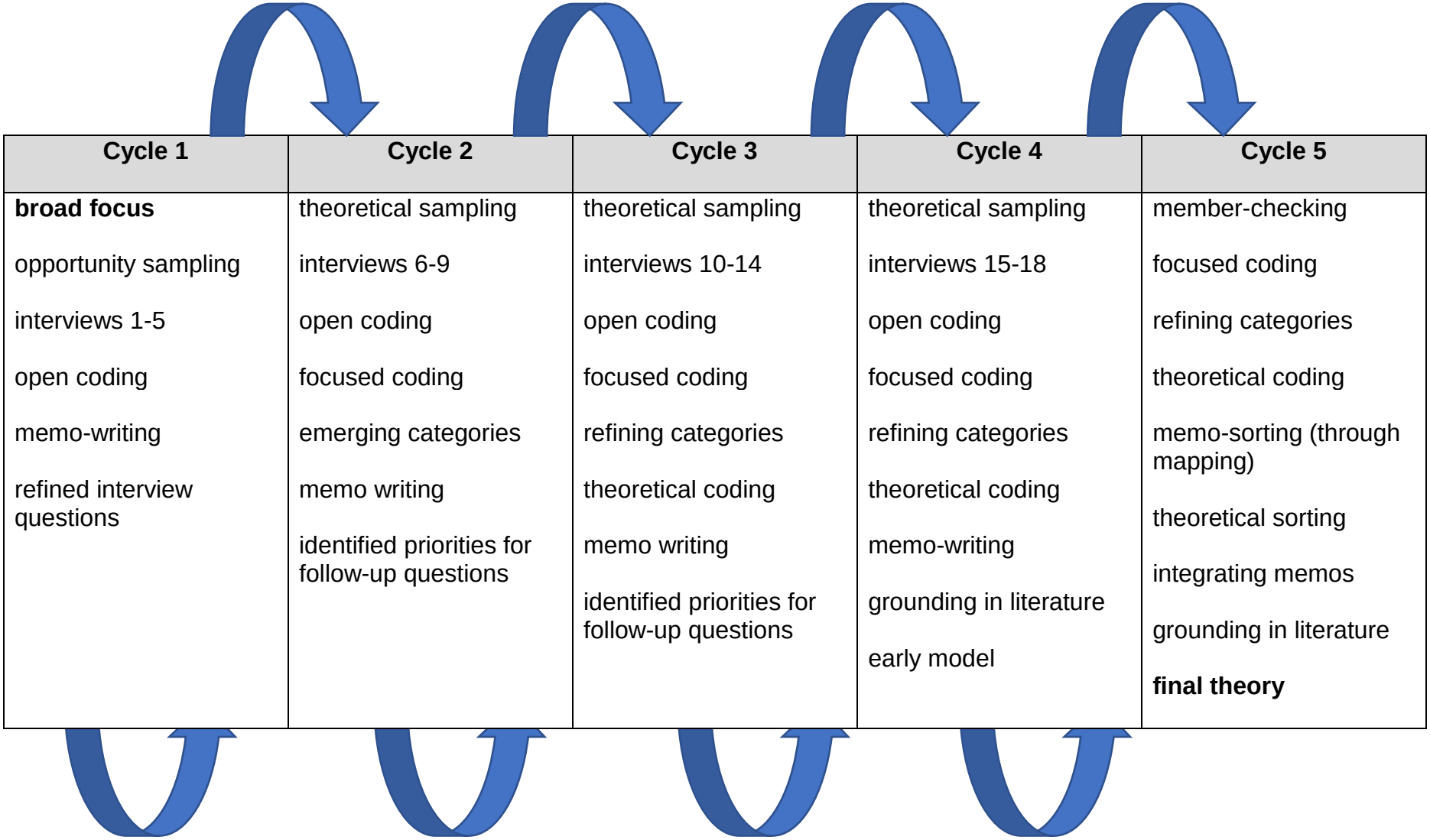
followed Charmaz's (2006) guidance on the GT process. Once I had conducted an interview, I began the process of line-by-line coding. Line by line analysis ensures codes are truly grounded within the data (Willig, 2013). Beginning the process of coding early, as well as writing memos (written analyses of developing ideas about codes), allowed me to gain insights about what kind of data to collect next (Charmaz, 2006). As the research went on, I honed initial codes, developing more focused codes and making links between them. As a novice researcher, structure was important to help guide my analysis (Charmaz, 2006). Therefore, I used Corbin and Strauss' (1990) Axial Codes and Glaser's (1978) Theoretical Codes as a guide to inform my ideas about coding, though I did not adhere strictly to either.

I was aware from the beginning that I had an active role in the grounded theory process and that my actions and interpretations influenced the path the research took and had a significant influence on the final theory. Charmaz (2006) argues it is not possible for the researcher to detach themselves from the research process and be an objective onlooker and therefore it is important to adopt a reflexive stance. Reflexivity helps the researcher to scrutinise themselves and their processes and to take care not to impose their own meanings on the data (Willig, 2013). I therefore defined my own views about character and wellbeing before commencing the research and kept in mind how these might influence the questions I was asking, the leads I was choosing to follow and my interpretations of the data. I used memo-writing to interrogate my thinking throughout the data collection and analysis process and to record thoughts, questions and ideas. This led me to explore the data in different ways. At later stages of the analysis, I used axial and theoretical codes to stimulate my thinking in different directions, opening up new relationships within the data and generating new questions. I took the data back to the participants to seek their thoughts about the emerging theory and subsequently integrated the emerging theory with the existing literature. Table 7 offers a description of each component activity in the GT process. Figure 2 illustrates how data collection and data analysis procedures were interconnected throughout (see Appendix O for detailed overview of data analysis process).

Table 7 Grounded Theory process

Activity	Description
Open coding	Line by line, action-focused initial codes after each interview.
Memo-writing	Memos were started in the early stages of coding and continued throughout data collection and analysis. Later memos described and analysed categories and the relationships within and between them.
Focused coding	Similar open codes were merged and renamed. Continued memo-writing helped to focus codes. The process of revisiting, refining and focusing codes continued throughout data collection and analysis.
Theoretical sampling	Specific new data was sought focusing on emerging areas of interest throughout the data collection process. This entailed refining interview questions.
Emerging Categories	Began to merge and adapt existing codes to form categories. New categories emerged throughout the process through focused and theoretical coding.
Refining Categories	Emerging categories were gradually adapted and refined through continued coding and memo-writing.
Theoretical coding	Coding specified relationships between categories.
Early grounding in literature	Compared early theoretical codes with the literature.
Early theory and model	Created model of emerging theory to share with participants.
Member checking	Shared model with participants and sought their feedback. This led to another process of refining and memo-writing. Model and theory were adapted based on participants' suggestions.
Memo sorting	Used mind-mapping and memo-writing to further explore links between categories and begin to put into an order.
Integrating memos	Analytical memos about the main categories were integrated with one another. This formed the basis of the theory.
Grounding in literature	Integrated relevant existing literature with emerging GT.
Final Theory	Refined GT to produce final theory.

Figure 2 Data collection and analysis procedure



Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Cycle 3	Cycle 4	Cycle 5
broad focus opportunity sampling interviews 1-5 open coding memo-writing refined interview questions	theoretical sampling interviews 6-9 open coding focused coding emerging categories memo writing identified priorities for follow-up questions	theoretical sampling interviews 10-14 open coding focused coding refining categories theoretical coding memo writing identified priorities for follow-up questions	theoretical sampling interviews 15-18 open coding focused coding refining categories theoretical coding memo-writing grounding in literature early model	member-checking focused coding refining categories theoretical coding memo-sorting (through mapping) theoretical sorting integrating memos grounding in literature **final theory**

3.3 Analysis

3.3.1 Overview of analysis

Participants all held clear personal understandings of what constitutes a good life and believed it was important to try and base their decisions on these understandings. Although they were often quite firm in their beliefs about what was good and right, their moral decisions did not always uphold their beliefs about the good, even in hypothetical scenarios. Young people described approaches to moral decision-making which, although underpinned by a strong sense of the good, were responsive to the situational factors judged most salient in promoting positive outcomes for themselves and the people around them. Virtue understandings seemed to be activated and prioritised to differing degrees depending on the situation and the individual's prior experiences. Participants seemed to weigh up the consequences of possible courses of action against competing personal and social priorities, placing a high weight on maintaining social relationships. These findings are discussed in further detail below.

3.3.2 Activating relevant beliefs and understandings of the good

Young people bring relevant personal beliefs about the good to their moral decision-making. They generally reported having gained these beliefs through personal experience, either as a result of their upbringing, through group membership, or through exposure to wider societal norms. Many ideas expressed reflected common sayings such as 'respect your elders' or 'treat others how you would like to be treated' (e.g. Millie (p. 1, line 10): "*if you're nice to everyone else they're gonna be nice to you*") as informing their understanding of the good. This reinforces Aho's (2012, p. 44) assertion that 'The community…provides a cohesive and stable narrative that guides the individual member toward communally accepted values'. Participants highly valued honesty, respect, fairness, kindness and responsibility, with some expressing these as non-negotiable regardless of the situation, especially honesty. Rory (p. 5, line 17) believed it would be easier for someone to uphold these virtues in their actions, "*if they…know who they are and they know what they believe in*". Billie (p. 3, line 33) similarly expressed how important it is that our actions reflect our beliefs because, "*that's what you base yourself on*". This suggests they saw virtue as central to their sense of self. Moral identity theory (Blasi, 1984) states that the more strongly an individual sees moral concerns as being central to who they are

as a person, the more likely they are to uphold their beliefs about what is right, even when situational factors might make this more difficult (Hardy & Carlo, 2011; Passini, 2016). Moral identity is judged by some psychologists to be an important component of character (Berkowitz, 2012; Nucci, 2017) and to provide a distinguishing feature from other forms of Moral Education by focusing on the question 'who will I be?' rather than 'what should I do?' (McGrath, 2017, p. 28).

However, the concept of moral identity has been criticised for not predicting under which circumstances a particular identity will be experienced (S. Hardy & G. Carlo, 2005). Sonnentag and Barnett (2015) found that although they expected individuals with a strong moral identity to take a stand against actions that would compromise their values, they found this was not the case in the context of their research. Similarly, in the current research, although many participants saw honesty as central to themselves, there were hypothetical and real-life situations where they would be prepared to compromise honesty. For example, Alex (p. 4, line 19) expressed the belief that, "*the morally right thing would be to be honest, like no matter what had happened*". However, his opinion in one of the hypothetical scenarios differed from this: "*she's been through some stuff at home and they're close friends…so they would wanna help her out. And if it's by lying, then I think they would be willing to take the risk*" (p. 5, line 10). This reinforces Nucci (2017) and Lerner and Callina's (2014) view that the exercise of character changes in response to the situation and is therefore not reducible to moral identity alone.

Young people did not consistently use the language of virtue when describing their understandings of the good. When presented with a list of virtues, many said they did not know what 'humility' and 'integrity' meant, despite these appearing in the school's core values. In some of their descriptions of decision-making, they referred to specific actions rather than using the language of virtue. For example, they spoke about "*tell(ing) the truth*" (Riley, p. 5, line 27) rather than 'honesty' or "*helping [people]*" (Phoenix, p. 2, line 39) rather than 'compassion'. The good was defined through descriptions of concrete behaviours rather than abstract terms and definitions whose meanings could be transferable in context. This lends support to social cognitive conceptualisations of virtues as schemas that *guide* us in our deliberations but whose application varies across situations (Aquino, Freeman, Reed, Lim, & Felps, 2009; Lapsley & Narvaez, 2004). As Alzola (2012) argued, the behaviours we classify in a given schema can change and expand as we develop experience and therefore each

individual's schema of a particular virtue will be specific to their own knowledge and experience. If this is true, there cannot be a strict set of behaviours we must adhere to in order to be called virtuous.

The salience of virtues seems to vary for young people depending on whether and how they are activated. Most participants did not believe they deliberated about all moral decisions. Two possible explanations seemed to emerge as to what happens to virtue in this scenario: either it is so well-embedded it becomes intuitive, or factors other than virtue determine their response to a situation. Participants believed there were some situations in which they "*just know*" (Riley, p. 4, line 6) what to do without having to think about it. For example, when Bob (p. 4, line 17) saw someone being bullied, she did not stop to think about whether to get involved or not: "*I didn't even think what was gonna happen, I just said, 'look, stop. It's not the right thing to do*'." This lends support to Narvaez's (2018) suggestion that some virtues are so well-established that we know the virtuous thing to do without thinking about it. This was a situation Bob had encountered before and something she felt passionately about. Such automatic responses have been likened to the Aristotelian concept of habits (Lapsley & Hill, 2008; Narvaez & Bock, 2014; Narvaez, Lapsley, Hagele, & Lasky, 2006), which may or may not be activated in a given situation (Aquino et al., 2009).

Although young people's intuitive responses often uphold what they believe to be good, this may not always be the case. Participants described "*getting carried away*" (Jesse, p. 3, line 7) and doing or saying things they might *"regret*" (Riley, p. 2, line 21) when they have subsequently thought about it. In these scenarios, beliefs about the good may not be driving their response. Young people believed they did not always perceive the need for conscious deliberation when in the moment. The Year 8 focus group (p. 5, lines 12-24) saw reacting before taking time to consider all their options as being more common for young people than for adults. This is perhaps because they are more likely to encounter novel situations that require conscious deliberation and less likely to have mature moral schemas in place, therefore increasing their reliance on intuitive responses to dilemmas (Albert & Steinberg, 2011; Narvaez & Bock, 2014). As a person develops in virtue, they develop more awareness of potential biases (Bourgeault, 2003) and an increasing ability to switch between control and automaticity in action as needed (Koutstaal, 2013). This suggests that providing opportunities to practice conscious deliberation about the good could help develop participants' intuitive responses, reducing the processing demands placed

on them in the moment and developing their ability to discern when conscious deliberation is likely to be needed.

3.3.3 Weighing consequences against competing personal and social priorities

When conscious deliberation was employed, young people were able to consider the potential outcomes of different courses of action and whether these outcomes upheld their understanding of the good. Similarly, Dewey's (1908/2009) concept of creative moral imagination states that when we have a moral decision to make we imagine the possible courses of action and their consequences to help us decide what to do (Narvaez & Mrkva, 2014). This is particularly difficult in situations where the best course of action is not immediately obvious because different 'fields' (De Caro et al., 2018, p. 294) of virtue conflict. For example, Rory (p. 3) described a situation where her friend had done something she judged to be wrong. She had to make a difficult choice between being fair to the victim by telling an adult what had happened or keeping what she knew to herself out of loyalty to her friend. In the end she decided that although her friend might be upset with her in the short-term, "*if I let her get away with it, it won't be fair on the other person, it won't be fair on [*the friend*] when she grows up*" (p. 3, line 36). Rory made a judgment about which consequences would best uphold her personal understanding of the good.

