HUGS AND BEHAVIOUR POINTS: ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION AND THE REGULATION OF 'EXCLUDED' YOUTH.

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ABSTRACT

In England, alternative education (AE) is offered to young people formally excluded from school, close to formal exclusion or who have been informally pushed to the educational edges of their local school. Their behaviour is seen as needing to change. In this paper, we examine the behavioural regimes at work in eleven AE programmes. Contrary to previous studies and the extensive 'best practice' literature, we found a return to highly behaviourist routines, with talking therapeutic approaches largely operating within this Skinnerian frame. We also saw young people offered a curriculum largely devoid of languages, humanities and social sciences. What was crucial to AE providers, we argue, was that they could demonstrate 'progress' in both learning and behaviour to inspectors and systems. Mobilising insights from Foucault, we note the congruence between the external regimes of reward and punishment used in AE and the kinds of insecure work and carceral futures that might be on offer to this group of young people.

KEYWORDS

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Across the United Kingdom a minority of young people struggle with their secondary schooling. While the vast majority of young people appear to do well in this phase of education, some do not. They and their schools do not get along. Some young people may simply not come to school at all, or come infrequently. Others may act in ways that their school does not accept, and many may be 'absent presents' who withdraw from engagement with the programmes on offer. In England, in 2012-2013[1], headteachers placed 3.52% of their pupils on fixed term exclusion, and permanently excluded 0.06%. Translating this into actual numbers shows the true scale of the issue – 3,600 boys and 1,030 girls were legally moved out of a school either to another mainstream school or to some kind of alternative. A further 199, 240 boys and 68, 280 girls were excluded for a short time, nearly half for only one day. At least some of this remainder may also have been considered eligible for alternative provision.

Alternative education is defined in law in England. It is designated

> … for pupils who, because of exclusion, illness or other reasons, would not otherwise receive suitable education; education arranged by schools for pupils on a fixed period exclusion; and pupils being directed by schools to off-site provision to improve their behaviour.
> (http://www.education.gov.uk/aboutdfe/statutory/)

The other three nations in the UK have similar definitions. Alternative education is *officially* equated with its population – young people on the edges of mainstream schools. This alternative education also has as its further mission the task of changing behaviours that are seen as problematic. Young people are referred to alternative education through a variety of diagnostic and interagency processes and have little actual choice about whether they attend or not. Alternative education can be short or long term, and full or part time. This government definition excludes any school that simply offers a pedagogical alternative – for example, an open and democratic approach, an outdoor education based curriculum, an immersive arts specialization – to anyone who chooses to enrol. These are the alternative education offers that are most often discussed in the scholarly literatures as progressive counterpoints to dominant modes of age-grade, classroom and subject based, teacher-directed schooling (Kraftl 2013; Mills and McGregor 2014; Wrigley, Thomson, and Lingard 2011). These alternative education programmes are not the focus of this paper. We address those origrammes specifically designed for young people educated at the margins of their local school.

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[1] Exclusion data for England: https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-exclusions; Wales http://wales.gov.uk/statistics-and-research/exclusions-schools/?lang=en; Scotland http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/Browse/School-Education/TrendSchoolExclusions; Northern Ireland http://www.deni.gov.uk/index/facts-and-figures-new/education-statistics/suspensions-and-expulsions.htm

Mobilising insights from Foucault, we argue that schooling, including alternative education provision, is dominated by an effective-ness logic enacted via actuarial comparison technologies such as inspection, league tables and test and exam results. We suggest that this logic has underpinned two moves in alternative education: (1) a shift away from 'softer' forms of talking therapies to performative behaviourist regimes, and (2) the removal of social science, humanities and languages from the curriculum on offer. We offer some speculative ideas about the consequences of these shifts.

We begin the paper by signaling the theoretical resources we bring to our argument about alternative education. We then describe and discuss effectiveness logic and the alternative education it produces.

Alternative education as the construction of orderly youth

There is a large international corpus of literatures that addresses alternative education. Key to this paper are the widely regarded 'best practices' in the sector – the formation of strong humane relationships between staff and students, flexibility of programming, the opportunity for young people to have a say and the provision of support when and as required[2]. Our paper mobilises an alternative reading of these practices, using Foucault and Foucauldian texts relevant to alternative education.

Foucault's *Discipline and Punish* (Foucault 1977) argues that societies use and rely on practices which create orderly citizens. While these were once largely about the use of brute force (death, torture and incarceration), more modern societies have developed a panoply of approaches which, while still having brute force as a last resort, encourage people to learn to discipline themselves. The task of disciplining minds and bodies (routines and regimes of care) are underpinned by surveillance and classification practices which both establish norms and identify the recalcitrant in order to institute external controls.

