

***Doctorate in Professional Educational, Child
and Adolescent Psychology***

Programme Director: Vivian Hill



**A study investigating the prevalence, practice and
perspectives of the use of internal exclusion in mainstream
secondary schools**

Kelly Golding

UCL, Institute of Education

Doctorate in Professional Educational Child and Adolescent Psychology

Student declaration and word count

I, Kelly Golding confirm that the work presented in this thesis is my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated in the thesis.

Word count (exclusive of appendices, list of references and impact statement): 37,329

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank everyone who has so kindly supported me with this research. Firstly, thank you to all the professionals who contributed to this study, especially given the unprecedented context of Covid-19 and the impact this has had on all our lives. A huge thank you to my academic supervisor, Dr Ed Baines, for your knowledge, support and brilliant sense of humour. Thank you to my professional supervisor, Dr Karen Majors, for your helpful advice. A heartfelt thanks also goes to my placement supervisor, Shona MacGregor – you have been an inspiration to me, I could not have survived the last three years without you!

I owe the biggest thanks to my family and friends. A big thanks to the DEdPsy Cohort for new friendship, fun and support. To my husband John, thank you for taking care of our family (and for the hours and hours of proof reading). Without your constant support this journey would not have been possible. Evelyn, thank you for being so patient with me. You are funny, courageous and you give the best cuddles. This work is dedicated to you, my lovely daughter.

Abstract

Internal exclusion (IE) is thought to be a common disciplinary practice in secondary schools, yet there is a dearth of research investigating the strategy. There are no statistics confirming the number of schools utilising IE and no independent analysis of how many pupils are placed in IE, how long they stay there for, and what they do. This study makes an important contribution to the literature by developing an indication of the prevalence of IE and the practices operationalising it, and by gathering school staff and EP perspectives about the use and efficacy of the strategy.

The research adopted a mixed-methods design and reports on quantitative data arising from two surveys: a school staff survey ($n=94$) and EP survey ($n=83$), and qualitative data from semi-structured interviews with school leaders ($n=9$). Results show that IE is a highly prevalent strategy used across England, but operationalised in different ways. The research found that internal referral patterns are typically stable or increasing which, coupled with perceptions that the same pupils regularly repeat IE, serves to challenge the fundamental assumption that IE acts as an effective deterrent against poor behaviour.

A main theme in the data was a belief that SEND pupils attend IE more frequently than their peers. This, and other findings, have important implications for policy and practice which include: an urgent need for clarity in government guidance, evaluation of the impact of IE and a review of the IE environment. With three-quarters of school staff indicating that EPs are used to support with behaviour, the profession could potentially play a significant role in assisting schools with IE. Typically, though, EPs tend to be restricted to supporting at the individual level and can be side-lined in systemic policy decisions related to IE.

Recommendations following the main findings from the study are summarised in a guidance framework. It is hoped that this will help support schools and EPs in navigating the complexities of IE processes in an ethical and evidence-informed way.

Impact statement

This research investigated the prevalence, practice and perspectives of the use of internal exclusion (IE) in mainstream secondary schools. It represents an important contribution to the research literature as it is the first study to develop an indication of the national prevalence of IE and the range of practices operationalising the strategy. Furthermore, the research reports for the first time on Educational Psychologists' (EPs) perspectives on the use of IE, giving valuable insights to the role of the EP profession in the use of the strategy.

The research adopted a mixed methods approach to gather quantitative and qualitative findings which demonstrated that IE is a highly prevalent strategy used across England, and operationalised in variable ways. It is one of few mixed methods studies to demonstrate that the IE environment can reinforce a punitive, disciplinary function and builds on the existing evidence base to highlight a perception that SEND pupils attend IE more frequently than their peers.

This study demonstrates that EPs could potentially play a significant role in supporting schools with IE. However, findings highlighted that EPs tend to be restricted to supporting at the individual level and can be side-lined in systemic policy decisions related to IE.

Research findings have a number of important implications for policy and practice which include:

Government policy

- The variability in the study's findings signals the need for an urgent review of government guidance to improve clarity on best practice in terms of the operationalisation of IE.

School practice

- Clearly identify the purpose of IE and evaluate impact against desired developmental outcomes.
- Introduce tighter accountability processes scrutinising the use of the strategy to ensure educational equity.
- Ensure that pupils are not placed in IE due to unmet SEND needs.
- Review the IE environment to ensure that pupils' surroundings support targeted developmental outcomes.
- Carefully consider the impact of Covid-19 on pupil mental health and wellbeing and make the focus of IE a holistic, rehabilitative one.
- Create a shared psychological understanding of behaviour across the school.
- Utilise the positive staff:pupil ratio in IE contexts to provide greater levels of individual pupil attention and a context to develop good relationships.