Looking beyond immediate consequences was often helpful in allowing participants to arrive at judgments that created a satisfactory integration of their competing beliefs about the good, rather than forcing them to select one over the other. For example, in one dilemma, young people had to weigh loyalty, compassion and honesty. The dilemma asked whether Dan should tell his friend, Sarah, the truth when she asked what he thought of her terrible singing. Many acknowledged a potential conflict here: "*I wouldn't wanna say it was horrible cos then you'd hurt her feelings but then it's hard cos I wouldn't wanna give her false hope*" (Ellis, p. 6, line 28). Most people felt that even though it may hurt Sarah's feelings in the beginning to hear that she is not good at singing, long-term it is better to hear this from a trusted friend. This belief in the importance of honesty between friends was held very strongly by almost all participants. Most believed Dan should tell Sarah the truth because then, "*she knows for next time she might need to improve*" (Jordan, p. 2, line 33) and because, "*if he lies and then she goes and performs in front of people, that will be more embarrassing for her*" (Sam, p. 6, line 27). Some young people's responses also

incorporated their concern for compassion towards Sarah. For example, Millie (p. 6, line 10) said it was important to, "*think of the best way…to tell the truth*" to let Sarah down gently. These examples show evidence of young people's ability to consider a wide range of possible actions and their outcomes and find a way to uphold what they believe to be good. Participants' responses integrated their understandings from separate fields of virtue into the action that produced the most satisfactory overall outcome to the situation. Rather than conceiving of each virtue as separate, which risks 'generating conflicting commitments for the agent' (De Caro et al., 2018, p. 292), they reasoned with complexity and sought opportunities to uphold multiple virtue fields, or virtue schemas, at once. Narvaez (2010) cites this as a marker of ethical expertise.

Young people highlighted the importance of being able to anticipate how their actions may be perceived by another person. The Year 8 focus group (p. 2, lines 12-33) believed it is often difficult to anticipate how another person will react to their actions and that responses to the same action could differ widely between people, making consequences even more difficult to anticipate. This makes the task of the moral decision-maker even more difficult. Not only must young people recognise that their actions, "*don't just affect themselves*" (Morgan, p. 3, line 1). They must also try to anticipate how the other person will react because, "*you may think that something's fair when it probably isn't fair if you look at it from somebody else's point of view*" (Charlie, p. 4, line 24). This ability to take the perspective of another person has been highlighted as a key skill in models of character (Nucci, 2017) and moral decision-making (Garrigan et al., 2018; Gibbs, 2014). Perspective-taking ability continues to develop into late adolescence (Dumontheil, Küster, Apperly, & Blakemore, 2010) and is therefore something young people may continue to require support with.

Often, in taking the perspective of another person, participants considered how their actions impacted on the feelings of others. Emotion is highlighted as key to ethical decision-making (Narvaez & Mrkva, 2014) and practical wisdom (Darnell et al., 2019) and was a component part of virtue for Aristotle (2009). Many participants said they would not want to do anything that might "*hurt*" the feelings of another person. Not only can emotions help weigh consequences, they can also prime young people to either increase or decrease the severity of their moral judgments (Schnall et al., 2008; Schnall, Roper, & Fessler, 2010). The Year 10 focus group described "*emotional block-down*" (p. 1, line 2) as predisposing them to more severe

judgments. This denoted times when an emotional experience earlier in the day affected their willingness to engage with subsequent situations as well as they felt they should.

Social influences were also salient in young people's responses to dilemmas. Consistent with research highlighting the key role parents play in helping children internalise and develop moral thoughts, feelings and actions (Kochanska, 2002; Narvaez & Lapsley, 2014), most young people believed their current understanding of the good came from their upbringing. Ellis (p. 8, line 37) said, "*I, yeah, stick to what my parents have taught me*". However, young people perceived a shift in the role parents played in supporting their moral decision-making as they got older. They believed their parents could still offer them advice: older people *"know more sometimes*" (Sky, p. 6, line 5). But the most significant source of support in moral decision-making was reported to come from peers, particularly for some Year 10 participants: "*When I was little it'd have been at home, but I think now everything I learn about being myself is from my friends because I see them every day*" (Riley, p. 9, line 1). This is reflective of a general developmental shift of reference in adolescence from parents to peers (American Psychological Association, 2002).

Through identifying with their peers, adolescents begin to develop their own moral understandings (Bishop & Inderbitzen, 1995). Young people believed when an individual's views match that of their social group, "*it'll encourage (them) to do the right thing*" (Charlie, p. 2, line 5). If the young person does not have relevant experience to draw on, they might look to their peer group, "*cos I've seen other people in situations and I guess like I've just learned from them*" (Elena, p. 6, line 20). Sometimes, if young people have a strong belief that contradicts that of the group, they might look to peers for emotional support and reassurance: "*if you just keep it all inside and don't tell anyone about it, it multiplies your problems ten times more*" (Ellis, p. 3, line 25). They valued being able to talk through a problem with their peers. Robyn (p. 9, line 30) believed she would be more likely to seek support in moral decision-making from her friends than from teachers because *"friends teach things better than teachers*".

Participants also placed a high level of importance on choosing friends well: "*I know they can help me make sure I'm making the right choices*" (Millie, p.2, line 37). Aristotle (2009) highlighted friendship as important for developing virtue; friendships

based on virtue are mutually beneficial with friends acting for the good of the other. Loyalty between friends was held in extremely high regard by many of the young people, with many participants expressing willingness to, "*take one for the team*" (Jamie, p. 6, line 4) and take the blame for something they had not done in order to protect a friend. It seems that peer support networks can be especially helpful to young people both in developing their beliefs about the good and enacting them. Consistent with Phillip and Spratt's (2007) findings in relation to peer mentoring that young people prefer informal peer support to more formal adult-led support, peer-to-peer support may offer a more powerful means of developing practical wisdom.

Conversely, peer groups can place pressure on the individual to conform, either through the threat of being called names or being accused of "*chickening out*" (Ellis, p. 1, line 22). Sometimes young people wish to belong to a certain group to "*boost their ego…and make them feel like they're cool"* (Ash, p. 2, line 12). Bob (p. 5, line 13) had experienced finding herself in the wrong crowd and warned that, "*the hardest thing is trying to work your way back out of that crowd*". This is consistent with existing research into the significant role of group norms in moral behaviour (Haidt, 2001; Sonnentag & Barnett, 2015). Mulvey and Killen (2015) found their participants knew bullying to be wrong and expressed concern for the victim but did not want to become the victim themselves by going against the group. Similarly, participants in the current research described feeling conflicted in situations where their peer group was bullying somebody. Most participants said that they would "*try to help*" (Ellis, p. 1, line 15) and "*stick[ing] up for other people*" (Elena, p. 3, line 24). However, there was also acknowledgement that the situation they find themselves in can sometimes make this difficult. Pressures to conform can overpower some individuals (Sonnentag & Barnett, 2015). It is possible to get sucked in to group norms and this seemed to link to young people's sense of identity. Bob (p. 5, line 35) warns it may be much later that the individual realises, "*this isn't the person I want to be*".

There was a perception that there is a qualitative difference in experience between being directly involved in a situation and being "*say like an onlooker*" (Alex, p. 5, line 6). Young people perceived it easier to uphold their beliefs if not directly engaged in the immediate situation. "*If you're in the moment, you're going to react with instinct and not think as clearly as if you had more time*" (Year 8 focus group, p. 2, line 35). Riley (p. 3, line 9) seemed to use a strategy which turned her into an onlooker and allowed her to gain some distance from the situation: "*you should think about in five*

to ten years if you look back…and think "…Did I choose just to be friends with the person and go against what I should have done?". Sometimes it is not until after a decision has been made that young people are able to find this distance: "*it still feels like the right thing at the time till you look back on it and you realise*" (Alex, p. 5, line 1). This highlights the importance for young people of having space and time to reflect on their actions. Reflection is an important component of moral decision-making as it informs our personal experiences and understandings of virtue and can help determine future action (Crossan et al., 2013).

3.3.4 Conclusion

The findings offer an exploration of some of the complexities involved in integrating personal understandings of the good with the demands of the situation. Young people hold beliefs about the good, which they have acquired through their experiences throughout their upbringing: from their parents, from people in their social circles and from wider societal expectations. They are constantly adding to and adapting their virtue schemas. The extent to which these beliefs about the good are activated and enacted when making ethical decisions depends on a range of interconnected situational variables, the most significant of which seems to be social influences. Social influences can be a source of support or pressure for young people in their moral decision-making, depending on the context. Often it is helpful for young people to have others to guide or reinforce beliefs about the good, particularly in situations they have not encountered before. However, it is difficult to hold and act on beliefs that are different to those of the group. Maintaining relationships and particularly upholding friendships is particularly important to young people and decisions that affect those they are close to can be more difficult if they have to go against a personal belief about the good in order to protect someone they care about. Even within seemingly simple decisions, there is evidence of a wide range of interacting personal and situational factors that are unlikely to be configured in the same way in any two situations. The ability to skilfully discern the relevant factors in a situation and integrate them with personal beliefs about the good whilst respecting others' beliefs about the good is a complex process which seems to vary according to the presenting dilemma and the individual approach of each participant.

The findings support a social-cognitive view of character development, which rejects a trait notion of virtue and emphasises the importance of the interaction between

person and context. This suggests the focus of Character Education should be on developing young people's ability to flexibly apply understandings of what is right and good according to the unique features of a given situation. This idea can be found in the Aristotelian concept of practical wisdom. The findings do not offer a set of components of practical wisdom or a list of the situational factors that should be considered in every situation. They highlight the complexity of thought behind moral decisions in a way quantitative tests of moral decision-making cannot capture. They also demonstrate young people's ability to reflect on situations in depth and to integrate a wide range of considerations into their moral decision-making, as well as offering some insight into the personal and situational factors that may weigh into young people's moral decision-making.

3.3.5 Limitations

A common criticism of moral dilemma research is that responses to hypothetical moral dilemmas do not always predict real-world decision-making (Graham, Meindl, & Beall, 2012). These scenarios conceptualise moral decisions as an end product, whereas in real life behaviour tends to be the end product (Krebs & Denton, 2005). Although technological advances are making it easier to observe moral decision-making in naturally-occurring social contexts (Mehl & Conner, 2012), this also has limitations as participants often do not have time to reflect in the level of detail required to fully explore their decision-making processes. To address this issue, some researchers have favoured asking participants to reflect on moral decisions they have recently made in their own lives (B. Marshall & Dewe, 1997). By asking participants to complete the questionnaires at the beginning of the research, I attempted to make the hypothetical dilemmas as relevant as possible to decisions participants might face in real life. The hypothetical scenarios proved useful as a stimulus for discussion, with participants relating them to similar scenarios in their own lives. However, an important limitation of the current findings is that participants' responses to the hypothetical scenarios presented may not reflect the way they would respond to a similar situation in their own lives.

Whilst the research considered the interaction between person and context, it did not consider how these interactions are affected by the nature of the dilemma being posed. Krebs and Denton (2005) outline four different types of moral dilemma: philosophical, antisocial, social pressure and prosocial dilemmas, each of which

make different cognitive and affective demands on the decision-maker. It is probable that given different kinds of dilemma, different interactions between person and situation may have emerged.

Further limitations relate to the extent to which it may be possible to generalise these findings beyond the current setting. The research took place in a school which had an established approach to Character Education. This meant students were used to reflecting on the good and the ways in which they applied virtues to their own lives. It is possible that students in a setting which does not focus on character development may not have been able to articulate their understandings of the good so clearly or to demonstrate the same level of flexibility in adapting their understanding of the good to match the requirements of the situation.

Added to this, it is important to recognise the limits of a subjective method such as Grounded Theory in producing data that can be generalised (Corbin & Strauss, 1990). As Willig (2013, p. 78) argues 'all observations are made from a particular perspective' and therefore to some extent depend on what the researcher is looking for. If another researcher were to undertake this study, it is likely their data collection and analysis would have looked quite different. This account offers one construction among countless other possible interpretations of the process of young people's moral decision-making.

3.3.6 Implications for research and practice

Directions for practice

Although care should be taken when generalising from the findings of grounded theory (Corbin & Strauss, 1990; Willig, 2013), many of the findings are supported by existing literature and thus may be reasonably thought to have some degree of applicability beyond this research sample. The findings suggest some possible avenues for future practice in CE.

Social cognitive theories of character which draw parallels between the Aristotelian concepts of virtue and practical wisdom and the psychological concept of ethical expertise (De Caro et al., 2018; Narvaez & Bock, 2014) seem to offer a promising theoretical underpinning of CE. The findings suggest CE programmes should focus not on habituation to individual virtues, but on training overall ethical expertise, as has previously been argued by Lapsley (2019). Narvaez (2008) states it is important

to develop both intuitive and deliberative processing in becoming an ethical expert. The intuitive and deliberative operations underpinning ethical expertise can be developed both through exposure to experience and through training deliberative operations, which are gradually internalised until they become intuitive responses (Dansereau, Knight, & Flynn, 2013; Knight, Dansereau, Becan, Rowan, & Flynn, 2015). Educational psychologists could play a key role in supporting teachers to design CE curricula which provide the first-hand experiences of decision-making needed to help young people develop both intuitive and deliberative processing. Explicit opportunities to reflect on deliberative processing may be particularly important in helping young people to develop the analytical processes needed to apply their understanding of the good effectively within novel situations (Knight et al., 2015).

If educators are to scaffold opportunities for young people to develop ethical expertise, it is important they understand its theoretical underpinnings. They should seek to create opportunities for students to generate their own understandings of the good and reflect on their own decision-making processes, rather than attempting to enforce a moral code through proceduralised, behaviourist approaches. Educational psychologists are well-placed to support teaching staff in understanding the theoretical underpinnings of the construct of character and in exploring its application to the curriculum. Supporting educators to develop effective CE programmes could offer a salutogenic approach to promoting wellbeing in schools. Such an approach emphasises the importance of taking active steps to help young people flourish, rather than addressing difficulties once these have arisen.

Educational psychologists could support schools to develop proactive approaches to character development, and thus wellbeing, by giving young people opportunities to discuss moral dilemmas either before or as they arise, rather than evaluating decisions that have already been taken, as might be the case with restorative conferences, for example. Similar to restorative conferences, schools could use preventative ‘character conferences’ as a way of supporting young people to consider how they might act if they were to be faced with a particular moral dilemma prior to being placed in that situation. Rather than discussing a situation in an attempt to restore relationships once somebody has been wronged, character conferences could offer an opportunity for young people to determine how to bring about the best consequences for themselves and others before they act. ‘Character conferences’

could serve as safe spaces for young people to bring moral dilemmas they are currently facing, giving them the opportunity to explore the situation and how different possible courses of action may sit with their understanding of the good.

As well as suggesting the potential power in salutogenic approaches to the promotion of eudaimonic wellbeing in schools, the findings also highlight the important role peers could play in promoting one-another's wellbeing. The findings suggest young people may be more likely to turn to their friends for support when faced with a moral dilemma than they would be to turn to an adult. Opportunities for reflection on real-life experiences with a trusted peer may be an effective means of encouraging young people to reflect on their decision-making and promoting deliberative thinking skills focused on issues that are pertinent to young people, rather than having discussion topics imposed by adults, who often have different priorities (Arthur, Kristjánsson, et al., 2017).Therefore, helping students to develop the skills to support one-another through conducting their own 'character conferences' may present a meaningful and effective way of developing a salutogenic approach to the promotion of wellbeing within schools.

Directions for future research

The findings offer evidence that young people adapt their ethical responses according to the situation. The current research has started to outline some of the situational factors salient to young people in their moral decision-making. However, the current sample size was small and limited to one school context which may not be reflective of the general population. Further research is needed to continue to outline the key situational factors that influence young people's decision-making in different contexts and among different age groups.