There is a body of scholarship which brings Foucault to special education including, inter alia, empirical studies of, for example, the classification, diagnosis and management of 'ADHD' (Harwood 2005; Bailey 2013); the material and categorical divisions and segregations of 'inclusive education' (Armstrong 2003; Ashton 2011) ; and the provision of vocational education for risky youth (Kelly and Harrison 2009). This body of work understands alternative education as a complex discursive tangle in which the development of expert knowledge systems and practices are key (Allan and Slee 2008). Young people who do not 'fit' designated behavioural or performance norms, as measured by adherence to school rules and attainment in tests and exams, are singled out and subjected to additional expert processes to

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2 See our comprehensive review of the international literatures
https://alternativeeducationresearch.files.wordpress.com/2014/10/literature-review-final-15-10-14.pdf).

'encourage' them to 'fit back in' by 'taking responsibility' for their behaviour (Graham 2012; Harwood and Allan 2014). For 'poor learners' this is through 'special education', while for those who refuse to conform to behavioural expectations, it is 'alternative education'. These two school 'types' are part of an overall social disciplinary apparatus located specifically within the institution of education.

Some scholarship on alternative and special education (Carlile 2011, 2013; Armstrong 2006; Meadmore and O'Connor 2006) mobilises Foucault's notion of governmentality (Foucault 1991) in order to examine the ways in which problems are conceptualised, calculated and rationalised and control exercised, often though not exclusively by the state, over the population as a whole (Dean 1999). Our interest is particularly in the pastoral and 'psy', that is, the work that particular problematisations of behaviour accomplishes in relation to AE populations.

The literatures on alternative education, with their emphases on relationships, communication and fair punishment, can be seen as a psy-therapeutic 'nurture' discourse which seeks to produce self-rationalising subjects who are able to manage their behaviour through adopting a conversational system of self-analysis (Rose 1999). Although initially dependent on external 'caring' adults, the goal is for the child/young person concerned to become self-nurturing (see http://www.nurturegroups.org). AE behavioural regimes are often commended for their 'real–world' focus through the adoption of 'reality therapy' (Glasser 1998); this highlights the consequences of actions and emphasises the individual's capacity to 'choose' between various fates. Again the object is for the individual to 'learn' the processes of making 'good choices' for themselves. Both talking and reality therapeutic approaches stand in contrast to external reward and punishment systems - those we have dubbed 'hugs and behavioiur points' regimes - where responsibility for deciding what actions do and don't conform always stays with an external body, rather than it being taken over, and up, by the individuals concerned.

We now turn to the research project to which we bring these understandings.

The research project: What's the alternative?

Our research was commissioned by The Princes Trust UK and it focused on the question of quality in alternative education. We were interested in thinking about what counted as quality in provision and how it might be best achieved[3]. In this paper we offer an additional analysis of data focused particularly on issues related to risk.

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[3] Link to full report report: https://alternativeeducationresearch.files.wordpress.com/2014/10/education-report-final-14th-october-2014.pdf

Our data consists of seventeen case studies of alternative education – eleven in England, two in Northern Ireland, Three in Scotland and one in Wales (this is roughly proportionate to the relative populations). Of these we saw ten full-time provisions (five in England, one in Wales, one in Northern Ireland and three in Scotland) and seven part-time (six in England, one in Northern Ireland). The sample is not representative because we were interested in sites which were deemed to be of 'high quality'. Our intention was not to produce a typology of 'best practice'[i] but rather to look at interesting cases to see what might be learned from them – what Connell (1995, 90) calls 'strategic sampling' with a potentially 'high theoretical yield'. We asked for referrals from local authorities, national AE organisations and selected from 'outstanding' inspection reports to ensure we had national coverage and a range of provision specialisations. We were aware of the potential skewing that such nominations might produce in our data, since it was likely we would be pointed to sites that fared well in current policy contexts. However, it is this very congruence with/translation of policy that is the focus of this paper. We were also highly limited by time and funding and, given our research question about quality, this mode of selection appeared both pragmatic and a fit to the brief.

Each case study was produced over a one to three day visit; the data comprises documents, observations of activities, interviews with key personnel and young people[4]. State, inspection and local authority documents were also collected and consultations held with key stakeholders in the field including OfSTED.

We conducted a cross-case analysis (Bassey 1999) to identify common themes and challenges. All sites were keen to be identified in the 'appreciative' (Cooperrider and Whitney 2005) single case studies, but all informants were anonymised. However, in the cross-case analysis we anonymised any references to particular sites and services, and we have held to this convention in this paper.

After our report was published we went back to our data to look specifically at behaviour and curriculum management in more detail. Moving away from the focus on quality we decided to examine what kinds of behaviour and curriculum were on offer, as we had felt somewhat uneasy about these aspects of some of the provisions we had seen. We also decided, at this point in time, that bringing a Foucauldian lens to our analysis would be productive. We produced a more detailed analysis of practices across all seventeen UK sites (see Appendix One for a list of practices). We report in this paper on the eleven English AE sites, although we have left the other three countries in our table as points of comparison.