EP Practice

- Introduce evidenced-based, viable and scalable alternatives to IE.
- Use professional training in research enquiry to support schools in evaluating the impact of IE.
- Support schools to develop a psychological understanding of behaviour.
- Support schools in reviewing their behaviour policy to ensure it is appropriately differentiated for pupils with SEND and that reasonable adjustments are being made.
- Support schools in bridging training gaps regarding SEND and relating pedagogy and support with differentiation for behaviour needs.
- Develop systemic projects to support staff with managing behaviour, such as peer supervision groups.

Table of Contents and Appendices

1. Introduction	16
1.1 Defining ‘disciplinary IE’	18
1.2 Defining the term ‘exclusion’	20
1.3 Defining Inclusion.....	20
1.4 Rationale for the study.....	20
1.5 Aims of the research	22
1.6 Covid-19	22
2. Systematic Literature Search	23
2.1 Overview.....	23
2.2 Defining the search questions.....	23
2.3 Review protocol and inclusion criteria	24
2.4 Undertaking the search	24
2.5 Screening and assessing quality	25
2.6 Overview of included search literature	26
3. Literature Review	29
3.1 Overview.....	29
3.2 Government guidance on behaviour in schools.....	29
3.3 Exclusion and the role of IE.....	31
3.4 National benchmarks and accountability systems	33
3.5 The rise of zero tolerance.....	33

3.6 The perceived pros of IE.....	35
3.7 The perceived cons of IE	36
3.8 The inclusion versus exclusion debate.....	38
3.9 Behaviourism and IE	39
3.10 What is the prevalence of IE in secondary schools in England?	42
3.11 How frequently do pupils attend IE and how long for?	42
3.12 Who attends IE and are any population groups over-represented?.....	43
3.13 What are staff and pupil perspectives about the use and efficacy of IE?	44
3.14 How is IE operationalised in practice?	44
3.15 What is the role of EPs in relation to IE?.....	46
3.16 IE in context	47
3.17 An international perspective.....	48
3.18 This study	49
4. Methodology	50
4.1 Overview.....	50
4.2 Epistemological perspective.....	50
4.3 Researcher position.....	51
4.4 Design structure and overview of methodologies	52
4.4.1 Rationale for using mixed methods.....	53
4.4.2 Phase 1	54
4.4.3 Staff and EP survey	54
4.4.4 Sampling strategy.....	56
4.4.5 Data collection procedure	57
4.4.6 Final sample.....	58

4.4.7 Data analysis procedure.....	59
4.5 Phase 2.....	60
4.5.1 Research Tool.....	60
4.5.2 Sample.....	61
4.5.3 Data collection.....	63
4.5.4 Data analysis.....	64
4.6 Integration of Phase 1 and Phase 2 data.....	66
4.7 Research integrity.....	66
4.8 Ethical considerations.....	67
5. Results.....	68
5.1 Overview.....	68
5.2 The prevalence of IE across the UK.....	68
5.2.1 The prevalence of IE use in schools: daily referral numbers.....	71
5.2.2 The prevalence of IE use in schools: referral numbers over time.....	72
5.3. The practice of operationalising IE in schools.....	72
5.3.1. Reasons for IE referral.....	74
5.3.2 Other behaviour support strategies used in school.....	76
5.4 Perspectives on the use and efficacy of IE.....	79
5.4.1 Perspectives on the importance of IE.....	79
5.4.2 Perspectives on pupil behaviour change following implementation of IE.....	79
5.4.3 Relationship between perceptions of behaviour change, following the introduction of IE, and other behaviour support strategies used by schools.....	81
5.4.4 The perceived benefits and value of using an IE strategy.....	82
5.4.5 The perceived challenges in using an IE strategy.....	86
5.5: EPs perceptions in relation to the level and type of support provided to schools.....	94
5.5.1: EP perceptions about the level of support provided.....	94
5.5.2: EP perceptions about the types of support provided.....	95