Existing CE research seems to focus on how young people respond to adult-directed and implemented programmes. However, evidence from this research highlights that young people will often seek support from their peers in their real-time decision-making. Further research is needed to explore how peer-to-peer support could influence young people's decisions about the good.

Research suggests first-hand experience helps young people to develop intuitive and deliberative virtue schemas (Dansereau et al., 2013; Knight et al., 2015). However, many CE programmes seem to be based on second-hand analysis of the actions of

others, for example literary protagonists (Arthur, Harrison, Carr, et al., 2014; Pike et al., 2015; Seroczynski et al., 2011) or historical figures (Long, 2014; Seider et al., 2013). Further research is needed into the potential of more practical, experiential programmes, such as Billig et al.'s (2008) Service Learning programme, in supporting the development of character.

3.3.7 Summary

This qualitative exploration of young people's decision-making highlights the complexity inherent in upholding beliefs about the good whilst also determining the best course of action according to the situation. The young people in this research demonstrated sensitivity to these complexities and were able to integrate their understandings of the good with salient situational factors to bring about what they judged to be the best consequences for themselves and others. The findings show the importance of helping students to develop the practical wisdom to integrate virtues and situational factors in promoting the best outcomes for themselves and others, which fits with a Pragmatist understanding of wellbeing. Overall, the research suggests that a social cognitive approach to Character Education, which emphasises the importance of building ethical expertise through opportunities to practise autonomous moral decision-making in a range of situations, offers a promising empirical approach to the promotion of eudaimonic wellbeing in schools.

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Appendices

Appendix A Electronic database search terms and results

ERIC EBSCO

Search Terms

Character education	Adolescent	Phronesis
"Character education"	DE "adolescents" DE "Middle school students" DE "Early adolescents" DE "High school students" DE "Junior high school students" DE "Secondary school students"	DE "Moral development" DE "Moral values" Virtue* "Practical wisdom" Moral reasoning Moral judgement Character Phronesis
Record of reasons for choice of terms: • Thesaurus says Character education = DE Values Education but the searches that came back were not relevant so I completed a basic search for "Character Education". • Did not use DE personality because the literature states that character is less fixed than personality. • No need to input two spellings of judgment as search picked up both. • Virtue, Character and Practical wisdom are not in the Thesaurus. • DE Moral Values = Principles and standards which determine the extent to which human action or conduct is right or wrong. • DE Moral Development = Developmental processes in the formation of moral reasoning and judgments.		

Search results

1. "character education" (1,137)
2. DE "adolescents" (47,142)
3. DE "Middle School Students" (11,850)
4. DE "Early Adolescents" (3,325)
5. DE "High School Students" (30,470)
6. DE "Junior High School Students" (5,324)
7. DE "Secondary School Students" (16,556)
8. S2 OR S3 OR S4 OR S5 OR S6 OR S7 (103,317)
9. DE "Moral Development" (4,554)
10. DE "Moral Values" (8,663)
11. Virtue* (2,094)
12. "practical wisdom" (153)
13. Moral reasoning (1,227)
14. Moral judgment (1,039)
15. Character (14,818)

16. Phronesis (102)
17. S9 OR S10 OR S11 OR S12 OR S13 OR S14 OR S15 OR S16 (27, 232)
18. S1 AND S8 AND S17 (115)
19. S18 LIMIT TO 2007-2017 (48)
20. LIMIT TO NOT “ELEMENTARY SCHOOL” (43)
21. NOT “SCHOOL SUSPENSION” (41)

British Education Index EBSCO

Search Terms

Character education	adolescent	Phronesis
“character education”	DE “teenagers” or de “adolescence” DE “middle school students” DE “high school students” DE “junior high school students” DE “secondary school students” DE “high school juniors”	“moral values” “moral development” virtue* “practical wisdom” “moral reasoning” “moral judgement” or “moral judgment” character phronesis
Reasons for choice of terms: • No “Character Education” in DE. • No “Moral Development” and no “Moral Values” in thesaurus. • Added DE “high school juniors” • DE teenagers or DE adolescence = both for adolescent and therefore on same row. • DE “Early Adolescents” not in thesaurus.		

Search Results

1. “Character education” (205)
2. DE “teenagers” OR DE “adolescence” (7,053)
3. DE “Middle school students” (462)
4. DE “High school students” (317)
5. DE “Junior high school students” (13)
6. DE “Secondary school students” (6,065)
7. DE “High school juniors” (16)
8. S2 OR S3 OR S4 OR S5 OR S6 OR S7 (13,253)
9. “Moral values” (74)
10. “Moral development” (696)
11. Virtue* (370)
12. “Practical wisdom” (47)
13. “Moral reasoning” (133)
14. “Moral judgement” OR “moral judgment” (98)

15. Character (1,591)
16. Phronesis (52)
17. S9 OR S10 OR S11 OR S12 OR S13 OR S14 OR S15 OR S16 (2,731)
18. S1 AND S8 AND S17 (44)

PsycInfo (Ovid)

Search Terms

Character education	adolescent	Phronesis
"character education"	teenagers.mp adolescen*.mp exp. middle school students high school students junior high school students secondary school students.mp	moral development "moral values".mp exp. virtue "practical wisdom".mp "moral reasoning".mp "moral judgement".mp "moral judgment".mp character.mp phronesis.mp
Reasons for choice of terms: • Controlled vocabulary suggests Personality development or moral development but this is not "Character Education". • Neither "teenagers", "adolescen*", "secondary school students" nor "high school juniors" were in the controlled vocabulary. • "Moral development" and "virtue" were the only terms for phronesis in the controlled vocabulary.		

Search Results

1. "Character education".mp (432)
2. Teenagers.mp (5,079)
3. Adolescen*.mp (148,159)
4. Exp. Middle school students (5,747)
5. High school students (10,816)
6. Junior high school students (953)
7. Secondary school students.mp (2,380)
8. 2 or 3 or 4 or 5 or 6 or 7 (162,409)
9. Moral development (2,010)
10. Moral values.mp (777)
11. Exp. Virtue (1,134)
12. "Practical wisdom".mp (296)
13. Moral reasoning.mp (1,392)
14. Moral judgement.mp (191)
15. moral judgment.mp (1,545)
16. Character.mp (17,578)
17. Phronesis.mp (176)
18. 9 or 10 or 11 or 12 or 13 or 14 or 15 or 16 or 17 (23215)

19. 1 and 8 and 18 (77)
20. Limit to 2007-2017 = (53)

Scopus

Search Terms

Character education	adolescent	Phronesis
"character education"	teenage* adolescen* "high school juniors" "high school students" "secondary school students" "junior high school students" "middle school students"	"moral development" "moral values" virtue* "practical wisdom" "moral reasoning" "moral judgment" character phronesis
Reasons for choice of terms: • Spelling "moral judgment" or "moral judgement" yielded same results.		

Search Results

1. Character education (539)
2. Teenage* (32,705)
3. Adolescen* (2,132, 640)
4. "High school junior" (237)
5. "High school student" (26,215)
6. "Secondary school student" (6,112)
7. "Junior high school student" (1,981)
8. "Middle school student" (5,548)
9. 2 → 8 OR (2,164,089)
10. "moral development" (3,330)
11. "moral values" (3,139)
12. Virtue* (58,948)
13. "practical wisdom" (709)
14. "moral reasoning" (2648)
15. "moral judgment" (4388)
16. Character (493,005)
17. Phronesis (661)
18. 10 → 17 OR (561,230)
19. 1 AND 9 AND 19 (40)

Appendix B Weight of Evidence

Study	Arthur, et al. (2017)	Billig et al. (2008)	Long (2014)	Pike et al. (2015)	Seider et al. (2013)	Seroczynski et al. (2011)
1. Are there ethical concerns about the way the study was done?	**Yes:** Possible vested interest of researchers – all from JCCV.	**Yes:** study was opt-out, parental consent assumed. Funding: CE grant given to schools.	**No**	**Yes**- Researchers hoping to secure funding to extend project.	**Yes**- study was opt-out, parental consent assumed. Participants received financial reward.	**Yes**- selective sampling based on potential for success. Pressure to participate to be able to leave programme?
2. Were students and/or parents appropriately involved in the design or conduct of the study?	**No**	**No**	**No**	**No**	**No**	**No.**
3. Is there sufficient justification for why the study was done the way it was?	**Yes**: to outline different approaches to CE and to consider teacher and student reports on effectiveness.	**Yes**: to evaluate the 3-year programme, using pre- and post-test measures of aspects of character development. But theoretical basis not clear.	**No:** mixed theoretical underpinnings, unclear rationale for study design and for CE intervention.	**Yes**: to explore the effect of the Narnian Virtues programme on virtue development.	**Yes**: to compare effects of emphasising moral or performance character development on character-related outcomes.	**Yes**: to explore the effect of the literature-based CE programme on the development of virtues.
4. Was the choice of research design appropriate for addressing the research question(s) posed?	**Yes:** Case study, mixed methods. Attempts to triangulate quant. and qual. Methods.	**Yes**: Quasi-experimental design. Matched controls.	**Yes to an extent** – Quasi-experimental design. Short time-frame of intervention.	**Yes, mostly**: Quasi-experimental within subjects design. Pre/post-test measures. Personality measure used as control.	**Yes**: Quasi-experimental design allowed comparison of 2 interventions but no control group.	**No**: Quasi-experimental. Allocation of participants to 'engaged' or 'disengaged' condition = arbitrary.

Study	Arthur, et al. (2017)	Billig et al. (2008)	Long (2014)	Pike et al. (2015)	Seider et al. (2013)	Seroczynski et al. (2011)
5. Have sufficient attempts been made to establish the repeatability or reliability of data collection methods or tools?	**Yes, some attempt**: Used questionnaires for quant. Both replicable. No mention of reliability. Qual. methods – semi-structured interviews not easily replicable.	**Repeatability, no**: Content and origin of surveys not clear from info provided. Reliability – yes: tested internal consistency of survey items. Reliant on self-report.	**Yes good**: clear pre/post-test procedure. Repeatable scale used. Cites previous studies on reliability of CEG. Reliant on self-report.	**Yes, some attempt**: Q'aire 1-tested reliability of items using Cronbach's alpha. But reliant on self-report. Reliability of Q'aire 2 not addressed.	**Yes, some attempt**: Used previously-established scales. Tested internal consistency of scale items using Cronbach's alpha. But reliant on self-report and Time 2 scores lower than Time 1 for both groups.	Yes, some attempt: used SRM-SF. Cites previous research showing good reliability. Used both teachers' and students' virtues ratings. No significant differences found between groups on: family size, family income, age.
6. Have sufficient attempts been made to establish the validity or trustworthiness of data collection tools and methods?	**Yes, some**: Validity – Ad-ICM previously validated by Thoma et al. (2013) then adapted for use in the UK by Walker et al. (2017). Moral self-relevance measure – no mention of validity. Choice of interview questions not clear.	**Yes, some**: pilot of survey items included factor analysis – items with high loadings retained. Matched control groups - no more than 10% variation on demographics found.	**No**: unclear why CEG (Narvaez et al., 2008) chosen as outcome measure but pilot studies used to establish its validity.	**Yes, some**: in subsequent publication, Francis et al. (2018) map virtues onto Eysenck's personality characteristics. Not clear how Q'aire 2 was developed or how it was analysed.	**Yes, some:** Chi square tests → no significant differences across schools in: gender, attainment, attrition. Community Connectedness predicted by *group* not condition ($p<0.0001$). Authors highlight scales may not be specific enough to assess Ethical Identity, Courage and Responsibility.	**Yes, some attempt**: Factor analysis of VYS and tests of internal consistency using Cronbach's alpha. SRM-SF – reliability tests cited. Used both teachers' and students' virtues ratings. Teacher inter-rater reliability Compared engaged and disengaged groups on family income, family size and age. No significant differences found.

Study	Arthur, et al. (2017)	Billig et al. (2008)	Long (2014)	Pike et al. (2015)	Seider et al. (2013)	Seroczynski et al. (2011)
7. **Have sufficient attempts been made to establish the repeatability or reliability of data analysis?**	**No:** qual. analysis methods not clear. Comparison of Ad-ICM averages not reliable.	**Yes:** t-tests comparisons of post-test survey experimental and control group scores. Triangulation with other sources (not detailed in this paper).	**Yes:** paired samples t-tests comparing the mean pre/post-test scores.	**Yes, partly**: Q'aire 1 used t-tests for within subjects pre/post-test comparison. But for Q'aire 2 compared mean scores - no statistical test.	**Yes, some**: Multi-level regression models used for each of the 6 measures.	**Yes, some**: 2x2 ANOVAs used to compare groups pre-/post-test. Checked for correlations between virtues scale and SRM-SF
8. Have sufficient attempts been made to establish the validity or trustworthiness of data analysis?	**No**: very little formal data analysis.	**Yes, some:** Used multivariate analysis to determine factors that may have moderated impact. P values calculated to determine statistical significance.	**Yes, some:** P values calculated to determine statistical significance of changes to CEG Scale scores.	**Yes, some:** P values used to determine statistical significance for Q'aire 1. Within subjects controls. Sufficient data to calculate effect size.	**Yes, some:** P values and effect size calculated. Unconditional multilevel regression models with postintervention scores as DV.	**Yes, some:** Used p values to determine statistical significance. However, due to small sample size and low statistical power, used p value of 0.1. sample size in statistical analysis not clear. Ratings were consistent with each other and had good internal consistency. Compared scores on SRM-SF in current study to scores from similar population in previous study- most participants = same level of moral reasoning in both.

Study	Arthur, et al. (2017)	Billig et al. (2008)	Long (2014)	Pike et al. (2015)	Seider et al. (2013)	Seroczynski et al. (2011)
9. To what extent are the research design and methods employed able to rule out any other sources of error/bias which would lead to alternative explanations for the findings of the study?	**No**: no comparison between groups or with control. Lots of reference to ethos. Low attrition rate on surveys.	**A little**: Attempts to account for variance and pinpoint source of effect. Hard to control and replicate. Unclear what outcome measures are. Programme fidelity unclear. Survey scores decreased from pre- to post-test.	**A little**: random allocation. Small control group- controls not matched. Programme fidelity? High attrition rate in both conditions (around 33%). No analysis of sources of possible variance.	**A little**: Clear programme of study. No control group but within-subjects comparison. Attrition: Year 9 class did not return scores for Q'aire 2.	**A little**: Attrition rate low and comparable between groups. Clear allocation to groups. Difference between groups is taken into account by stats. Attrition rate? Unreliable scales – some have low internal consistency; all rely on self-report.	**A little:** Programme is replicable, though content of discussions not predictable. Assignment to engaged or disengaged group = arbitrary. High attrition rate- impact on data analysis not made clear. Reliance on self-report but also used teacher report.
10. How generalisable are the study results?	**Low:** no comparison. Not clear which aspects of CE led to which outcomes in which schools. Ad-ICM mean scores varied according to age.	**Medium:** Large sample size. Can't replicate exact intervention. But high levels of statistical significance for some effects of service learning. Small effect sizes.	**Low:** - short timescale, high attrition rate, no matching of controls. Programme fidelity?	**Medium**: programme outcome measures clear. Relatively small sample size. Generalisability of outcome definitions and measures?	**Low/medium:**– no fidelity measures for programmes. Effect of different teachers/styles not controlled for. No comparison with no CE intervention.	**Low:** Scales & some course content replicable. Small sample size, population not representative, engaged and disengaged group = ad-hoc. Attrition rate and numbers in data analysis unclear.
11. In light of the above, do the reviewers differ from the authors over the findings or conclusions of the study?	**N/A:** no causal links between intervention and outcome. Some qual. evidence of virtuous behaviour. Ad-ICM linked to virtue reasoning.	**No**: character outcomes = better for CE group. Acknowledges no clear causal connection between service learning and character development.	**No**: the intervention did not make a difference to students' Commitment to Ethical Goodness.	**No**: increased virtue knowledge but does not necessarily mean virtuous behaviour.	**Yes**: not enough evidence to conclude that disparate approaches to CE result in different character strengths.	**Yes:** some sig diffs identified between engaged and disengaged group, but not possible to calculate effect size. 'Engaged'/control = not appropriate comparison.