We now turn to our substantive analysis. We report on the ways in which eleven English sites managed behaviour, and then focus on the educational offer. We next discuss the overall effectiveness regime at work.

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[4] The seventeen case studies are published on www.alternativeeducationresearch.wordpress.com

Effective schools

The English education system has been subject to a thirty-year policy agenda to move:

- from a state funded and local authority provided school system to a state funded and individual or federated system of independent schools directly answerable to central government,
- from a system in which schools had high degrees of autonomy in relation to curriculum to one in which they have high degrees of autonomy in relation to budgets, and
- from a system which was regulated via exams and the pastoral support of advisers and inspectors, to a system in which regulation is effected by an expanded number of tests and exams and data driven inspection (Ball 2012; Whitty 2002).

The policy agenda depends on the explicit designation of 'standards' of effectiveness against which schools are judged to succeed or fail and the continuous collection of performance measures. There is also a simultaneous elevation of schools and leaders deemed to do well; while those deemed wanting by inspectors face 'academisation' and the public removal of entire school leadership teams (Gunter 2010; Lawn and Ozga 2014, ; author).

This effectiveness system produces schools and school staffs highly focused on minimising and managing risk to the institution and themselves. The collection and monitoring of data is an everyday practice (Ozga 2009; Ball 2009), as is the exercise of 'institutional triage' - the identification of students falling below target attainment levels, and their intensive remediation or removal (Ball, Maguire, and Braun 2011; Gillborn and Youdell 2000). All schools in the English system are expected to meet attainment targets, including alternative education provision, where the expectation is that students will sit for tests and exams and the schools will be subject to the same regimes of inspection and potential closure.

The English level of regulation via inspection and target setting has led to a national preoccupation with actuarial concerns – the achievement of effectiveness, standards and regulation via data-driven audit (c.f. Hardy 2015, in Australia). Schools in England are expected to be able to make visible for external scrutiny the ways in which they meet the effectiveness agenda (Ozga 2009). The demand to be open to external surveillance has led to everyday practices of internal/self surveillance, where the expectation of having to be audit-able lead to practices in which 'visibility', 'measurability' and 'prove-ability' dominate (Thomson, Hall, and Jones 2010).

We now show how this effectiveness logic played out in our study in behaviour and curriculum systems.

Making the ordering of young people visible

All the AE services in our study were, by definition, concerned with the young person's behaviour. Their task was to change the young people so that they could return either to mainstream schools, or transition to sixth form colleges, or work. Young people were seen as being at risk of not finishing their education and becoming a cost to the state through benefits dependency, antisocial behaviours and/or incarceration. The problem was that the young people were habitually disorderly and the solution was therefore to re-train their minds and bodies, to rehabituate and thus rehabilitate them to mainstream. Changing habits required five key practices- categorization, routinisation, surveillance and calculation and responsibilisation.

(1) young people were variously categorised
All of the provisions that we visited enrolled young people through referral processes. These inevitably occurred after a long period of troubled interactions and troubling events at the mainstream school. In many cases young people arrived after being excluded several times for fixed periods of time, or in some cases they were permanently excluded altogether. The reasons for referral were recorded in case files or verbally transmitted to the alternative providers usually in the form of acronyms – for example, SEBD (Social Emotional Behaviour Disorder); low-level Asperger's; dyslexia (catch name for a variety of perceptual problems) and the tellingly named 'conduct disordered'. Very often the young people were identified as potential NEETs (Not in Employment, Education or Training). We often heard young people referred to *as* these categories, as in "They're one of our ESBDs" as if this was their identity .

All provisions had an entry interview with prospective students and during this time they probed for the history that had occasioned the referral. In many instances this involved the AE staff generating their own set of categories for the young person which were recorded in their files. Some of our full time sites administered their own psychological tests on entry.

The young people we spoke to variously took on or rejected the labels that they had been given. Some were resentful of the ways in which their case-file continued to be important to mainstream schools.

> '*The students were critical of the way that mainstream schools keep things on file, "never forget", and "drag things up from the past". They felt that labels stick in school, whereas AE has provided them with a "fresh start"' (extract from field notes, including quotations).*

But young people often reported positively to us that they had had a chance in AE to 'become someone different'.

AE providers were generally torn about the processes of categorizing young people. On the one hand staff wanted to give young people a new start. They also often stressed to us that the young people they worked with were just kids like any others

– that is they were norm-al not deviant. On the other hand, they wanted to know beforehand what they might expect from the young person. They were also very keen to have a 'baseline' against which they could record the progress that they had produced in the young person. The 'special' categories allowed them to offer some progress comparison against other similarly categorised young people, past and present, in their facility.