5.6 Summary of phase 1 results	98
5.7 Phase 2 results: thematic analysis of semi-structured interviews	99
5.7.1 Theme 1: The purpose of IE	100
5.7.2 Theme 2: Key factors determining the use of IE.....	103
5.7.3 Theme 3: Complications of using IE.....	109
5.8 Summary of phase 2 results	114
6. Discussion	115
6.1 Overview.....	115
6.2 RQ1 Prevalence: How prevalent is the use of IE in mainstream secondary schools?	115
6.2.1 How many schools use IE?.....	115
6.2.2 How many pupils attend IE?.....	118
6.3 RQ2 Practice: What are the in-school practices that operationalise an IE strategy (including the role of EPs)?.....	119
6.3.1 IE is operationalised in highly variable ways.....	120
6.3.2 In the majority of cases, the IE environment was used to reinforce a punitive, disciplinary function.	122
6.3.3 EPs could potentially play a big role, but currently work mostly at the individual level and have little influence over IE policy and implementation.....	124
6.4 RQ3 Perspectives: What are school staff and EP perspectives about the use and efficacy of IE?	128
6.4.1 There is a belief that SEND pupils attend IE more frequently than their peers.....	128
6.4.2 The assumption that IE acts as a deterrent against poor behaviour does not hold up.	131
6.5 The current context of Covid-19 and the use and operationalisation of IE.....	133
6.6 Strengths and limitations of the study.....	135
6.7 Implications for policy and practice	137
6.7.1. Recommendation 1: clear government guidance on use of IE	138

6.7.2 Recommendation 2: Identify purpose, evaluate impact and introduce tighter accountability processes	139
6.7.3 Recommendation 3: Ensure that pupils are not placed in IE due to unmet SEN needs	140
6.7.4 Recommendation 4: Create a shared psychological understanding of behaviour across the school	141
6.7.5 Recommendation 5: consider the impact of Covid-19 on pupil mental health and wellbeing and make the focus of IE a holistic rehabilitative one	142
6.7.6 Recommendation 6: Review the IE environment to ensure that the pupil’s surroundings support targeted developmental outcomes	142
6.8 Conclusion	145
References	146
Appendix A: Systematic literature search	165
Appendix A1: Systematic search results: search question 1	166
Appendix A.2: Table 18 systematic search results for search question 2	167
Appendix A.3: Relevance Questions	168
Appendix A4: Overview of the final policy documents included in the systematic search	169
Appendix B: Staff survey questions	170
Appendix D: semi structured interview questions	178
Appendix E: Doctoral student Ethical Approval Form	180
Appendix F: Covering letter for schools	193
Appendix G: Information sheet for schools	194
Appendix H: Combined letter and information sheet	196
Appendix I: Consent Form for interview	198
Appendix J: Consent form for survey on Qualtrics	199

Appendix K: Summary of Ethical processes.....	200
Appendix L: Worked example of thematic analysis process	201
Appendix M: Attribution of quotations used in the text	207
Appendix N: Worked example of coding system for content analysis (EP Survey).....	208
Appendix O: Worked example of coding system for contents analysis (Staff survey)	208
Appendix P: Representation of LAs in the staff survey data	209
Appendix Q: Table X Geographical locations of EP survey participants.....	211

List of Tables

Table 1. Overview of final research literature included in systematic search.	27
Table 2. Frequency data relating to survey participant demographics.....	59
Table 3. Demographic information of interview participants school setting	63
Table 4. Frequency of schools that use an IE strategy	69
Table 5. Frequencies of responses relating to daily IE referral numbers by staff role.....	72
Table 6. Frequencies of responses relating to IR referral numbers over time by staff role ...	72
Table 7. Frequencies of participant responses relating to IE in Practice: Time, Talk and Supervision.....	74
Table 8. Frequencies of responses relating to reasons for IE referral (respondents able to select multiple options)	75
Table 9. Frequencies of responses relating to other behaviour support strategies (respondents able to select multiple options).....	78
Table 10. Mean frequency of school staff perceptions of the importance of IE in school behaviour policy	79
Table 11. Perceptions of IE leading to changes in pupil behaviour.....	80
Table 12. Staff survey: Frequencies of responses relating the perceived benefits of using an IE strategy.....	83
Table 13. EP survey: Frequencies of responses relating to the perceived benefits of using an IE strategy.....	86
Table 14. Staff Survey: Frequencies of responses relating the perceived challenges of using an IE strategy	89
Table 15. EP survey frequencies of responses relating the perceived challenges of using an IE strategy.....	92
Table 16. Frequencies indicating level of EP support to schools	95

Table 17. Frequency of responses relating to types of support that EPs provide to Secondary Schools to support pupil behaviour.....	96
Table 18. Systematic Search Results: Search Question 1	166
Table 19. Systematic Search Results: Search question 2	167
Table 20. Overview of the final policy documents included in the systematic search	169
Table 21. Attribution of interview quotations.....	207
Table 22. Representation of LAs in the staff survey data	209
Table 23. Geographical locations of EP survey participants	211