Study	Arthur, et al. (2017)	Billig et al. (2008)	Long (2014)	Pike et al. (2015)	Seider et al. (2013)	Seroczynski et al. (2011)
12. Have sufficient attempts been made to justify the conclusions drawn from the findings, so that the conclusions are trustworthy?	**N/A** Findings = description, not causal links.	**Low/Medium:** need for clarity around conceptualisation of character development and how outcomes measure that.	**Low**: –4 sessions may not be enough to impact on character. No further explanation offered.	**Medium**: CE led to greater knowledge of virtues, not behaviour.	**Low**: conclusions based on differences between the 3 groups but no control.	**Low**: identifies significant diff between groups on fidelity and charity but based on self-report and small sample size. Qual. findings suggest discussion provoked thoughts and motivations about virtue.
13. Weight of evidence A	**Low**	**Medium**	**Low**	**Medium**	**Low/Medium**	**Low**
14. Weight of evidence B	**Low**	**Medium**	**Low**	**Medium**	**Low/medium**	**Low**
15. Weight of evidence C	**Low/medium**	**Low/medium**	**Low**	**Medium**	**Low/medium**	**Low/medium**
16. Weight of evidence D: Overall weight of evidence	**Low**	**Low/Medium**	**Low**	**Medium**	**Low/Medium**	**Low**

Appendix C Participant Information Sheet

What's the study about?

- I'm researching how our character traits (e.g. honesty, fairness, respect) help us live a good and happy life.
- I'm hoping to work with students to find out what you think about character and how different character traits can help you in your daily life.

What will I be asked to do?

- Part 1: Take part in an interview which should last for about 30 minutes. There will be questions about character traits and what they mean to you.
- Part 2: Take part in a group discussion with between six and ten people. We will discuss some of the ideas that came up in the interviews.

Agreeing to take part

- It's up to you whether you want to take part in the research.
- You can change your mind at any time and stop taking part.
- You will be given time at the start of the session to find out what we're doing and choose whether you still want to take part.

How will my data be used?

- I will make audio recordings of the interview and the group session. I'll use these to write a record of the discussion.
- All the data will be anonymous so no-one would be able to tell it's you in the report.
- If you leave the study, your data will be deleted.

How will data be stored?

- The audio recordings will be saved securely then deleted when I've written my report.
- Only my supervisors and I will have access to the data.

Appendix D Consent form

Dear Parent/Carer,

My name is Claire Briggs. I am a Trainee Educational Psychologist studying at Newcastle University. I am writing to you because I am hoping to recruit a group of students to take part in a research project taking place in school this term. The research is related to young people's understanding of character traits such as honesty, respect and fairness and how they apply these traits to their everyday lives.

The study would involve participation in an interview in which students would be asked to consider which character traits they think might be important to apply when faced with a fictional everyday scenario. They would also be asked to participate in a short group session in which we would discuss ideas that came up during the interview in more depth.

Participation in the study is completely voluntary. All data collected will be anonymous so the responses of individual children would not be identifiable anywhere in the research report. Participants will have the right to withdraw from the study at any time.

I am hoping to commence the research in the next few weeks. Students have been given a Participant Information Sheet detailing what the research will entail. I will hold a briefing session next week to give more details to students interested in taking part and to give them the opportunity to ask any questions they may have.

If you are happy for your son/daughter to be involved in the research, please sign the parent section of the consent form and send it back to school with your son/daughter.

If you have any questions about the research, please do not hesitate to contact me – see details below.

Kind Regards,

Claire Briggs

(Trainee Educational Psychologist)

Newcastle University

c.l.briggs@newcastle.ac.uk

Please read each statement carefully and tick to show you consent:

- □ I have read the Participant Information Sheet.
- □ I give my consent to participate in the interview and the focus group on character.
- □ I understand that I am free to choose not to take part at any time, without giving a reason.
- □ I understand that all information I give is anonymous and confidential.
- □ I understand that the conversations in the interview and focus group will be audio-recorded and transcribed by the researcher. Only the researcher will hear the audio-recordings in full.
- □ I understand that as part of the research we will produce a theory of how virtues can be applied to everyday life.
- □ I understand that the interviews and focus groups will be analysed and presented in a research report as part of the researcher's thesis, which may be put forward for publication in the future.

Name of student: ……

Signature: ……

Name of parent/guardian: ……..

Signature of parent/guardian: ……..

Date: ……..……

If you have any questions about this research, please contact:

Claire Briggs, email: c.l.briggs2@newcastle.ac.uk (Researcher)

David Lumsdon, email: david.lumsdon@newcastle.ac.uk (Research Supervisor)

Appendix E Questionnaire

The dilemmas young people most commonly face

Read the situations below. Some of these situations may lead to difficult decisions for young people:

1. Drug and alcohol use
2. Unsupervised parties
3. Telling lies to receive something you shouldn't (e.g. a higher grade, a cinema ticket)
4. Bullying/falling out with friends
5. Romantic relationships
6. Cheating in school work/exams
7. Being let down by adults/having to protect adults
8. Sticking up for a friend/ becoming a 'tell-tale'
9. Trying to please demanding parents
10. Deciding what to do next after making a bad choice
11. Money
12. Social media use

a. Write the numbers of the **three** situations you think are most likely to lead to difficult decisions for young people of your age:

_____ _____ _____

b. Write the numbers of the **three** situations you think are least likely to lead to difficult decisions for young people of your age:

_____ _____ _____

c. Are there any other situations (**not on the list**) in which you think young people often face difficult decisions. Please describe below:

_____

_____

_____

_____

Appendix F Origins of questionnaire scenarios

(Taken from 'Daily Dilemmas' (Denison, 2018))

Scenario presented in questionnaire	**Which 'Daily Dilemmas' scenario came from**
1. Knowing how best to help a friend with a problem such as drug or alcohol misuse or an eating disorder.	#1: Jeff's best friend is getting into some pretty risky behaviors, including dangerous drugs. What can Jeff do to help his friend? #5: Corey is drunk and stuck at a party thirty miles from home with nobody sober to drive him. He's not happy about any of his options. What should he do? #12: Maria is sure that her good friend, Pam, has an eating disorder. Pam's parents are in denial, and nobody but Maria and a few friends seem concerned. What should Maria do? #23: The incoming school president was caught breaking the school rules about alcohol. Should he be permitted to take office or should the student body hold a new election? #28: Lisa is at a party where her friend Sarah is vomiting and losing consciousness from alcohol consumption. Lisa wants to call 911. Her other friends want to try to deal with it themselves so they don't get in trouble. What to do?
2. Parents not letting them do things that their friends are allowed to do.	#2: Jennifer knows her parents won't let her go to "the big party" if they find out the host's parents are out of town. Should she lie about it?
3. Telling lies in order to receive something they shouldn't (e.g. lying about their age to get into the cinema).	#3: What's the difference between cheating on a math test and lying about your age in order to save money on a movie ticket? #19: Archer is facing a thorny, but common, ethical dilemma: should he lie to his parents in order to receive a reward he's not entitled to, or tell them the truth and give up the reward?
4. Being asked to do or say something against someone they are friends with.	#15: Three of David's classmates have created an offensive website that attacks students and teachers. The principal wants to know who did it and David is the only one who knows. Should he lie to the principal or betray his classmates? #27: Noah sees the same bully torment the same victim every day on the schoolyard, and nobody tells the teacher about it. Should Noah speak up and risk being labeled "tattletail," or should he ignore it and mind his own business?

5. Having a crush on the same person as their friend.	#7: Stephanie was supposed to tell a certain guy that her good friend had a crush on him. Instead, Stephanie ended up hooking up with the guy, herself. And to make matters worse, she lied to her friend about it . Now things are spinning out of control. What's she supposed to do?
6. Cheating in school work/exams to get a better grade or because they have run out of time to finish a piece of work.	#8: A stressed out honor student has plagiarized a term paper and been turned over to the school's honor council. She is pleading with the council not to report her violation to the Ivy League university she is applying to. What should the council do? #13: You are stumped on an important math test and you have the perfect opportunity to cheat without getting caught. What do you do, and how do you explain your decision? #31: Georgia is a very good math student who does well on homework but falls apart under the stress of heavily weighted tests. Under these circumstances, would it be so terrible if she cheated just a little? (an exploration of situational ethics)
7. Having to protect parents who are in some kind of trouble e.g. alcohol use, drug use, gambling.	#9: A high school sophomore faces a family crisis when his alcoholic mom relapses into drinking. #16: When Jay asks his mother how she would react if he tried drugs, he gets a stern warning. Then he discovers that she's been smoking pot. What is he supposed to do with that? #18: What do you do when your friend's dad comes to drive you home from a party, and you can tell that he's drunk?
8. Dealing with a situation where they have been wronged by another person e.g. the person has told lies about them or has threatened them.	#4: Julia's best friend has turned against her and is now organizing the other girls to bully and isolate her. What can Julia do? #10: An eighth grade girl starts receiving threatening notes in her locker and her backpack. #11: A fifth grade boy is overcome with hurt and anger when a classmate spreads a lie about him.
9. Trying to please demanding parents e.g. parents who have high expectations about school grades, behavior, or doing well at a sport/hobby.	#22: Andrew is caught in a conflict between trying to please his overbearing father and doing what is best for himself.

10. Owning up to something they know they're going to get into a lot of trouble for.	#14: The star student makes a bad choice involving alcohol. Now she has to decide what to do about it without ruining her reputation or compromising her ethical principles.
11. Trying to help a friend who has got into a bad relationship e.g. with an adult, or someone online who sounds suspicious.	#20: Bethany has confided in Stacy that an adult neighbour has been touching her in ways that make her uncomfortable. Should Stacy keep Bethany's secret or risk their friendship by telling an adult? #21: Peter's long-time close friend, Bridget, is wrapped up in an online relationship with some older guy on My Space, a social networking website. Peter senses danger, but Bridget resents his warnings and wants him to butt out. What can he do without risking their friendship?
12. Knowing how to respond to an unkind word or post about someone on social media e.g. hurtful words or an embarrassing photo.	#24: Katy cringes every time she hears her friends use words like "retarded" or "gay" in a derogatory manner. Should she object when it happens, or should she let it pass so people won't think she's weird? #29: David has just joined a Facebook group and he discovers that somebody has posted an offensive and malicious photo of a girl from his class. David feels very uncomfortable about it. What, if anything, should he do?
13. Knowing they have profited from someone else's mistake/bad luck (e.g. taking money someone forgot to take from the ATM, or accepting a grade they know the teacher has miscalculated)	#6: Lea has been offered something she really wants. Unfortunately, it's terribly unfair to a lot of other people and she knows it. Should she allow herself to benefit from an unfair situation? #17: Kevin feels that his baseball coach has given him an unfair advantage over other members of the team. Should he do something about it, or just accept his good luck? #25: Someone left money sticking out of an ATM machine and there's nobody in sight. Nobody but Ben, that is. If he takes it, does that make him a thief? What should he do? #26: Erin's chemistry teacher made a huge mistake on Erin's final grade. A mistake that was very much in Erin's favor. Should Erin point out the mistake to her teacher, or accept her good fortune quietly and gratefully? #30: Brian has the perfect summer job, thanks to his dad. But when Brian finds out that some of his co-workers (including some with families to support) make significantly less money than he does even though they've been there much longer, he feels conflicted. What should he do?

Appendix G Questionnaire results

Situation	Most difficult total	Least difficult total	Difference	Total times mentioned
1. Drug and alcohol use	11	6	5	17
2. Unsupervised parties	6	5	1	11
3. Telling lies in order to receive something you shouldn't (e.g. a higher grade, a cinema ticket)	3	7	-4	10
4. Bullying/falling out with friends	9	1	8	10
5. Romantic relationships	7	8	-1	15
6. Cheating in school work/exams	2	8	-6	10
7. Being let down by adults/having to protect adults	2	4	-2	6
8. Sticking up for a friend/ becoming a 'tell-tale'	1	5	-4	6
9. Trying to please demanding parents	2	2	0	4
10. Deciding what to do next after making a bad choice	3	4	-1	7
11. Money	5	2	3	7
12. Social media use	6	5	1	11

Qualitative Data

12 people responsed to Question c: '*Are there any other situations (**not on the list**) in which you think young people often face difficult decisions?'*:

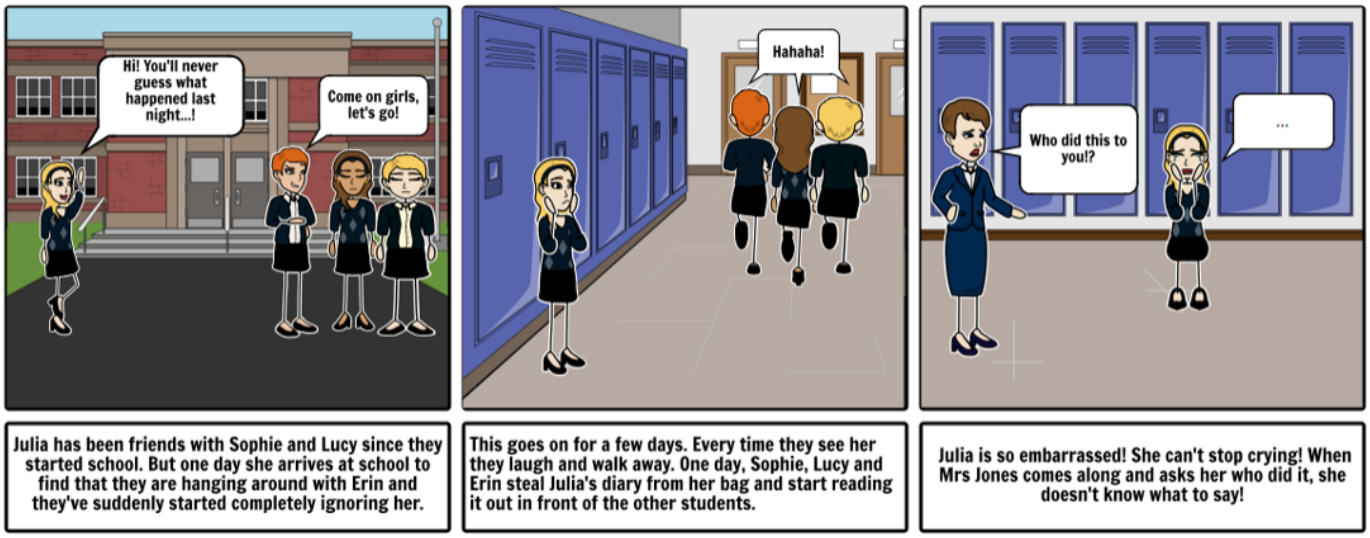
- Peer pressure x 4
- Exam pressure/pressure for good grades x 2
- Young parents
- Low self-esteem, communication and being a target either at home or at school
- Opinions/fear of people talking about you
- Appearance/opinions of other students in school
- Friends doing something illegal/getting involved with illegal things