(2) AE offered regular routines
Young people in AE were generally characterised as living chaotic lives and having fared poorly in the comparative freedom of secondary school with its regular changes of teachers, lessons and rooms. It was considered important to have a calm and predictable environment with a curriculum organised in a way more attuned to primary education – longer lessons, fewer teachers. Mornings were often dedicated to 'more academic' pursuits and the afternoons to more 'hands on' activities.

AE routines were a major means of disciplining attention, emotions and bodies (Bailey and Thomson 2009). The mainstream school had failed to inculcate appropriated (normalized school) behaviours and it was critical for the AE to achieve this, and early on as this constituted 'success' and 'change'. All but one of our AE sites saw the focus on conforming to routines and routinised behaviours as the first step towards learning, and the first step back to mainstream educational or employment provision.

Staff paid a great deal of attention to young people learning what they considered to be important social skills – being on time, speaking in turn, greeting staff and peers, sitting, standing and moving around with permissions. These actions were assumed into behaviour regimes and subject to charting and measuring activities and reward and punishments.

(3) surveillance was continuous, calculated and highly visible
AE staff all identified the small size of the provision as being important. Similar emphasis is given to the high ratio of staff to students, compared to mainstream schools. We frequently observed equal numbers of adults and young people together in a room. Both the size and adult presence were seen as making AE more humane. AE is a place where it is possible to create meaningful relationships and have relaxed conversations, to deal with problems as they arise, and to get support for the difficult process of change.

But an alternative reading of small size and high staff numbers is also possible. Some staff told us that it was almost impossible for young people to hide away. Someone always knew where they were, and what they were doing. Rooms not in use were often locked so students could not find solitary space; there was always an adult within earshot of young people even when they were officially on a 'break'. When a young person arrived at school obviously distressed, or when they had had an altercation in class or outside, staff were also able to be deployed 'to keep an eye on them'.

This personal monitoring was accompanied by a range of paper-based procedures. Part-time AE generally kept a record of students' activities, achievements and behaviours for each session that they attended. Some of our full time provisions had teachers fill in lesson-by-lesson sheets about behaviour. Others ran 'points systems' where points were awarded and deducted for good/bad behaviour. There were often rewards – ranging from praise or notes home, to hamburger vouchers - for those who achieved an arbitrary number. And there were also punishments – ranging from withdrawal from activities to being sent home, being excluded – for those recalcitrants who refused to be orderly in class or the wider school.

The AE provisions that we saw generally had daily staff meetings. Held either at the beginning or end of the day, these meetings were the place for staff to share successes (students behaving according to the desired norms) and problems (information about what was happening 'outside school' or particular difficulties that a students had experienced that day). Very often shared brainstorming about 'where to next' produced a new intervention to steer change in the young person. Records of staff meetings formed important 'evidence' that monitoring was an established regimen.

Generally, all staff were expected to be responsible for every student, so there was a focus on information-sharing. One site in Northern Ireland required each staff member to note minute details from the day; these were left in a place where all staff could access them. All of the provisions had permanent records, whether electronic or otherwise, of positive and negative instances which could be drawn upon when needed. This was a distributed surveillance practice where everyone knows 'who to keep an eye on', 'who to watch out for'.

With one exception, all AE providers used a quasi-scientised approach to the processes of surveillance of young people - progress had to be visible and measured. What was seen and said had to be calculated, recorded and charted over time. The actual ways of achieving this varied – from pre and post tests, to behaviour graphs constructed from daily points and grades, to profiles built up of multiple data sources. We saw case files listing the various choices and targets selected by young people, organised to show 'development'. This information formed the basis of reports back to the enrolling school, to social workers and to parents. It also often formed the basis for the various 'talking' interventions that were made.

(4) young people were also made responsible via talking therapies

All research on AE refers to the importance of relationships, as noted earlier. This is said to be a major strength of the sector and it stands in stark contrast to the impersonal, hierarchical and alienating structures and processes of most mainstream secondary schools (Wexler et al. 1992). Young people have 'choice' in AE, and often in the activities on offer. This was certainly true in the provisions that we visited. Indeed if AE had run solely through routines, surveillance and calculation regimes young people would probably have refused to attend. It was the 'human' elements of AE that were most important to them, they told us. The AE we saw

were very concerned with pastoral discipline – the demonstrable exercise of care in order to encourage the young person to take responsibility for themselves in order to avoid the imposition of more punitive measures (Hunter 1994).

All AE that we saw did engage in forms of 'talking therapy'. This was primarily in relation to getting young people to 'understand their own behaviour' and 'to make responsible choices'. Conflicts between staff and students, and between students, were generally resolved via a mix of the confessional - 'talking through the problems' - and some form of 'consequence' - usually involving some kind of community service or isolation. Young people were often encouraged to monitor their own emotions (develop 'emotional intelligence'), report regularly on how they were feeling and then talk through why they might be 'feeling bad' and the options they had for 'feeling good'.