List of Figures

Figure 1. Overview of the research structure, methods utilised and contribution to research questions.....	53
Figure 2. Outline of data analysis and integration processes undertaken	60
Figure 3. Map displaying school staff survey respondents by county in England.	69
Figure 4. Map displaying EP survey respondents by region of work in UK.....	70
Figure 5. Thematic map detailing main themes and subthemes arising from thematic analysis of interviews.	99
Figure 6. Diagram of sub-themes contributing to theme 1: The purpose of IE.....	100
Figure 7. Diagram of sub-themes contributing to theme 2: Key factors determining the use of IE.....	103
Figure 8. Diagram of sub-themes contributing to theme 3: Complications of using IE	109
Figure 9. Guidance framework for schools and E	144
Figure 10. Relevance questions developed to review abstracts of papers identified in the systematic literature search.....	168

List of abbreviations

APA	American Psychological Association
DfE	Department for Education
DHT	Deputy Headteacher
EP	Educational Psychologist
EEF	Education Endowment Foundation
FTE	Fixed Term Exclusion
HT	Headteacher
IE	Internal Exclusion
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
RQ1	Research Question 1
RQ2	Research Question 2
RQ3	Research Question 3
SENCo	Special Educational Needs Coordinator
SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
TA	Teaching Assistant
TEP	Trainee Educational Psychologist

1. Introduction

Discipline in schools is a perennial preoccupation in education and a consistently high-profile issue for educational psychologists (Harold & Corcoran, 2013). The current focus on pupil behaviour is borne out in government rhetoric with the Secretary of State for Education describing “behaviour and discipline as the cornerstone of what defines successful schools” (DfE, 2021b). A perspective clearly reflected at policy level in the newly launched £10 million behaviour hubs programme.

Teachers remain concerned about behaviour in their classrooms and poor pupil behaviour is cited as a key factor impacting levels of teacher retention (DfE, 2019). For policy makers, researchers and practitioners alike, the response to pupil behaviour regulation difficulties in an effective and ethical way comprises a principal educational dilemma (Armstrong, 2018).

Rates of exclusion are inextricably bound to considerations of discipline in schools. English exclusion rates exceed that of other UK countries (Ferguson, 2019); in the DfE’s analysis of the 2018-2019 figures for secondary schools, rates of permanent exclusion remained stable (7,894 permanent exclusions), whilst fixed period exclusions increased from 410, 800 to 438, 265. The most common reason for exclusion was ‘persistent disruptive behaviour’ (DfE, 2021c).

Troubling inequalities persist in exclusion data; pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM) are four times more likely to be excluded, pupils with special educational needs (SEN) account for 45% of the excluded population and there are big disparities in rates according to ethnicity. Pupils of Gypsy / Roma and Traveller of Irish Heritage and Black Caribbean ethnic origin have the highest rates of exclusion (DfE, 2019). In England then, there are evident connections between school disciplinary processes and inequality (Gazeley et al., 2015).

Data from the Department of Education (DfE) suggests that a single day's absence from school can hinder a child's life chances (DfE & Gibb 2016) and longitudinal research shows that school exclusion is a risk factor associated with a broad range of negative outcomes. These include poor mental and physical health, involvement in crime, unemployment, and homelessness (Pirrie et al., 2011). Whilst the long-lasting negative effects of permanent exclusion are relatively well understood, there is limited research on the impact of within school disciplinary processes. It is conceivable that the inequalities present in school exclusion data discussed above are mirrored in internal school disciplinary processes, which potentially also have a disproportionately negative impact on vulnerable, over-represented pupil groups. Gazeley et al. (2015) suggest that official school exclusion rates are "the tip of the iceberg" (p.500), and call for urgent research mapping internal school disciplinary processes.

Disciplinary internal exclusion (IE) is a within-school disciplinary process that involves the temporary withdrawal of a pupil from mainstream instruction. The practice is described as a key preventative strategy currently used for pupils at risk of permanent exclusion in English secondary schools (Thomson, 2018). Unlike a fixed-term exclusion, the pupil is relocated within the school environment. Schools are not held to account for their use of IE (Munn et al., 2015), there is no official exclusion, but the strategy does involve removing pupils from mainstream classes (Power & Taylor, 2018). IE has become the most commonly used within-school disciplinary alternative to 'formal' exclusion (Munn et al., 2015). However, to extend the metaphor used by Gazeley et al. (2015), this disciplinary practice lies beneath the tip of the iceberg, in murkier waters.

Given the lack of regulation surrounding the use of IE, it is perhaps unsurprising that the practice is vulnerable to negative attention from the media: "When school is an isolation cubicle with three toilet breaks a day" (Lightfoot, 2020). However, grey literature does not

provide the much-needed clarity and balance to the debate about the use of IE. Paradoxically, IE is both a common strategy in school, but also a relatively poorly understood educational practice, with the absence of clear government guidance this results in highly variable, discretionary use of IE. It is therefore imperative for educational researchers to explore the complex factors informing IE and its impact on pupils and staff.