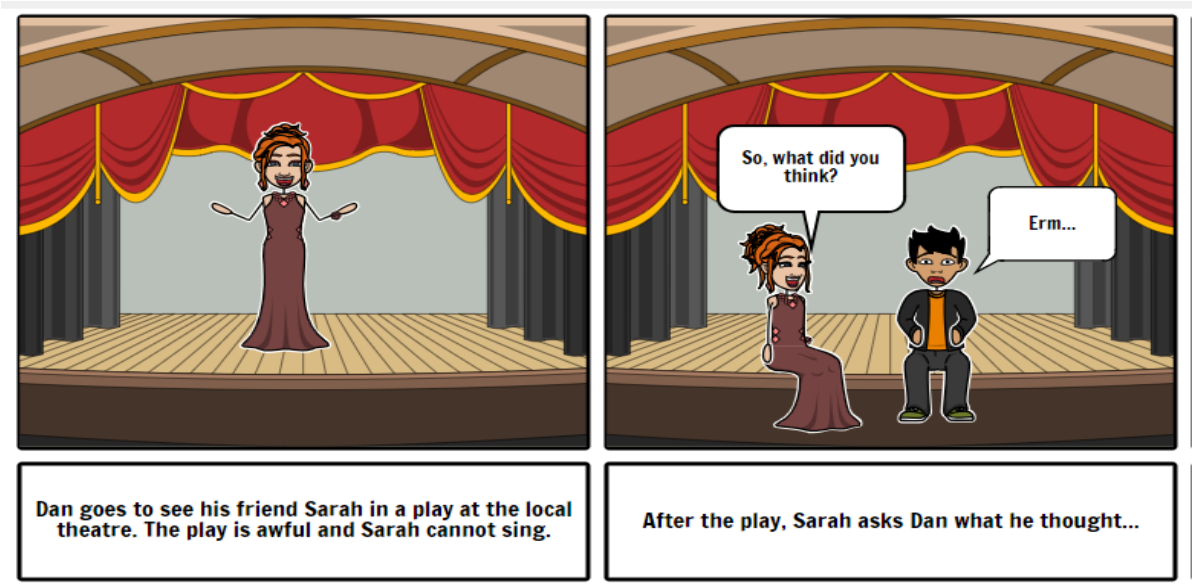
Dilemma scenarios judged most common overall:

- Bullying/ falling out with friends
- Alcohol and drug use
- Peer pressure

Appendix H Examples of moral dilemmas

The following are examples of the moral dilemma comic strips used in the interviews:





Appendix I Interview questions

Open-ended questions	**Possible prompts**
1.Let's read the stories together. I'd like you to choose one of the stories you feel comfortable to talk about. I'm going to ask you to think about what the character should do and why. I will ask you to explain your answer.	Complete the decision map. How did you come to that decision? If you had to describe to the character how you made your decision, what would you say? What do you think the character had to take into account?
2.What does it mean to you when I say 'do the right thing'?	How do you know whether or not you are doing the 'right' thing? Do you think you have a good understanding of what is 'right'? Describe when you might and when you might not do the 'right' thing.
3.Can you tell me about times when it might be easier for yourself or for other young people to feel you have done the 'right' thing? Can you tell me about times when it might be harder for yourself or for other young people to feel you have done the right thing?	Are there any specific examples? Do you think you make decisions in the same way at home as you do at school?
4. (Show list of virtues): Look at the list. Are there any words on the list which stand out to you/you think are particularly important? Why? Are there any of the words on the list that seem less important to you? Imagine a world without any of these things- what would it be like?	What does this word mean to you? Can you give me an example…? Tell me a bit more about… What makes you think that… Can you explain why you think ___ is more important than _____? How do you know this is what it means?
5.I was wondering how you know the things you have talked about today. How did you come to hold the ideas you do? What do you think you would need to keep developing that understanding?	Can you give me an example..? Tell me more about… What makes you think that…? So you think….?

Appendix J Virtues discussed in interviews

(Adapted from JCCV, 2017)

Honesty	Justice/Fairness
Gratitude	Responsibility
Humility	Compassion
Integrity	Respect

Appendix K Adapted interview questions

Interview question	**Possible prompts**
1. I'd like you to choose one of the stories you feel comfortable to talk about. What are the character's options? Which one should they choose and why? What does their choice say about their character?	Complete the decision map. How did you come to that decision? If you had to describe to the character how you made your decision, what would you say? What do you think the character had to take into account?
2.What does it mean to you when I say 'do the right thing'? Can you tell me about times when it might be easier for yourself or for other young people to feel you have done the 'right' thing? Can you tell me about times when it might be harder for yourself or for other young people to feel you have done the right thing?	How do you know whether or not you are doing the 'right' thing? Do you think you have a good understanding of what is 'right'? Describe when you might and when you might not do the 'right' thing. Do you think you make decisions in the same way at home as you do at school?
3.Do you consider yourself to be a good person? What does this mean to you?	Are there any specific examples? Are people good all the time? What makes a good person?
4. Look at the list. What would you call all these? Are there any words on the list which stand out to you/you think are particularly important? Why? Are there any of the words on the list that seem less important to you? Imagine a world without any of these things- what would it be like?	What does this word mean to you? How do you know this is what it means? Can you give me an example…? Tell me a bit more about… What makes you think that… Can you explain why you think ___ is more important than _____? Think of a time you might have to choose between two or more of these...?
5.(read Heinz Dilemma, Kohlberg (1969)) What are Heinz's options? What should he do? What might this say about his character?	Do you think everyone would do the same in this situation?
6.I was wondering how you know the things you have talked about today. How did you come to hold the ideas you do? What do you think you would need to keep developing that understanding?	Can you give me an example..? Tell me more about how you learn about these things in school... What makes you think that…? So you think….?

Appendix L Sample transcript

Interview 4

Pseudonym: Rory

Age: 14 Year Group: 10 Has been in school since beginning of Year 7

Ethnicity: Asian

Religious belief: Muslim/Christian

Date/Time of interview: 18.10.18./2pm Duration: 35 minutes

So, the first question is about erm last week before the interview, I gave you some questionnaires to ask your opinions about the kinds of situations that young people face in their daily lives and I've used that to come up with some stories with some different characters in and they're not sure…and they've got difficult situations and they're not quite sure what to do. So, I'm going to show you the different stories, I'm going to ask you to choose one to talk about, so whichever one you feel comfortable talking about. So I'll just, I'll show you them all, I'll describe them and then you can choose.
So we've got Julia who's…erm…who had a group of friends and then erm they've kind of turned against her if you like. They've started calling her names and being quite mean to her. Erm…and then they do something really unkind to her and then the teacher kind of knows that something's wrong and asks her what's happened and who did it and she has to decide whether to tell the teacher or not. Then we've got James and Maya who were caught drinking at a dance in school and erm their friend was also involved but she'd gone by the time the teacher found out, so do they kind of turn her in as well? And the last one is David has seen erm an unkind post on social media about somebody in his class and he knows that it's this group of boys who wrote the post…erm. And he's threatening to tell erm the teacher and then they threaten that if he tells the teacher then they will share what's been posted across the school, which would embarrass the girl and make her feel really upset. So do you have a preference?

Well, I'm not sure between that one and that one…

Ok….do you want to pick one to start with and then we might do two if we've got time. So, what I'll do then is I'll leave you some time to kind of read through this and I want you to think about erm…what everybody might be thinking or feeling in that situation and can you make some notes about that in that box. So, I'm gonna give you a minute or, well, as long as you need really to read through, make a few notes, and then we'll chat.

(1 minute)

How would you say, cos it wouldn't be bullying cos bullying goes on for like a long time but I dunno…

Mmm, yeah, I know what you mean…I mean, you could use the word bullying and I know what you- I'll know what you mean, er…is it picking on? Is that strong enough, or is that…?

Yeah, I think so.

Ok, well you choose whichever.

Ok, I'll just put bullying.

(1 minute)

Coding Density

believing in self
powerful emotions driving decisions
being consistent in your beliefs and actions
differing moral consciences between people
learning from mistakes
seeking support when needed
being honest is very important
not letting friends get away with bad decisions
decisions contingent on setting
changing influences as we get older
first hand experience helping us learn
eliciting positive feelings for self and other
strength of relationship
peer pressure making right thing harder to do
not feeling able to tell
balancing needs of self and other
lies not always sitting well
think before you act and speak
putting self before others
importance of being kind
getting caught up in own feelings
considering options and their outcomes
not letting injustice happen
virtues fitting with each other
selecting friends carefully
reflecting on experiences
portraying a certain image
telling/how avoiding worse in future
negative influences showing/getting thing
making own decision (not swayed by others)

I never know how to spell perspective.

Ah, don't worry about it, I'm not going to test your spelling.

(1 minute)

Ok, do you want to start talking me through?

Yep, basically, I've put the problem is like it's a friends issue and it's about a sudden change of behaviour that's resulted like in a form of bullying. And Julia's feeling upset and she's possibly feeling neglected by her friends cos they've known each other for a long time, so she might have felt a bit betrayed. Sophie and Lucy cos since they know her like since they started school, they could be trying to impress Erin so a form of peer pressure. So they went along with it but they also lack understanding and maturity. Erin might be insecure...because she's just started hanging out with the girls and she wants to maintain that friendship or she could be having a difficult time at home and, in turn she's trying to make other people feel bad because she feels bad. And also she lacks understanding and maturity.

Ok, fab. Wow, that's loads of information. Thank you. My next question is the question that's on here really (points to question sheet). How should the character decide what to do?

Well, I think she can talk to someone about it, like who she trusts and she can, she can- like sometimes when I have a problem like I always like talk to myself in my head and like try and think of like the best way how to deal with it. So I think what she should do is that she should complain about it because if you don't then they'll never learn and you never know in the future like if...if...they don't learn their mistake they might keep on doing bigger mistakes so she'll be doing a favour to herself by sticking up for herself. She also be doing a favour to the girls by teaching them a lesson cos most people like when they get caught, they actually start and like feel that way.

I'm just gonna make a quick note cos you said something interesting and I want to come back to it later if it's ok. Erm...so you think that she should tell somebody about it (Rory: Yeah)**...ok, thank you. Did you find that was an easy decision to come to, or a difficult decision to come to?**

Well, I think it was a bit easy for me because I've been through it before and I did nothing about it and it resulted in like further problems so I think like for me it was an easy decision to make because I have experience and also if someone's being unkind to you then they shouldn't get away with it

Ok, so you think having that experience yourself helped you to (Rory: Yeah) **see more clearly what you needed to do. Brilliant. (pause). So if you were going to give advice to Julia right now, what would you tell her to do?**

Well, first of all tell her to tell somebody but I would also tell her that like she might be feeling embarrassed obviously cos they read her diary but at the end of the day what they've done...I know like it's like it's exposed in front of students but it reflects a lot about their character than it does on her because they're doing the action. And I would also tell her that they're immature at this age, like they don't know what they're doing. They're trying to grow up, like trying to become an adult but they don't like necessarily have all the things...and I would just say that...(long pause) and if they feel good about like putting someone else down then maybe she should stop being friends with them. And I would also tell them that like yeah like it's a big deal but like in ten years' time when they leave school it won't be a big deal any more and like they've just not worth the time.

Brilliant thank you so much. What a great. Erm...I was interested in...you mentioned...you said something about they're just...you said something like "they're trying to become an adult". I can't

quite remember exactly what you said. So, what...what do you think...what's the difference that that makes then?

I think cos...like. I think it depends -some adults like know some like they like they adults but they don't know how to act but I think it does depend cos they don't necessarily have the experience and maybe they don't have the mentality yet to accept their mistakes and admit that they've done something and try and change it or do something about it...like for them, I think they probably lack understanding cos like teenagers, I've been there before like, like they revolve their lives around themselves. They don't think like about what's happening in the world or what's happening to other people, they just like live in a bubble sometimes. And so they get so caught up in what they're feeling that they fail to recognise like that their actions, your actions have consequences on other people's lives but I think as you go older you, like, you work with colleagues and you interact with different sorts of people and you can also learn a lot from them but I think it's also like a good – I think school can be toxic at times because I think the problem with school is that sometimes like you don't know who to talk to because, like, I think cos lots of teenagers are quite self-conscious so they don't know who to talk to but I think maybe when you're an adult you might actually want to do something about it. And I think like since like you go to job interviews and you do all sorts of things, I think that helps to build your confidence and it helps you see things in a different perspective.

Thank you, brilliant. Is it ok if we move on to the second question? (Rory: Yeah) **I'll just take this out of the way cos you won't need that one now...erm...so, I want to spend some time thinking about how you might go about making decisions in your daily life and I think you've touched on it quite a bit in your answer to the first question, which is great, so I just have a few little questions about that. Erm... and I want to think about particularly what does it mean to you when I say 'do the right thing'? So I'm gonna give you thinking time again and I want you to jot down any ideas that you have before we chat.**

(writing: 1 minute, 20 seconds)

Ok, so what does it mean to you when I say "Do the right thing?"

Well, I said that first of all it's more like a moral conscience so what I think might not be what other people think so...but I'll say that it's being kind to others and not letting injustice happen and you should stay true to yourself and follow the law, even if it, if it's reasonable cos sometimes like in like different countries, like some of the laws restrict people to have the freedom for what they believe in, even when it's hard. And I would say help people and yourselves out and...like...the problem was that, it's happened recently, actually, I've been thinking of telling Mr Smith something and I am going to tell him but everyone around me was saying "aw, you shouldn't" and they've been like, they've being saying a lot of hurtful comments to me. But because I know that the person's done a wrong thing, I have to report it, being her friend because if I let her get away with it, it won't be fair on the other person, it won't be fair on her when she grows up.

Right, ok, so...it sounds like that's been a difficult decision for you. And what do you think are the things that have made you come down on the side of telling Mr Smith?

First I was sure I was going to tell but then I kind of struggled and ...because lots of students were having a go at me, even in lessons and outside at lunch and break and I felt like it was really overwhelming. So, I knew that it was the right thing to do but I was also scared of what people would do to me. So, I thought that I would talk to my sister about it- she's in Year 11 – and I talked to her about it and she told me that "I think it is the right thing to do because at the end of the day, despite what others are telling you, like, you need to do this cos it'll be beneficial". So...so, it was

making own decision (not swayed by others)
negative influences showing wrong thing
telling now avoiding worse in future
portraying a certain image
reflecting on experiences
selecting friends carefully
virtues fitting with each other

considering options and their outcomes

getting caught up in own feelings

putting self before others

think before you act and speak

balancing needs of self and other

not feeling able to tell

strength of relationship

eliciting positive feelings for self and other

first hand experience helping us learn

changing influences as we get older

decisions contingent on setting

being honest is very important

seeking support when needed

learning from mistakes

powerful emotions driving decisions

believing in self

Coding Density

not letting injustice happen

importance of being kind

law not always suiting well

peer pressure making it

not letting friends get away with bad decisions

differing moral considerences between people

being consistent in your beliefs and actions

really hard for me but then I though that I have to do it and I'm gona stick to it. And the stra- - before I told Mr. Smith, I thought it'd be nice for me to tell my friend and explain to her why she shouldn't do it, like, her actions have consequences. But she, she just denied it, she was like "Oh, it's all you fault, you're like such a tell-tale" and all that. And then later on and she attacked me in the changing rooms in P.E. but then later on, like she came over and we had a discussion, and she said that she was a bit nervous on what her mum would think about it but I told her like that everyone makes mistakes but it's important that you learn from mistakes cos no-one's perfect but if you learn from them, then you can like make sure you don't do them again.