We saw two AE provisions, one full time and one part time, which specialised in softer psy approaches, offering both individual and group counseling sessions. Some AE providers also wished they could do more - *"I think the best thing would be to get them some therapy or counselling or some kind of anger management so when they go into a big college environment or into work they will know how to deal with it"* (FT AE).

AE providers were all aware that the young people needed to move from needing external discipline to a situation where they were responsible for themselves. However, we noted the tension between the their regimes of calculation and surveillance designed to keep control and coerce good behaviour via rewards and punishment, and their responsibilising practices. The degree of emphasis on each of these in different sites often produced very different environments for young people.

The logic of AE behaviour management

Our research supports previous studies that show that the all forms of special education rely on practices such as categorisation, routinisation, surveillance and calculation, and responsibilisation (e.g. Allan 1996). We concur with researchers who suggest that AE locates risk in the body and subjectivity of the young person, and indeed their family (Smyth and Hattam 2004). Both the young person and their parents/carers may be pathologised through the AE process, although most of the services that we saw achieved this in a relatively benign way. One of the Scottish provisions made explicit reference to parents as problems

> *We try to get the parents into good habits. We write into the contract the rules they must follow to inform us of absences etc as we don't want them getting into bad habits. (interview)*

And our Welsh provision sent a slip of paper home with each student every night to illustrate the kind of day the pupil had had, expecting that the parents would discuss the information and take action if the report was poor.

However our research did locate, we think, a shift in AE practice. All but two of the services we saw veered further towards externalised discipline – particularly monitoring and measuring - and had less of a pastoral approach than was the case a few years ago (author and other). And in contrast to the literatures which emphasise the use of talking and reality therapy approaches, in the AE we saw behaviourist psychological approaches dominated. While talking and reality therapies were in use, they were framed by the behaviourist. Overall, the students' day was managed according to their behaviour in specific time slots and spaces. It was when this regime failed that talking therapies were introduced, and if these failed, then it was back to more severe punishment. Our AE sites were geared more to Skinner than Fritz and Laura Perls. This mode of personal training provides strong structure and immediate reward and punishment for behaviour - this is often critiqued as relying too heavily on extrinsic measures and fails to foster sufficient intrinsic self discipline (e.g.Kohn 1999). If this was the case, and if the AE that we saw all wanted to achieve self-discipline, as they claimed, why had this shift occurred?

In partial answer to this question, we noted that the behavourist regime was highly visible. Infractions and successes were charted on whiteboards, slips of paper, computer programmes across lessons, days and weeks. We know that talking and reality therapies lend themselves more to 'case notes' than to graphs and numerical summations (Smith 1993). But behaviourist 'evidence' can be sent home, discussed with the young person, as a 'reality check' - and shown to inspectors. We suggest that there is a strong connection between the need for AE to demonstrate effectiveness to external auditors, and their regimes of keeping order. We take this point up again later in the paper.

However, we now continue turn to the learning that the young people in AE were meant to do.

The AE curriculum offer

AE providers operate, as we have explained, within a standards-based policy framework, the most extreme version of which is located in England. Full time AE providers are expected to cover all areas of the national curriculum, to allow young people to sit for the national tests and examinations and to acquire meaningful credentials. In our case studies we saw a particular problematisation of learning and the development of systems of surveillance and calculation which were geared to manage the risks of this effectiveness regime to the AE provider.

(1)   an AE problematisation of learning
With only one exception entry procedures to full time AE provision were dominated by the view that attending to behaviour issues was a pre-requisite for learning anything 'academic'. While there were often tests administered to determine 'learning styles' and 'reading ages', most entry conversations focused on the

troubles that the young person had had with other students and with teachers (Ecclestone and Hayes 2008).

One site did engage young people in discussion about themselves as learners and told us that attending to learning and achieving positive learning gains could have a positive influence on behaviour. This view stood in contrast to other locations as these two quotations from two separate English sites illustrate:

> She said that in some cases it feels like we are just "torturing these kids to try and get their Maths and English" (fieldnotes).

> J said that doing Maths and English is "the hard bit" and is particularly difficult with these young people (fieldnotes,).

In another site we were told that staff had recently 'discovered' that their

perception of students' reluctance to learn was not necessarily true.

> '…we implemented an hour of English and an hour of Maths and we thought we'd give it a go and see what happens and it's been really successful – surprisingly so. In the past we've sort of been scared of subjecting them to English and Maths lessons but we've done that. We've put them into Entry Level 3 English and Maths exams and although we don't need to we've gone through the process of finding an exam board and an invigilator and given them all a table and so that is an experience for them to go through. And we've been really impressed with how much they've stepped up and that they did turn up and took it seriously and put their phones away. So that was good" (fieldnotes)

We note in this comment the view that learning was 'an experience' not an entitlement, a point we return to later.