1.1 Defining ‘disciplinary IE’

The generic term IE is complex to define. Extant literature refers to the concept using a broad and contradictory range of proper nouns. For example, “behaviour support unit”, “reflection room”, “seclusion room”, “exclusion room”, “inclusion room”, “isolation room”, or more informally, “sin bins” and “time out” are just some of the terms assigned to the practise of removing a pupil from a mainstream classroom for a period of time due to unwanted behaviour (e.g. Barker et al., 2010; Gillies & Robinson, 2012;; Munn et al., 2015).

The limited consistency in labelling IE practices is symptomatic of variations at a local level. Investigative research into alternative provision, commissioned by the DfE, found key differences in the ways in which IE is implemented. The researchers identified that schools tended to emphasise IE as either a sanction or supportive mechanism, which led to substantial differences in practice (Thomson, 2018). Variations in school ethos and surrounding disciplinary structures that underpin the use of IE in turn influence what Munn et al. (2015) identify as the dimensions of the strategy: the level of supervision and who supervises; where the IE takes place; how long the IE is for and what kind of work is undertaken.

The discourse around IE is equally contradictory at national level. Statutory guidance relating to school exclusions states that “ internal exclusion (also referred to as ‘seclusion’ or ‘isolation’): [is] when a pupil is barred from the classroom, but not from the school site” and

clarifies that “this is not an exclusion” (DfE, 2017, p. 58). In a linguistically baffling way, the guidance definition intends to separate the label of ‘internal exclusion’ from conceptualisations of school exclusion. However, the DfE commissioned report *Creating a Culture: How school leaders can optimise behaviour* (2017) defines exclusion as *any* form of removal from the mainstream classroom, including IE. A further DfE report offering advice for headteachers regarding discipline in schools identifies IE as a potentially effective strategy that schools can adopt “which allows disruptive pupils to be placed in an area away from other pupils for a limited period”. This report however does not use the word ‘exclusion’ and instead refers to “seclusion or isolation rooms” (DfE, 2016, p. 12.).

The disagreement as to whether the process of IE qualifies as a form of school exclusion is reflected in the wider research literature. The practice of IE is simultaneously positioned as a parallel process sitting alongside school exclusion (Gazeley et al., 2015); as an (inclusive) alternative to fixed-term exclusion (Gilmore, 2013) and as a form of formal exclusion, in that the pupil is being denied the opportunity to take part in the curriculum and thus the same learning opportunity as peers (Munn et al., 2015).

For the purposes of this study, IE is conceptualised as a disciplinary practice where a pupil is removed from “typical instruction (or social environment) for a period of time in response to unwanted behaviour” (Nese & McIntosh, 2016, p. 4). This is a within-school process where the aim is to remove a pupil from class, not from the school premises, due to disciplinary reasons (Skipp & Hopwood, 2017). The pupil is therefore removed from their typical instruction with their teachers and interactions with their peers. In line with the scope of the current study, IE is defined as having a disciplinary function and within school units, bases or rooms are primarily used as a form of behaviour management practice. As such, this study does not use the term IE in relation to units, bases or rooms with a broader remit to

support pupils with SEN, where staff may be fulltime and have a reparative role to address pupil vulnerabilities and needs (e.g. nurture bases).

1.2 Defining the term ‘exclusion’

This research broadens the definitions of exclusion to include practices where pupils are removed from mainstream classrooms but remain in the school building. As such, this definition includes disciplinary IE. This definition is aligned with the DfE commissioned report on behaviour guidance where exclusion is outlined as any form of removal from mainstream lessons (Bennett, 2017).

1.3 Defining Inclusion

The term ‘Inclusion’ is a kind of educational grand narrative and is complex to define. The SEN Code of Practice (2015) uses the word ambiguously and there is no definition in the guidance or glossary of terms. Of the wide-ranging definitions, which feature the different conceptualisations of integration and inclusion (Webster, 2019), this study’s definition is in line with Stanforth et al. (2018) where philosophical connotations of the construct are temporarily placed aside to generate a definition which focuses on practical implementation; pupils inclusion within school and classrooms. Inclusion is defined as: equality of opportunity to learn and participate in education; the valuing of difference which is reflected in curriculum, pedagogy and assessment; for all pupils to be represented in decision making processes (Stanforth & Rose, 2018).

1.4 Rationale for the study

Currently, no national data is gathered in relation to IE practices in secondary schools and there is no formal accountability mechanism for the strategy (Ferguson, 2019; Gazeley et al.,

2015). The combination of discretionary practice and the invisibility of the strategy, serves to shape difficult, mostly unanswered questions.