So it sounds like she kind of changed her opinion about what you'd done as well. Erm...do you think that was kind of by talking to her about it and explaining your point of view (Rory: Yeah**). It sounds like...ok, erm...and...it sounds like you, kind of, needed to be sure that you were doing the right thing in that situation (**Rory: Yeah**) cos you spoke to your sister about it and you spoke to friends about it and...did you find that that was helpful?**

I think it was in some ways because it helped me to clear my head cos, like I think cos like people were attacking me and I didn't say anything so I felt like really overwhelmed so I thought that talking to someone about it can help. But, I think it depends, like last year, I was dealing through a really har-, through a really difficult time at home but I think cos I didn't know who to tell, cos after what happened, it's kind of like, that year, I started doubting people and I wasn't sure, like, if they were just gonna walk out or something like that, so I think it did affect me. But, I...so, but I did like I wrote in my diary to help so I could reflect on my day and I think it's helped. I think this year it's definitely better.

Erm, I'm interested in the idea about reflection, cos I think you've talked about it twice now. You said something before as well about talking to yourself in your head to try and work out what the right thing is...and obviously reflecting in your diary and writing things down. Do you know what it is about that process that is helpful?

Well, I think, the good thing about it, I think it helps you, like just take a minute and just think about it cos sometimes like you get so caught up in the problems that like you can't stop to think and it doesn't do any help so like I think I talk to myself and I tell myself that it's gonna be alright. Cos I think mind power is a big thing. If you don't have the right mindset, then that could be difference between failing or....doing well in a grade and that could be the difference between life and death...cos lots of people struggle through mental health issues and I think... that because their mind is fixed on negativity, it's understandable at times, like I've felt that but at the end of the day, what happens to you in your life doesn't have to define you as a person. Like, I think if you have the right mindset and if you keep telling yourself things that are positive, it will have an impact. But, cos at the end of the day, I think that you have some control over your life. Like you can control what you think and feel cos your thoughts normally become your actions. So sometimes like for example, if you feel really good about getting a good grade or getting a job, you would go over and tell people about, or maybe celebrate, and so your thought like reflects on your action. So I think sometimes its best to take self-reflection so you can think about it clearly and then I think it helps.

Thank you...erm...I think we'll move on to question 3, which is quite similar. So this is about times when it feels easier to do the right thing and times when it feels harder. And actually I think in the explanation you were giving about that situation with your friend, you've already said a lot about erm, times when it's easier to do the right thing and times when it's harder. But just thinking more generally, what do you think are the things that make it more difficult for a young person to do the right thing?

Well, I think like, maybe for older people as well, like people do matter a lot to them. And I think that sometimes...I think especially with young people, they get swayed easily. Say if a friend says an opinion, they feel like they have to go along with it, so I think it-they find it hard- cos they want to be cool or they want to look good but they know that in order to do the right thing, like it can, like, cause problems with that image. Cos most students, I've noticed that they build an image of themselves and they portray it to staff and students but I think I've noticed a lot of things about this school that like peer pressure is a massive thing. Like, there's this boy in my class in maths. He's quite clever but because his friends are popular, he goes along with it, he's like "I don't want to learn" but he actually came over to me, he was like "Aw, I'm really stuck on this and I really want help. I really want someone to help me". So I think it's diff- people can affect you, I think, and also I think sometimes, like, it's hard because you doing the right thing, like sometimes it can hurt other people as well. So I think people play a big part in it...and I think....also, I think it depends on what people think is the right thing as well. Like, so some people think that maybe the right thing, like if they feeling bad they put others down so they think that's the right thing. So I think sometimes it's a conscience that matters.

Thank you...and...what do you think makes it much easier for young people to do the right thing?

Well, I think, like, if they, if they like know who they are and they know what they believe in. So I think if they have confidence in themselves, then they'll find it easier cos self-belief is honestly a massive thing and it really does transform you I think cos I used to think I really wasn't good enough and no-one was ever going to like me but when I started to thinking, "it's not how other people treat me that matters; it's about how I view myself", that thought was very strange cos I think people always harden themselves. Like, I always thought that everyone was equal and no-one should treat everyone in a bad way. When it came to myself, like, I didn't think that way, so I think, I think that you need to ha-, understand your worth, cos everyone's like worth, like just because you like a teacher more than the other doesn't mean that teacher's worth any less cos we're all human beings. But, so I think...what was the question again?

Ermm...times when it's easier for young people to-

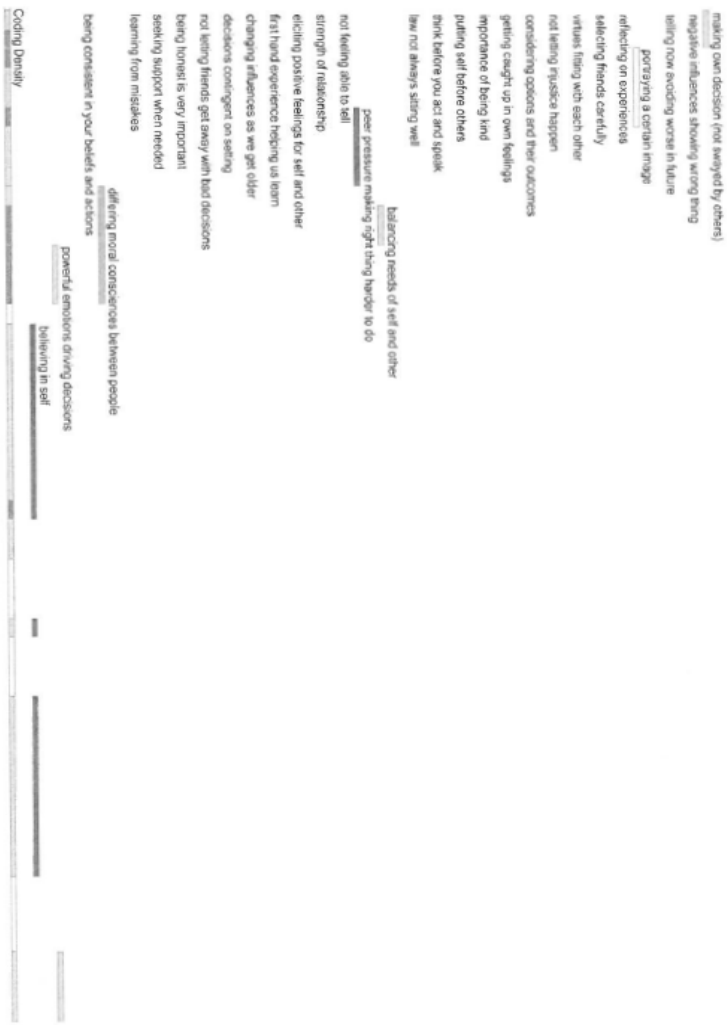
-yeah, so I think confidence and self-belief is a huge factor in it.

mm-hm. Where do you think that self-confidence and self-belief comes from?

Well, for me, it came from my hard times. First, I was like stuck. I didn't know what to do. I just used to cry and I missed some of my lessons last year. But then I thought, like, "I'm still here even though I've been through all of these things, I'm still here". So I thought that that did help and sometimes it's the little things, for example, if you erm...if you speak in front of a class, even though you're nervous and you think you can't do it but you still manage to say something, like that gives you confidence. If you know like a subject, or if you know what you're talking about, that can give you confidence. So I think it's sometimes the little things, but I think also it's about the mindset to be honest.

Thank you. That's really, really interesting. Thank you so much. Erm...I had a thought about what I wanted to ask you next but it's gone. I'm hoping it'll come back to me. Do you think- yeah- that was what I was thinking about. Erm...do you think that you always do the right thing?

No, definitely not. I think I have made some mistakes but I think like when I've done them, like I think cos I wasn't aware, like of my surroundings sometimes cos I was so caught up in my own



emotions that like I couldn't see what I was doing to other people sometimes. So, I think...what was the question again...?

Erm...do you always do the right thing?

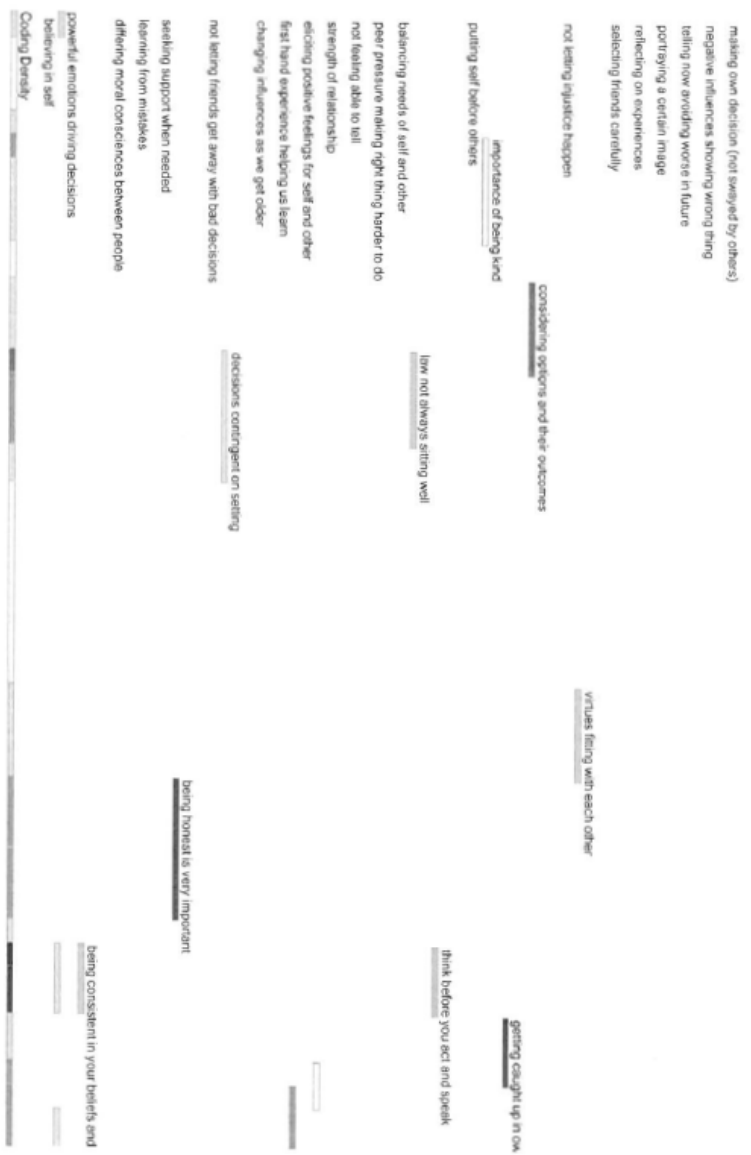
So, I think you can't always do the right thing. As humans, like we're not perfect, we try to like, we try to be the best person that we can be but I think at times it's bound for you to make mistakes. For example, if you don't like a colleague at work... and, and...so sometimes, you'd be like mean to them like in some way like or just like make them not feel included. So I think that is kind of like not the right thing. But also I think...what was the question again...?

Erm...do you always do the right thing?

Yeah and I think also, I think, it's hard sometimes too, for you to do the right thing because sometimes, like you overthink things too. So if you think "Alright, if I do that-", for example, for teenagers maybe, "If I stick up for this person everyone's bullying, what if...?", like they over-think, like they make the issue so big that they just don't do it. And I think it's never easy to always do the right cos sometimes it is hard. For example in countries where you're, where you don't have the freedom for what you believe in, for example, women's rights, or something like that, like they want to do it, but they might get killed for doing it, cos in some countries...so I think it's hard. It depends on the like conditions and the circumstances.

Yeah, so the- it sounds like what you're saying is there's times when you need to think about yourself as well isn't there? Especially in those situations where you're in danger if you do what you think is the right thing. Yeah, absolutely. Erm...so, yeah, it sounds like doing the right thing is not always straightforward (Rory: Yeah)**. Ok, erm...I'm gonna move us on to the next question now, which is about erm...have a look at these words here. And I want you just to think about, erm...which ones jump out to you as being the most important. So it might be one, or it might be two or three, like, whichever ones you think are the most important...(20 seconds)...Or you might think that they're all equally important...**

I think they all are important but I think some like overlap. For example, humility and compassion, like, sometimes, like, if you like care for others who are hurting, you wouldn't like necessarily brag that like, "Aw, I've done like this, or I've got this much" cos you know that would make the other people, person, feel like "Oh, well I can't live up to that.". But I think honesty is a very important trait in a relationship like because without trust nothing can be gained. Because like say if you lie like all the time, there comes a moment when you just stop believing in it, and like even if you want to you just can't. So, honesty's very important. Even when it's hard, if you're honest, I think that's what apprecia-, like that's what I really appreciate. I'd rather have like a person who like doesn't like me than a person who pretends to like me and then goes behind my back and talks about me. Cos I think that that's like, kinda like in some way like a betrayal. So I think honesty is a really important trait and I think responsibility is a big thing because if you don't take responsibility for your actions, then it can have further consequences. Like, most people just live in the moment, like they don't think, they just live in the moment and they just do things like as it goes along but I think sometimes you need to stop and look like at your own actions and other people's actions, like were they right, or could it have been done in a better way? So I think ...and also, I think like we all- we're all humans and I think some people, they're just so caught up about themselves that they don't stop to think about other people. They don't stop to think that there's other people that's hurting. And if it's, if like, if for example, if your friend or our family was hurting, it's your responsibility to help them. And I think compassion is a big thing cos without compassion, like you wouldn't do anything right. Like,



murders, I think murders happen sometimes maybe when you're conscience is blurred or because of the bad things that happened to you. Like, you just, like shut like all the things off. But I think compassion is very important cos you can help people with compassion. Like there are people out there who really need help and I think like. I always used to tell myself in Year 6 like if I could make one person's day brighter, that would be a goal for me. So I used to try and do that every day. And I think it also like makes you feel good cos you've helped a person and also makes the other person feel good so I think it's quite nice to have. And I think respect is a big deal cos if you're in a relationship and if someone doesn't respect you, then that could affect your own conscience cos you've spent so much time with that person that you start to think that you don't deserve any respect. And I think it's important that we treat people they way that we want to be treated. For example, like some people have no respect at all...for example I remember in the shops once, like you know sometimes like there's homeless people standing and one person just literally got up – they were quite young and they threw a bread like on his face. I think cos they think, "Aw, like Aw, they're in that condition so we're obviously more better than them" but I think that like that boy wasn't respecting that man and I think like we should respect others cos everyone wants to be respected but we fail to understand that we should do it to others as well.

Ok, you said something about...erm...these things kind of helping people to feel good. So, is that an important part do you think of why we need to show these things?

Well, I think ...some way it helps you to dictate your lives some ways, cos if you get your like, if you know your like values and you, if you know, like, you have to be- I think cos sometimes it shouldn't be used just for your own gain cos some people will be kind to others just to show- and when no-one's there, they just like stop doing it. So, I think that-what was the question again?