We also saw the ongoing belief that young people in AE were good with their hands rather than their heads – as if the two are separate (Rose 2005) . Students needed largely experiential based methods and activities, we were told. But the English and Maths lessons that we saw were far from active and engaged, and most often involved text book and worksheet based tasks achieved only with intensive support from a staff member. The kinds of engaging pedagogies often argued as best for re-engaging young people in the academic learning that counts (Kamler and Comber 2005; Janks 2009) were seldom seen. A remedial and teacher-directed approach was the norm. However, the worksheets did produce demonstrable measures of 'progress'.

A further consequence of the view that young people in AE were reluctant to learn was seen in the ways in which the curriculum offer was modified. When

activities such as cooking were inserted into the day, this was seen as a 'life skill'. Vocationally oriented activities such as work experience and vocational course such as hairdressing and childcare (mostly for girls), and construction, mechanics and plumbing (mostly for boys) (c.f. Russell and Thomson 2011) were seen as being 'relevant' to a young person's future. Outdoor activities and excursions were highly valued as they took young people away from their familiar surroundings and required them to act responsibly and appropriately: these were also a site for significant behaviour interventions. But the inclusion of these kinds of activities meant that some other subjects had to be removed.

Almost without exception it was Languages (seen as too difficult and alienating) and Social Sciences (seen as not valued by employers or by the young people) that were removed. Art, and occasionally Drama, remained. This was justified on the grounds that young people would not be able to achieve in more formal curriculum areas:

> They offer a "limited diet" of GCSEs but they believe that if they offered ten the young people wouldn't be able to access all ten, so instead the emphasis is on focus and quality outcomes across 4-5 subjects (field notes full time AE)

Topics which routinely appear in social sciences courses do address questions that might be considered relevant to young people in AE - how poverty is produced, the cultural construction of deviance, gendered and raced social relationships and so on. However we saw little evidence that these were seen as important. The one site that focused on learning had a practice of daily newspaper reading and staff encouraged students to debate current affairs. Another site offered a Peace Education module which engaged young people in discussions about values, current events and relationships. These were the exceptions in our case studies and neither was in England.

While many of the same perceptions of 'suitable' learning also existed in part-time AE, these were less of an issue. Because these were complementary offers they focused on recreation, vocational education or the arts and only had to include some literacy and numeracy activities. By and large these literacy and numeracy activities were similarly 'remedial' in their nature – they were also often cursory. Staff for example asked young people to write about their choices and experiences, and to measure when they were cooking. One part time provision required staff to attend to 'embedding literacy', but it appeared to us to be done inconsistently and had the effect of frustrating many of the young people who did not see the purpose of the writing tasks. Staff in this site told us that they felt they would benefit from some training in this area.

(2) Surveillance and calculation oriented learning

Like all schools AE full-time provision is required to track students' learning. These tracking systems were often less well developed that those related to behaviour and relied much more on teacher tests and completion of text book tasks. We saw four

sites where students' learning was tracked daily through the use of learning targets, whereas in other locations it was much more likely to be at fortnightly or monthly intervals.

Because of their small size and funding, full-time AE could not provide the range of expertise across all curriculum areas, and we saw some use of specialised on-line provision supported by face-to-face tutoring. We also saw the use of unqualified teachers, teaching assistants, and people working outside their area of training. Despite the high incidence of 'official' diagnoses of special education among students, we found that staff with formal qualifications and experience in special education were a tiny minority. We attribute some of the unimaginative pedagogy, text-book dependence and the basic nature of learning assessment and tracking on the lack of staff training in these areas both before and during their time in AE.

What was most valued in staff, we were told, is their capacity to manage behaviour, not learning. Behaviour was hierarchically positioned as superior to and more important than learning in all English provisions. However, in Scotland and Northern Ireland staff were routinely seconded from mainstream schools for fixed periods of time which enhanced both the AE and the staffs' own repertoires of pedagogical practice. This made for smoother bridging of AE and mainstream provision and brought better qualified and specialised staff into AE.

In all full-time sites the learning and behaviour tracking systems were kept separate. Both could however be produced for schools, parents and inspectors when required, although inspectors often looked for better everyday learning monitoring than AE was able to provide.

The logic of AE education provision

Our AE case study sites were required to offer a curriculum on par with the mainstream. All education systems in England (also in the other three nations) now expect AE, both full and part time, to show that young people are also learning (c.f. Carlile 2011). AE is held to account by an effectiveness regime which demands that progress and learning can be demonstrated. AE itself, like all schools, is surveilled and measured against declared performance norms.