Currently, there are no statistics collected confirming the number of schools utilising IE as a strategy, or research investigating the process of referrals. There has been no independent analysis of how many pupils are placed in IE, how long they stay there for, what they do, and no analysis of characteristics of pupils that are placed in IE rooms (Gillies & Robinson, 2012). The long-term impact of students repeatedly missing mainstream instruction as a result of IE is also not well understood (Stanforth & Rose, 2018). These chasms in the data have made it difficult for researchers to identify if certain population groups are disproportionately affected by the strategy (e.g. Gillies & Robinson, 2012; Power & Taylor, 2018; Stanforth & Rose, 2018).

A research report commissioned by the DfE found a lack of ‘hard evidence’ of schools evaluating the impact of IE. The report highlights that schools cite the avoidance of an exclusion as evidence of success, but that this conclusion is not supported by formal evaluations. Thus there was no available platform from which to determine if it was IE that led to a positive outcome (Thomson, 2018). In applying any strategy or intervention in an educational setting it is important to establish whether it is evidence based (Vegas et al., 2007), yet in the case of IE there doesn’t appear to be one.

There is tacit understanding that IE exists in most secondary schools in England (McBeath & National Union of Teachers, 2006). Despite the prevalence of IE, and the recent flurry of articles present within grey literature, there is a dearth of research investigating the use and workings of IE strategy. This study aims to begin to address this gap in the research literature.

1.5 Aims of the research

This research has four main aims relating to the prevalence, practice and perspectives surrounding the use of IE in mainstream secondary schools. Firstly, it aims to develop an indication of the prevalence of IE. Secondly, it seeks to understand the in-school practices that operationalise IE, including the role of Educational Psychologist (EP), reasons for IE referral, length of IE referral and the IE environment. Thirdly, to understand school staff and EP perspectives about the use and efficacy of IE. Finally, this study aimed to consider the implications of this research to inform a guidance framework with recommendations to assist secondary schools and EPs in navigating IE in an ethical and evidence-informed way.

1.6 Covid-19

The Covid-19 pandemic represents an unprecedented context for the present study, testing the very foundations of education and forming what Harris and Jones (2020) call a “colossal moving target” for educationalists to manage. Whilst the long-term impact of the pandemic and resulting school closures are unknown, it is clear that Covid-19 has intensified education inequality and exacerbated children’s mental health and well-being needs (Harris & Jones, 2020). The DfE highlights that pupils in England may have been exposed to a range of adverse experiences and that this will have implications for pupil behaviour (DfE, 2021a). Given that the present study’s aims are embedded within an understanding of pupil behaviour, the researcher also sought to collect and evaluate data in relation to the impact of Covid-19 on the use of IE in schools.

2. Systematic Literature Search

2.1 Overview

A systematic literature search was undertaken to identify current research relating to the prevalence, perspectives and practice on the use of IE in secondary schools. This approach was adopted to promote the identification of high-quality material and ensure that the search could be replicated. The researcher adopted the systematic search protocol as outlined by Jesson et al. (2011), as follows: phase 1 included defining the search questions, compiling key words and setting up inclusion and exclusion criteria; phase 2 comprised the search process and refining the search terms and criteria; phase 3 included the screening process and assessing material for quality. This chapter provides full details of the systematic literature search undertaken.

2.2 Defining the search questions

Initial literature searches established that IE can be described using a confusing plethora of nouns. In consideration of the complexity of both defining IE and labelling it, further initial searches were conducted to identify the most common terms used to describe IE.

A decision was made to use broad ranging search questions in an attempt to capture all relevant literature. The search questions were as follows:

- What current literature exists on the prevalence, perspectives and practice on the use of IE?
- What current grey policy literature exists relating the prevalence, perspectives and practice on the use of IE?

2.3 Review protocol and inclusion criteria

The literature search was refined by publication date, including papers from the year 2000 to date only. For the policy search, this was refined from 2016 to date as there were a large number of documents related to the search term. Secondly, where the search tool had functionality to do so, subject was used as an inclusion criterion. Disciplines relating to education and psychology of education were included, whereas papers from clinical or other non-school contexts were excluded (see Table 18 in Appendix A for list of included subjects). Thirdly the context criterion mainstream secondary schools was utilised. To preserve quality, only peer reviewed articles, book chapters and theses were included in the searches related to search question 1. Policy documents only were included in the search related to search question 2.