Erm...how did I word it? I just wrote "feel good". You'd said something about feeling good (Rory: Oh yeah**). Does that remind you..?**

Yeah. I think that feeling good about yourself, it's good, but I think you should not make it all about yourself. Like you should see the balance, I think. And I think also, like most people need to help people. I've noticed like even in this school, not a lot of people are helping people. We say that we're a community but in some ways we fail to recognise like how we should behave around others...because we like sometimes you might be like conscious about your own job, or your own friendship circles, so I think it's very important to...also think about others but I think it's important for you to feel good too.

Ok, yeah, that- that makes sense. Thank you. Erm, I'm going to ask you one more question about these words and then we'll move on to the final question. So, this one's another thinking one and you can put it in Box 4. I don't know why we didn't use Box 3, sorry. Erm...the question is, I want you to imagine a world without any of these things (points to the sheet). What would it be like?

(40 seconds)

Ok, imagine a world without any of these things (points to the sheet). What would it be like?

I think it would be chaotic because like you wouldn't have any sense of like doing the right thing. Like, you would all be like against each other and putting each other down and I think hate has been like a big thing going around in the world. And because of hate, like we see bad things happening that are like, like, unim-, like you can't imagine it. And I think there would be no point to life I think if you didn't have these things because there'd be nothing to look forward to and I think...it would be

terrible because there'd be like lots of discrimination and injustice and...and...it would be chaotic. I honestly can't imagine a world like that.

Ok. Thank you. Erm, I know I said I was only gonna ask you one more question, but is it okay if I ask you one more question about these?

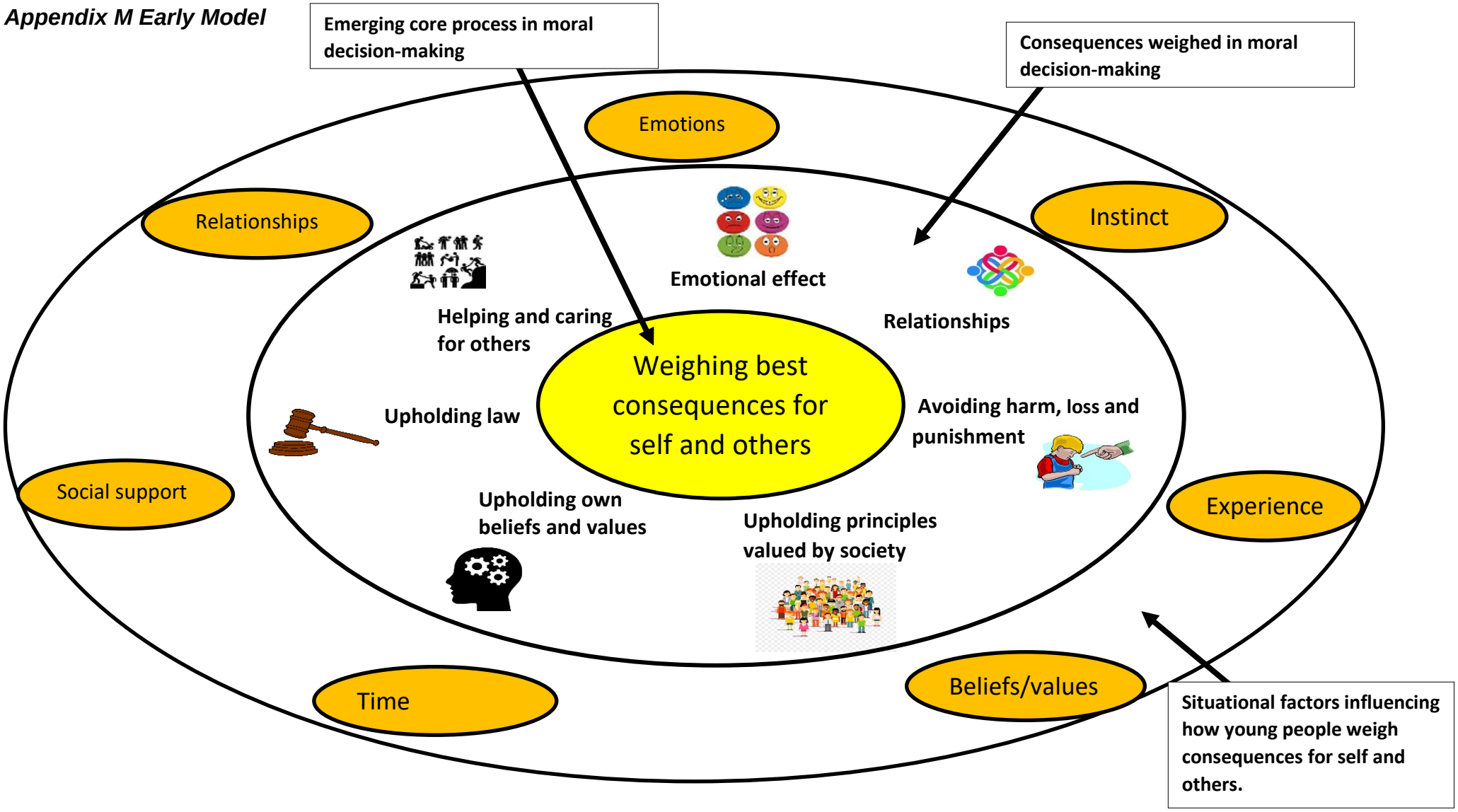
Yeah, it's alright.

Where do you think these things come from?

Well, I think...they do a bit about up-bringing but I think mostly they're to do about your experience at times or how you perceive the world. So for example, if you see the world as erm...as like inferior and everything revolves around you then you would lack humility and I think sometimes your experience does help because I think that maybe if you brought up in a neglected home where you had no-one then you might think what's the point in doing that to other people cos that's happened to me. But I think if you like go through a difficult time or if you make a mistake and you overcome that, I think it's a learning experience and I think we just have to look and see, like for example, we just have to look and see for example, like there's a lot of bullying going on but I think you just have to see the consequences that actions have and you have to apply them to your own life. But I think...when I was little, I used to think that everything like came about like upbringing. I still think that but I think less of it now because I think, "Yeah, but you choose the person who you want to be". And I think that, even if you, like my grandad, he's passed away now but he grew up in a neglected home. His mother died when he was young and his father was quite simple so...and his step-mother just wouldn't feed him or any of his brothers at home. So my grandad was like the oldest son and he took care of his own sisters while the other brothers moved out and he said he found it very difficult. He used to- I think he's from Pakistan, he used to find it very difficult and he decided to move to England. And so I thought and now, like he went to prisons, like talking about like how to reform, and he was a governor of a school and he did all those sorts of things that now when people come, like when he died, there's a radio show about him so I was quite surprised about that. But people came and even people we didn't know and they were like "Aw, we're really sorry about- to hear that...". But I think- so I think that you choose the person you get to be. You can either, like be really sad and just think that's all I'm gonna be, or you can either like pick yourself up. But I think like hope is a very important thing because without hope, you wouldn't see the point to anything, I think. There was a time last year when I lost all hope and I just used to think that coming to school and waking every day used to be terrible and I just wanted it to end. But then, I thought about it and I thought that if I'm here then maybe I can help other people who feel that way, make them feel better. Cos I think every person- that's what I find beautiful, like everyone's different so they each bring something different like to the world and I think like sometimes it can good. For example, one of my friends is really quiet and she doesn't speak a word but I think without her, like you wouldn't have that quiet time. And one of my friends is really headstrong and I think it's like good sometimes so you can share opinions so- but I think that it's more to do with experience, or how you perceive the world. Unless, like, you- some people just let their upbringing, like, cos they grew up in a neglected home. One of my friends, she's older now but one of my sister's friends, like she grew up like in foster care so she was moved around and my sister really tried to help her and they all did but she wouldn't listen and she just blamed her upbringing for it. So I think if you don't want to be helped, like no-one can help you. I think that you have to...so I think it does depend on you and I think experience plays a big part in it.

Ok, brilliant, thank you. Erm...we'll move on to the final question, which is actually about something quite similar. It's about how you know all of these things that you've talked about

Appendix M Early Model



Appendix N Participant Debrief Sheet

Thank you for taking part!

The aim of the research was to learn more about what character and virtues mean to you and how they apply to situations you might come across in your daily life.

Research into Character Education states:

- Character can be taught- we can learn new virtues.
- Our character and virtues can help us in making decisions in our daily lives.
- Sometimes we may have to choose between two or more virtues when faced with a dilemma.
- Young people are thought to be in the process of developing their virtues and so may approach situations differently to adults.

In our research:

- You talked about virtues and their impact on your life.
- As a group we thought about….
- The following seemed to be important to you when thinking about character and virtues….

Don't forget:

- Once transcribed the audio recordings will be deleted.
- All data will be anonymous.
- The report may be published in the future.
- You can still choose to leave the study and your personal data will be deleted.
- If you are interested in finding out more about the results, I am happy to share.

Any questions, please contact:

- Claire Briggs, email: c.l.briggs2@newcastle.ac.uk (Researcher)
- David Lumsdon, email: david.lumsdon@newcastle.ac.uk (Research supervisor)

Appendix O Data analysis procedure example

The table below provides a broad summary of data analysis, with examples of codes and extracts of memos at different stages of the process.

Step in data analysis process	Commentary
Original Grounded Theory question: How do young people apply character and virtues to their daily lives?	I started with a broad overarching question. As the data collection and analysis process went on, I adapted the question as patterns and ideas began to emerge from the data.
12 early **initial codes** which seemed particularly significant: • Basing decisions on consequences • Being honest is very important • Being taught about the right thing • Being there for friends • Following the rules • Interpreting the right thing in different ways • Keep remembering and thinking about the right thing • Learning the right thing through experience • Not hurting others • Others influencing thoughts and actions • Telling somebody • Thinking about other	In initial coding, I had stayed action-focused and as close to the data as possible. I had 512 codes prior to beginning the process of focused coding. It was possible to reduce the number of codes quickly by merging codes where ideas were duplicated but wording differed. I wrote short, descriptive memos for each of these 12 early initial codes which seemed particularly significant.
Example of **memo based on initial code.** **25.10.18. MEMO: Not hurting others** Not hurting people seemed to be a priority for most participants. Almost everybody mentioned the importance of thinking about others. (**Could link to: 'upholding what's morally right', thinking about others' and 'being there for friends').** Nine people spoke explicitly about the importance of not hurting others. Jesse said it's, "just not good" to hurt the feelings of others (Jesse) and Ellis remarked "Don't do anything that you know is gonna cause something, for somebody to be horrible or for something bad to happen". Ellis seemed to be speaking here about the importance of having good intentions and setting out to think of the effects our actions have on others. She	Not hurting others' was an initial code which I retained as a focused code. It was subsequently merged into 'basing decisions on consequences', which went on to become part of the 'weighing competing priorities' category, which in turn became the 'weigh consequences against competing personal and social priorities' in the final analysis.

acknowledged it is not always easy to anticipate all the possible consequences of our actions and therefore there is a chance that we might inadvertently hurt someone else. However, we should always start by trying not to hurt others. Some things were believed to be very obviously wrong and very obviously going to have a negative effect on another person. As Bob said, "you know that if they're going to start bullying and tormenting, you know it'll hurt that person and it'll make them upset". I wonder if 'not hurting people' might take different forms. Some of the quotes seem to relate to not actively doing something you know will hurt someone else, while some relate more to the effects of inaction i.e. standing by and doing nothing when another person is being harmed or hurt: No active harm to others Some participants described ways in which they ensured their actions did not harm others, for example, not being mean to people you don't like (Rory), not bullying others (Bob) and making a decision not to tell people things in order to spare their feelings (Ash) – this seems to depend on the future stakes i.e. if all you will do is hurt their feelings, you might not tell them but if you can spare them worse consequences in the future, you would tell (interesting: immediacy of consequences – how far into the future should we look?). Jordan talked about owning up to what you've done – perhaps in order to spare others from getting into trouble? (**Does this fit here, or would it be better coded with 'taking responsibility'?**). No passive harm to others Passive harm can come to others if we are not sufficiently aware of the people around us. It was judged important to remember to put oneself in another person's shoes e.g. druggist may have done the same as Heinz (Jordan). Alex talked about the importance of remembering the other person. Riley said people don't always realise how they've made someone else feel e.g. Julia's tormentors in dilemma scenario. Similarly, Rory spoke about the importance of recognising the consequences of our actions, which can sometimes be put to one side if we get too caught up in our own emotions. Ash said something similar to this – she spoke about not being selfish. Bob said something similar relating to getting caught up in the moment: "I had the feeling they were bad…but when you're in the moment…" (**interesting: something about immediacy of a situation? Proximity to a situation?**). Another important element to passive harm comes when young people can see "injustice happening" (Rory) but may not act – possibly because of consequences to self? (**What holds**	**Example quotes for initial code: 'not hurting others'** <Files\\Interview transcript 1 Jesse Y8> - § 2 references coded [0.92% Coverage] Reference 1 - 0.35% Coverage not tell the girl cos then she'll be really upset Reference 2 - 0.57% Coverage don't hurt people. I think when you hurt their feelings and it's just not good. <Files\\Interview transcript 10 Charlie Y10> - § 1 reference coded [1.00% Coverage] Reference 1 - 1.00% Coverage **like that, yeah.** Erm, yeah, maybe just tell her what she could improve on a bit more. But I wouldn't tell her that she's terrible cos that can knock your confidence I guess, especially when you think that you're alright. <Files\\Interview transcript 11 Ellis Y10> - § 4 references coded [4.38% Coverage]

people back?). Bob gave bullying as an example: "You should not stand by and watch somebody getting bullied without trying to do something about it" (Bob). As well as bullying, Ash pointed out people may not respect others if they are jealous of them (**is disrespect a form of passive harm…or should this be coded elsewhere…?**). Queries/anomalies Doing the right thing can sometimes hurt others – I don't know if this counts as active or passive harm – e.g. Rory's story about having to tell an adult about something a friend had done. She believed she was acting in the friend's best interests. Giving others a chance to confess – again, don't know whether this constitutes active or passive harm.	
Codes from Nvivo on 30/10/18: What does character and virtue mean to young people and how do they apply it to their lives? **Arriving at a judgment about the best thing to do** ➔ **Deterrents to perceived right action** →avoiding harm, loss or trouble →bad decisions threatening health →being in the situation makes it harder to do the right thing →having to make a choice in the moment →not anticipating all consequences in the moment →not thinking in the moment →peers influencing in moment →instinct kicks in →powerful emotions driving decisions →Degrees of culpability →Getting caught up in own feelings →Not hurting people →Peer pressure making right thing harder to do →everybody knowing about what's happened →group disagreeing with you →portraying a certain image →Personal problems making good harder →Strength of relationships →Telling truth could have negative consequences ➔ **Facilitators of perceived right action** →avoiding trouble	I adapted the original research question to include consideration of what character and virtue mean to young people. Following further focused coding, the most salient codes changed from those which were standing out after the first stage of focusing some of the initial codes. Similar codes were grouped at the same node using the Nvivo12 software. Some codes started to emerge as overarching categories and sub-categories, as shown in the codes opposite. Bold codes are those that were emerging as possible categories, with associated focused codes and initial codes displayed below them. The initial code 'avoiding harm' was combined with other initial codes to form the focused code 'avoiding harm, loss or trouble'. This was initially categorised

→eliciting positive feelings for self and other →rewarded for responsible behaviour →seeking support when needed →having optinion reinforced by others →informing teacher there has been an issue →not feeling able to tell →standing by who you are and what you believe →being consistent in your beliefs and actions →being willing to say what you think →believing in self →making own decision (not swayed by others) →minding your own business →selecting friends carefully →think before you act and speak ➔ **Possible hidden consequences** →positive side-effects of upholding right action ➔ **Weighing competing priorities** →considering options and their outcomes →choosing best outcome for majority →balancing needs of self and other →compromising so both profit →giving what you want to get back →putting others before self →putting self before others →choosing between two negative outcomes →balancing needs of individual against rules →decisions contingent on setting →differing moral consciences between people →differing views on relative importance of gratitude →strength of relationship **Learning about the right thing** ➔ **Learning from others** →consulting trusted people around you →selecting friends carefully →judging if someone's a good person →learning from examples →changing influences as we get older →negative influences showing wrong thing →showing meaning by good influences →the right thing is told to us	with 'deterrents to perceived right action', although this changed in subsequent stages of data analysis.