It was an accepted 'truth' in our AE sites that young people needed to learn 'the basics'. But the reality was that many of the young people in AE would not 'do well enough' in these subjects. AE sites were thus in a position where their capacity to reach targets and show progress was in jeopardy. AE providers had two responses to this situation.

(1) Because it was important to be able to show that young people were learning something and 'making progress', forms of more easily measurable activities and materials were most often used.
(2) All sites were engaged in 'trimming' those things that were seen as 'less necessary'. They offered a modified curriculum composed of 'the basics'

(English and Maths), subjects of 'interest' (Art and IT), and vocational and life skills courses. While this offer would not garner the full approval of inspection bodies, it did allow AE to demonstrate attainment.

We encountered a strong commitment in all sites to the importance of the basics and work-related subjects, despite the patchy progress of pupils. But equity-related educational notions - of a common curriculum or the right to all areas of knowledge or that social sciences, humanities and languages are crucial ways of making sense of your world and your-self - were largely absent.

Consequences of this form of AE

We have argued that the overall policy push for the logics of effectiveness supports particular kinds of behaviour management regimes and a particular curriculum offer. We saw that the more pastoral 'psy' practices which enable a self-disciplining subjectivity were largely framed by behaviourist regimes which relied on ongoing sovereign judgments of order. External surveillance framed and delimited self-discipline. We also saw that AE now generally omits those intellectual activities which foster critical thinking and awareness of social and political issues. Both of these practices allowed AE providers to produce visible evidence of progress for external auditors.

We are mindful that our sample is small and selective. We are mindful that we cannot assume that all young people will respond in the same ways to the AE that they receive. As Revelry (2015) argues, 'psy' regimes can produce resistant subjectivities who reject neoliberal values and practices. We also don't want to suggest that self-discipline is unnecessary: good 'order 'in schools is integral to student learning (Watkins 2012) and pastoral discipline from caring teachers is preferable to policed discipline (Devine 1996). But we worry about the kinds of conforming subjectivities that this kind of AE might produce. We wonder about its possible consequences for young people, for example: not self-managing in less rigidly structured organisational settings; not exercising the kinds of initiative expected in workplaces and higher and further education and having inadequate knowledge resources to understand the social, political and cultural crucible in which they live. We worry about the potential lack of social justice for the young people experiencing this kind of AE (c.f. Rix 2011).

We are also mindful of the kinds of futures that might be available to the young people typically in AE. Levels of incarceration of young people are increasing in the UK (see http://www.howardleague.org/weekly-prison-watch/). There is a proliferation of precarious work in which employees are expected to abide by sets of rules and working conditions that trade unions have long rejected (Standing 2011). We note that the carceral and marginalised work both rely on sovereign forms of discipline - they expect less self discipline and less responsibilised citizens than say for example permanent stable work in a trade or profession, or indeed, further or

higher education. We see some resonance between these social changes and the shifts in AE. Making this case of course requires more than our small study, but we note this concern here as something that deserves further attention and thinking. If, as Ecclestone and Brunila (2015) argue, education is generally turning to advocate therapeutic emotional management for all students, with negative implications for social justice, then our study suggests that a different regime – behaviourist hugs and behaviour points – may be in the ascendency in AE in England. This is contrary to the directions suggested by much of the literature on AE which highlights its humane/pastoral characteristics. We suggest that the trend to 'hugs and behaviours points' that we observed certainly requires urgent critical attention.

And the lack of longitudinal data about the fates of young people post their AE enrolment avoids any determination of how their 'success' in these programmes holds in the longer term, and also prevents us from seeing whether any of the possibilities we have suggested might come to fruition. But we observe, while AE rhetoric, its regime of truth, is always about reducing risks for young people, both the behaviour management and educational logics and systems in play in England and to some extent in the other three nations of the UK at present actually manage risks for AE itself. The AE we saw was strongly geared and steered to produce visible and tangible representations of the kind required by systems as evidence of things 'working well' in both its re-ordering and learning missions.

APPENDIX

Case Study	Behaviour Monitoring Systems	Curriculum	Achievement Monitoring Systems
1	Assessment of academic, social, emotional, therapeutic and medical needs when young person arrives. Regular reporting covers punctuality, motivation, confidence and readiness to learn.	Full range of GCSEs as well as functional skills qualifications.	All students have individual learning plans with precise targets for attendance, attainment, attitude to learning and behaviour which is updated every six weeks. Progress is measured against this.
2	Young people acquire points for good behaviour. 100 points gets them a prize. Positive and negative behaviour, and attendance, is reported on a central database to provide a detailed profile to be reviewed at meetings.	Up to 13 GCSE subjects alongside vocational subjects.	Assessments and base-lining when students arrive. Data collection 6 times a year. Progress assessed against targets.
3	Young people acquire points for good behaviour. Behaviour points and concerns are logged to generate a detailed behaviour profile of students. There is a weekly prize and certificate for the student with the most points. Pupils write their behaviour targets every morning and they are sent home every night.	Minimum of English, Maths, ICT and art. A variety of vocational qualifications are available.	Assessment and base-lining when students arrive. An Individual learning plan is produced to ensure appropriate work. Young people are reassessed every six months. Attainment data is colour coded to illustrated progress according to targets.