2.4 Undertaking the search

The initial literature search identified 14 possible search terms to capture IE (see Table 18 in Appendix A for a list of the final terms). The search terms were separated by the Boolean phrase “OR”. Electronic databases searched included *Web of Science*, *British Education Index* and *Digital Education Resource Archive* (DERA). The latter was utilised to address search question 2 relating to government policy. As the 14 search terms did not yield any results on the DERA platform, the more general term “exclusion” was applied. *Google Scholar* was also searched, but due to the large number of possible papers meeting the inclusion criteria, a revised search strategy was used: “internal exclusion” AND “secondary school”.

Results from the DERA policy search were refined by screening the title of the identified document for relevance to the search questions. Documents with relevance scores

<1 were excluded from the final search results (see Appendix A.3 for relevance questions used).

Results from the broader literature search were refined by a) screening the title of the research paper and b) skimming abstracts for relevance. The relevance criteria applied was the same for all searches.

All searches were performed between 14.04.20 and 17.04.20. All papers were cross-referenced and duplicates removed. See Appendix A for tables presenting the literature search results.

2.5 Screening and assessing quality

Material identified from the systematic literature search were screened and assessed for quality. Abstracts were reviewed in detail for relevance to research questions underpinning the current study (see Appendix A.3 for relevance questions). A relevance score was calculated by allocating a point for each relevance question addressed in the abstract. These points were used to generate a final relevance rating. Relevance scores <2 were not included in the final search results. Further quality assessment was undertaken when full texts were reviewed for internal validity. This included analysis of data collection methods, data analysis, results and conclusions (Xiao & Watson, 2019). Restrictions to library access due to Covid-19 at the time of the search precluded access to four book chapters that may have met the final inclusion criteria.

For policy documents identified in the search, the screening approach comprised a review of the document summary passages for relevance. Policy documents with relevance scores <2 were excluded.

2.6 Overview of included search literature

A total of 16 texts from the literature search met the full search inclusion criteria, they are presented in Table 1. Four DfE documents met the final policy search criteria. Details of these documents can be found in Appendix A.4.

The final literature comprised peer reviewed articles ($n=10$), book chapters ($n=5$), and one thesis. This included mixed method studies ($n=5$), qualitative designs ($n=6$) and utilised a range of data collection methods including: ethnographic observation, documentary analysis, questionnaires, focus groups, analysis of in-school data on internal exclusions. Interviews were the most frequently used method (see tables 1 and 2 for details for each of the included texts). The final policy search comprised review papers ($n=2$) and qualitative research reports ($n=2$). Strengths and limitations of the studies are explored in the literature review.

Whilst the literature search was not refined by country and set out to capture international literature investigating IE, of the 10 peer reviewed articles included in the final literature search, 9 draw on research undertaken in England and 1 in Wales. Possible reasons for the absence of international literature on the use of IE include the difficulty of researching informal exclusionary practices (Power & Taylor, 2018) and that the search terms did not capture other possible linguistic labels used for the IE process in international contexts.

Table 1. Overview of final research literature included in systematic search.

Title	Text Type	Method	Context	Data collection methods	R * Score	Strengths/ Limitations
Barker, J., Alldred, P., Watts, M., & Dodman, H. (2010). Pupils or prisoners? Institutional geographies and internal exclusion in UK secondary schools.	Article (PR)	Mixed methods	Secondary (1)	Analysis of in-school data Interviews (n= 39) Informal observations	5.	Single school Specialist Perspective – environment/ geography of schools
Carlile, A. (2011). Docile bodies or contested space? Working under the shadow of permanent exclusion. <i>International Journal of Inclusive Education</i> , 15(3), 303–316.	Article (PR)	Qualitative	Local Authority Secondary	Interviews Ethnographic observations	2.	Focus on perspectives and inclusion/ exclusion generally. Has ecological validity
Corcoran, Tim. (2013). Discourses on behaviour: A role for restorative justice? <i>International Journal on School Disaffection</i> , 10(2), 45-61.	Article (PR)	Qualitative	Secondary (1)	Staff focus groups. Participants (n=21)	4.	Single school. Limited to staff perspectives. Written by an EP – relevant standpoint
Ferguson, L. (2019). Children at Risk of School Dropout. In J. G. Dwyer (Ed.), <i>The Oxford Handbook of Children and the Law</i> . Oxford University Press.	Book Chapter	n/a	n/a	n/a	4.	Descriptive chapter. Shapes a critique of the current system. Lack of balance in writing.
Fripps, Linda Emily (2011). Challenging behaviour and inclusion in a secondary school: Perceptions, policies and practices. EdD thesis The Open University.	Thesis	Qualitative	Secondary (1)	Case study	4.	Limited sample – 1 school. Completed by DEdPsy student – relevant
Gazeley, L., Marrable, T., Brown, C., & Boddy, J. (2015). Contextualising Inequalities in Rates of School Exclusion in English Schools: Beneath the ‘Tip of the Ice-Berg’. <i>British Journal of Educational Studies</i> , 63(4), 487–504.	Article (PR)	Qualitative	LA/ Teacher Training context.	Interviews with university tutors (n=8) and LA staff (n=7)	4.	Sampling strategy across national and local contexts
Gillies, V. (2016). <i>Pushed to the edge: Inclusion and behaviour support in schools</i> . Policy Press.	Book	Mixed methods	Secondary School (3)	Ethnographic study	5.	High ecological validity. Polemical. Can assert opinion as fact.
Gillies, V., & Robinson, Y. (2012). ‘Including’ while excluding: Race, class and behavior support units. <i>Race Ethnicity and Education</i> , 15(2), 157–174.	Article (PR)	Qualitative	Secondary school (3)	Part of an ethnographic study. Interviews (n=73)	5.	High ecological validity. Polemical. Can assert opinion.