➔ **Learning through our own experience** →first-hand experience helping us learn →learning from mistakes →reflecting on experiences ➔ **Some things are innate** **Upholding widely-held principles** ➔ **Addressing wrongdoing** →making amends →reflecting after the event →taking responsibility for wrongdoing ➔ **Being honest is very important** →honesty is most important →honesty is the right thing →honest and respect most important →honesty maintaining trust in relationships →telling truth leads to fewer problems →telling now avoiding worse in future →consequences of lying ➔ **Being there for others** →being there for friends →choosing between friendship and right action →not going against a friend →not letting friends get away with bad decisions →weighing up whether to take the blame for a friend →considering the worth of a friendship →equal worth as human beings →asymmetric relationship with respect →being fair to others →not standing by and watching suffering →being kind →responding to needs of others →wanting to help ➔ **Following law or rules is best** →law not always sitting well ➔ **Taking responsibility**	
Emerging categories 1.12.18. • **Basing decisions on consequences** • **Weighing competing priorities**	Through a process of constant comparison and analytic memo-writing about focused codes and emerging

• **Keep remembering and thinking about the right thing** • **Learning about the right thing** • **Upholding what's morally right**	categories, these categories began to emerge from the data. 'Arriving at a judgment about what to do' was replaced with 'basing decisions on consequences' and 'weighing competing priorities'. The intention in splitting the category was to highlight that weighing needs of self and other seemed to be important and that through this process participants were then able to base decisions on consequences. Weighing competing priorities seemed to form a key part of the decision-making process. (see below for example memo).

1.12.2018. MEMO Basing decisions on consequences

(In writing the memo, I used some of Corbin and Strauss' (1990) axial coding questions, along with some of Charmaz's (2006) key questions to consider when analysing the data.)

What is the process?

Everybody in the course of outlining their decisions made some reference to the consequences of their decisions.

How can it be defined?

Many spoke about the importance of thinking about the consequences of different courses of action before deciding what to do. Some participants talked about thinking about the consequences for themselves and for others (Bob, Jesse and Jordan). They did not say explicitly how they would weigh these up and none of the other participants spoke about it explicitly but I think there is some evidence from their responses of how they might do it. There was more said about the consequences for self than for others…

Self

The participants spoke about a number of different consequences which might potentially affect them, including:-

- "getting into trouble" (Bob, Jesse and Ash- don't want to "throw themselves under the bus"). The idea of getting into trouble seemed to be particularly important to Jesse who mentioned it three times. She related it to truth- you will get in trouble if you hide the truth.
- Being punished for breaking the rules (is this the same as getting into trouble?) – Elena, Bob (mentioned in the scenario about Maya and James and the risk they might get excluded).
- Feeling guilty for lying (Elena and Bob)
- Fear of being hurt by e.g. bullies (Sky and Jordan)

- Breaking the law (**a few people mentioned the importance of following the law- links to Following the rules**). Jordan explicitly mentioned the possibility of going to prison if you break the law. Elena talked about how important it is not to do anything illegal. **Is breaking the law the deterrent or is the consequence of breaking the law the deterrent? To follow up…** Alex acknowledged that the law wasn't always right but that it's better to go with it because the consequences of not following the law are "not too great really". This is interesting because it suggests that the law in itself may not be the determining factor but rather the consequences of breaking it → **suggests the possibility that if the consequences of breaking the law were not too severe, Alex thinks young people might be happy to do so…?**
- Avoiding teacher involvement. Riley spoke lots about trying to sort things out for yourself before getting a teacher involved, **although the consequences may relate more to how it's perceived if you get a teacher involved than to the actual involvement of the teacher (?)**
- Poor health – Jesse identified the negative impact some activities can have on YP's health: smoking and drinking. Jordan also spoke about how drinking might affect YP. A**gain, perhaps I haven't drilled down to the root concern here: The fact that drinking can affect you is not necessarily bad- what are the effects we should hope to avoid??**
- One action leading to further problems. The most talked-about example of this was lies: Sky, Ash and Bob all alluded to the idea of telling one lie having a snowball effect where you have to tell more and more lies to cover up the initial lie. A knock-on effect of lying is that it leads to lack of trust (Riley) and people stop believing what you say (Rory).
- Receiving rewards e.g. being allowed to do something again in the future (Riley). Riley gave the example of being responsible and looking after her cousins meaning that she was allowed/asked to do it again (her virtue was rewarded).

Other

There were not as many comments under this code pertaining to the effect of our actions on others. However, I think this might be because I have coded these ideas at a different location: 'Thinking of others'. There's more around treating others well under 'thinking of others' (**Consequences are implied but not explicit in this category**). 'Being there for friends' could also form a strong part of the link between thinking of the consequences for self and others. Perhaps I need to explore possibility of rearranging/merging these categories…?

- Protecting others: Standing up against bullies (Rory). Bob talked about stepping in to prevent people from being bullied because she could see that the person was really upset and the bully was going to make things worse.
  Sometimes our actions might not seem to be in the other person's best interests in the short-term. For example, Rory talks about a decision she made that her friend didn't agree with at the time. She was able to explain the decision to the friend and help her to understand that although the short-term consequences were not good for her, she had done it to protect her in the long-run. Perhaps part of what it means to be a good friend is therefore taking unpopular decisions and being prepared to stand by these in the best interests of the other person…**How do they know they're acting in the other person's best interests**?
- For own gain – sometimes people appear to be being kind to another person but they are actually doing this for their own gain (Rory). "I think cos sometimes it shouldn't be used just for your own gain cos some people will be kind to others just to show- and when no-one's there, they just like stop doing it."

To consider: We judge what to do based on consequences. How do we judge which consequences are right and which are wrong? It's not straightforward…maybe virtues come in here…so maybe we need to think about the consequences and then think about whether these consequences uphold virtue…? In which case, virtue is more important/is different to cognition and affect…?

Actions and interactions (whom and how?) (Corbin & Strauss, 1990)/ How does this process develop? (Charmaz, 2006)

Alex spoke about deciding what would be the best thing to do in general. His and others' responses implied a weighing up of different courses of action and their possible outcomes. Jordan also spoke about trying to determine what is the "best" thing to do in a given situation. Bob's response to one of the dilemmas posed also indicated an awareness of the importance of thinking about the consequences from different perspectives. She recognised that the characters could either be excluded themselves or potentially risk losing a friend – so there would be cons to either decision. Alex talked about the pros and cons of either decision too and about how he might use the worth of the friendship to determine what the best course of action would be…so it wasn't strictly about consequences for him- he combined objective consequences with a more subjective feeling… "base the decisions off that like if it's worth it really". **How do we determine whether it's worth doing something?**

A few people spoke about how having more knowledge or experience might help them in their decision-making (**Links to 'Keep remembering and thinking about the right thing**' and **'Learning through experience'**). Sky, for example, said you're more likely to do the right thing if you know more because "you'll know like the consequences if you do the wrong thing". So experience helps us know what to expect and prepares us for future decisions. Alex also talked about how experience helped to prepare people for doing the right thing. His response seemed to incorporate emotion…he thought that it would be easier for a person to take the blame for someone else if they were used to being in trouble and that it might be quite a difficult decision for someone who was not used to being in trouble (**Should emotion be in a category of it's own, or does it enter into all categories?**).

Sometimes young people spoke about following instructions they had been given from elders, (**perhaps this is distinct from applying their own knowledge and experience**?): Jesse talks about teachers always saying that students will be "in a lot less trouble" if they just tell the truth. This is almost received wisdom…seems like something commonly said by teachers to students…

How does the research participant act while involved in this process?
Participants spoke about upholding rules; some of them talked about weighing up the pros and cons of different outcomes; some of them recall past experiences; some of them act according to their instinct and think if you have to think too much about it then it probably means you're doing the wrong thing…**should the right thing to do always be immediately obvious to us? How can we incorporate virtue into decisions when acting on instinct?**

When, why and how does the process change?
It is easier to do the right thing in situations where the right thing is more obvious (Alex). It's also easier to do the right thing if it is something you hold as an absolute. For example, Bob told me she cannot *stand* bullying and therefore does not need to think about what to do when she sees it happening. She will always step in and help the person being bullied because she knows it's the right thing to do: "I didn't even think what was gonna happen, I just said "look, stop. It's not the right thing to do." The importance of 'sticking up for others' and helping those who are being bullied was also mentioned by other participants. **How do we know bullying is wrong? What is bullying? What is it about bullying that people find so unconscionable?**

It's not always a case of weighing what will happen as an immediate result of the situation. Thinking about the ongoing consequences of our actions at different future points in time could tip the balance in a different direction. Jordan spoke about this idea of weighing consequences in the here and now against future consequences. She pointed out it might be okay to lie in some situations in "preventing a bigger situation from happening". Similarly, Sky spoke about it being tempting to do the wrong thing if you think you might be able to get away with it in the short term. However, she concluded that people are always likely to get found out in the end. This suggests young people don't just weigh consequences at one point in time- they consider the long-term as well as the short-term implications of their decisions. (**Links to anticipating hidden consequences…?**). Some responses suggested young people were not always able to anticipate all future consequences clearly in the heat of the moment. Riley said sometimes she knows after she's done something that it was the wrong thing to do. This suggests young people might not always know or think about what was the right thing to do before they do it…**this could also fit with some of participants' comments about instinct**…**are they acting out of instinct? Impulse? Social influence? What is the difference?**

?? Is it always possible to judge the virtue/good of an action on the basis of its consequences? Sometimes a person might do the right thing and still get into trouble…? Therefore appealing to consequences alone cannot tell us if their action was right or wrong. Important – suggests limitations of consequentialist notions of morality…?

What happens as a result? (Corbin & Strauss, 1990)

Participants seemed to be weighing the consequences for self and others in order to: avoid harm (through getting self or others into trouble, through causing emotional distress, or through causing harm or loss to self or other). It was particularly important to avoid negative consequences and promote positive consequences for those participants felt close to – **links to maintaining relationships**? It also seemed important to participants to follow the rules (including the law) and to do what they believe to be morally right.

20/12/18 – Theoretical coding. Through mapping the relationships between emerging categories and continuing to write memos, 'weighing competing priorities' emerged as the dominant process in moral decision-making. This was linked to 'Basing decisions on consequences' and the category which emerged was called 'Weighing best consequences for self and others'. Of the other emerging categories, I merged 'learning about the right thing' and 'keep remembering and thinking about the right thing' to form the sub- category 'having relevant experience'. 'Upholding what's morally right' also became a subcategory within 'weighing best consequences for self and others'. The other focused codes

all seemed to fall under this weighing process in that they were conceptualised as situational factors which might interact with one-another and influence the weight the individual gave to different consequences. The following sub-categories emerged within 'weighing best consequences for self and others':

- Helping and caring for others
- Emotional effect
- Relationships
- Upholding the law
- Upholding one's own beliefs and values
- Upholding principles valued by society
- Avoiding harm and loss

- Experience
- Time
- Social support
- Instinct

Through theoretical coding, the factors were initially split into two groups as shown above; the first group was the consequences young people seemed to be weighing in their moral decisions and the second group was the factors that seemed to influence the way in which they weighed these consequences. These factors featured in the model of the emerging theory I took back to participants during the focus groups (See Appendix N).

Sharing the model

I took the model back to participants for feedback. They agreed most of the factors presented in the model were relevant to them and were consequences that might influence their moral decision-making, except 'Upholding the law'. They did not think the law was directly relevant to them at their age. They also highlighted the interactions they thought took place between all the different factors in the model and that a decision could be influenced by different combinations of factors depending on the situation.
The model did not offer an adequate way of mapping the influence of each of the factors or the interactions between them. Participants highlighted that any element of the model could interact with any other, depending on the situation. I concluded it is not possible to represent specific personal and situational factors relevant to moral decision-making diagrammatically. I went back to the process of theoretical coding and began to reconsider the links between each of my categories.

Theoretical coding and linking to existing literature
(My theoretical memos were merged to generate the final analysis, as seen in Section 3.3)

Reconsidering the links between each of the sub-categories under 'weighing the best consequences for self and others', I realised this did not fully explain the process of moral decision-making. In the focus groups, participants had spoken about acting on instinct at times or not wanting or needing to think about all the possible consequences of their actions. Therefore, this category did not fully express all possible processes. In the interviews, participants had spoken about the idea that they sometimes act on impulse. The Year 8 focus group spoke about the idea that often adults are better at stopping and thinking about all the consequences than young people are because they have more experience. When I began my literature search, I started to think about the idea of having the experience needed to make certain decisions and also about whether this experience is necessarily called upon in different situations. Social cognitive dual processing theory reinforced the idea of the importance of experience in moral decision-making. Moral dilemmas might activate an intuitive response if the young people has a well-established virtue schema that can provide an automatic response in a similar situation. Alternatively, a moral dilemma might require a deliberative response in less familiar situations. This might lead to more conscious processing of a wider range of factors which may influence the situation. Having had experience of similar situations in the past may help the young person to anticipate possible consequences in terms of, for example, harm, loss, relationships with others, or emotions. Existing experience therefore plays a key role in our response to moral dilemmas. 'Having relevant experience' seemed equally as important as 'weighing the best consequences for self and other' because our experience permeates through everything we do. Therefore, 'activating relevant beliefs and understandings of the good' became a second substantive category alongside 'weighing best consequences for self and others'.

I then adapted 'weighing best consequences for self and others' because it did not fully express the interactions that were at play between the variety of possible personal and situational factors at play. I also realised that it was not possible to name all the personal and situational factors that could have an influence on moral decision-making, or to develop a heuristic or model that could adequately express how they interact. I decided the category therefore needed to be broader and to express the constant interaction between a range of personal and situational factors. Again, the literature supported this category, with theories of ethical expertise and practical wisdom highlighting the importance of being sensitive to relevant situational factors and trying to find a way to integrate virtues to promote the best possible outcomes for self and others within the bounds of the particular situation.

This led me to change my research question a final time to: How do young people's personal understandings of the good and salient situational factors interact with one-another in their moral decision-making?

Final substantive categories and sub-categories following integrating relevant literature with emerging grounded theory:

Substantive theoretical code: activating relevant beliefs and understandings of the good (corresponds to section 3.3.2)
negative influences showing wrong thing

being shown meaning by good influences
- first-hand experience helping us learn
- reflecting on relevant experiences
- upholding one's beliefs

Substantive theoretical code: weighing consequences against competing personal and social priorities (corresponds to section 3.3.3)

effect of emotions
level of social support
maintaining important relationships
proximity to the situation
producing the most satisfactory overall outcome