4	Data on attendance, punctuality, behaviour, and attainment are collected and reviewed by the school.	A military-inspired fun and fitness programme.	There is no academic content.
5	Students have targets for their engagement and social development.	English, Maths, and outdoor learning qualifications	Each student has a work plan. Progress sheets are completed each day by teacher and student. This documents the work covered, attitude to learning, and progress towards targets.
6	Young people have an individual review meeting once a month where they work with a member of staff to decide on their social and personal targets.	5 GCSEs in English, Maths, ICT, Graphic Design and Multi Media.	Young people have learning orientated targets.. Targets are kept in a folder and referred to everyday.
7	They track the attainment, behaviour and attendance of students. Negative behaviours are logged, categorised and tracked.	English, Maths, Science, BTEC in sport and either GCSE art, media, or a vocational subject.	Young people are base-lined when they arrive so academic progress can be demonstrated. Students have an individual learning plan. This is reviewed throughout the year and information is stored on a central system.

8	Data not available	English, Maths, Science and ICT as standard. Can also take psychology, P.E. art, drama, cake decorating and history.	
9	They assess students' strength and difficulties using a questionnaire. A daily report on attendance feeds into monthly reports. They have a weekly case conference to discuss each young person.	English and Maths and a wide range of vocational qualifications.	A member of staff attends all off-site activities to monitor the students' progress and interaction with others.
10	Young people have lots of one-to-one time with adults. They have therapeutic sessions both on their own and in groups. Young people complete surveys which track changes in their life satisfaction, resilience and self-esteem across the programme.	The programme is therapeutic. Young people engage in a range of real-life farm tasks alongside therapeutic sessions.	There is no academic content.
11	Students are monitored according to 8 indicators of wellbeing from the Scottish Government GIRFEC directive.	Qualifications are available in a full set of academic and vocational subjects.	Young people are evaluated against Scotland's Curriculum for Excellence capacities. This is accompanied by a meeting, to which relevant stakeholders are invited. All young people have an individual learning plan.

12	Attendance and punctuality are monitored carefully.	A one or two year motor vehicle course, Literacy and numeracy embedded.	Diagnostic tools are used to assess academic levels and difficulties when young people first arrive.
13	Young people set their own goals through their Personal Development Plan, and review these with staff. The 'My Journey' evaluation tool tracks how young people are progressing across five 'soft skills' during the programme.	A personal and social development programme, based on activities. Incorporates some literacy.	Trust on Track is the main database used for gathering relevant profile and background information on each of the young people, as well as their journey through the programme.
14	Young people are awarded points each lesson and given an overall score each day. The boy and girl with the highest points that week will receive a small prize. The pupil of the month gets a bigger prize.. Attendance is closely monitored for each student.	English, Maths, ICT, P.E, Duke of Edinburgh, PSHEE and a vocational course.	They base-line all of the young people. Staff write a report after each session. Pupils receive termly reports about how they are doing in each subject, their progress and their grade. Each young person has an Individual Learning Plan, reviewed annually.
15	Young people receive points at the end of every session for meeting their targets, effort, behaviour, and uniform. 100 points can be won each day. .If they get over 60 they get to choose an activity during the 'free time'. There are penalty points for breaking rules.	Qualifications are available in a full set of academic and vocational qualifications.	Progress is monitored regularly. Full weekly reports go to the child and home.

16		Curriculum is project based with embedded Literacy, numeracy and ICT. Vocational programmes run alongside this.	They do a diagnostic assessment of each young person .They generate an individual learning plan, and this is looked at in the overall quality assessment of the provision.
17	Attendance and all contact with the family is monitored. They have pupil and family profiles so they can support beyond the family to support their child.	Qualifications are available in a full set of academic and vocational subjects.	Pupil progress is recorded and reported to facilitate the setting of short and long term goals. Outcomes are discussed 6-8 weeks after admission, then progress across subjects is tracked on a termly basis. All pupils have an Additional Support Plan (ASP).These are reviewed regularly through case conferences, which enable input from pupils and parents.

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[i] Our view is that 'change' is not transferable in any simplistic kind of way. There are however common patternings which inhibit and promote change particularly in schools serving neighbourhoods made poor (Thomson 2002; Lupton 2004), and important questions which arise, and interesting principles about ways of working, that can be drawn from reform stories (Warren Little 1996).