Title	Text Type	Method	Context	Data collection methods	R * Score	Strengths/ Limitations
Gilmore, G. (2013). ‘What’s a fixed-term exclusion, Miss?’ Students’ perspectives on a disciplinary inclusion room in England: <i>British Journal of Special Education</i> , 40(3), 106–113.	Article (PR)	Mixed methods	Secondary School (1)	Analysis of in-school data. Pupil Interviews (n= 5)	4.	Single school. Socio-cultural perspective comparable in terms of deprivation indicators.
Gilmore, G (2017) “INFORMED VISUAL NARRATIVES FROM THE INSIDE Students’ Viewpoints on Inclusionary Practice” in. Plows, V., & Whitburn, B. (2017). <i>Inclusive education: Making sense of everyday practice</i> .	Book Chapter	Mixed methods	Secondary School (1)	Interviews (n=4) Questionnaire Visual Narratives	4.	Follow up interviews from original study-longitudinal perspective
Gilmore, G. (2012). What’s so inclusive about an inclusion room? Staff perspectives on student participation, diversity and equality in an English secondary school. <i>British Journal of Special Education</i> , 39(1), 39–48.	Article (PR)	Mixed Methods	Secondary school (n=1)	Analysis of in-school data (documentary analysis), online questionnaire n=30) Staff interviews (n=9)	5.	Single school. CHAT theory
McKeon, M. (2001). Promoting the inclusion of students at risk of exclusion: An evaluative case study. <i>Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties</i> , 6(4), 236–250.	Article (PR)	Mixed Methods	Secondary School (1)	Interviews (n=40) Questionnaire Analysis of in-school data	6.	Single case study design
Munn, P., Cullen, M. A., Lloyd, G., & Recorded Books, I. (2015). <i>Alternatives to exclusion from school</i> . SAGE Publications Ltd.	Book Chapter	n/a	n/a	n/a	4.	Descriptive. Argument shaped against IE
Nese, R. N. T. & McIntosh, K. (2016). Do school-wide positive behavioral interventions and supports, not exclusionary discipline practices. In B. G. Cook, M. Tankersley, & T. J. Landrum (Eds.), <i>Advances in learning and behavioural disabilities</i> (pp. 175-196). Bingley, UK: Emerald Group Publishing.	Book Chapter	n/a	n/a	n/a	4.	Useful references and generates evidence to possible alternatives / limitations of IE
Power, S., & Taylor, C. (2018). Not in the classroom, but still on the register: Hidden forms of school exclusion. <i>International Journal of Inclusive Education</i> , 1–15.	Article (PR)	Qualitative	Secondary School (12)	Interviews (part of the WISERD Education Multi-Cohort Study (WMCS))	6.	Total of 12 interviews. Only HT perspectives. Homogeneity but limitations to generalising data
Stanforth, A., & Rose, J. (2018). ‘You kind of don’t want them in the room’: Tensions in the discourse of inclusion and exclusion for students displaying challenging behavior in an English secondary school. <i>International Journal of Inclusive Education</i> , 1–15.	Article (PR)	Mixed	Secondary school (6)	Quantitative data on exclusions Qualitative. Staff (n=55) and pupil (n=53) interviews	4.	Quantitative data points strong (n= 2515) Seem to shapes a false dichotomy. Doesn’t discuss limitations – lack of reflexivity is issue

3. Literature Review

3.1 Overview

This literature review adopts a hybrid approach (Xiao & Watson, 2019), which synthesises the most pertinent research identified in the systematic literature search and relevant research literature identified by traditional review methods, regarding the prevalence, practice and perspectives on the use of IE in mainstream secondary schools in England. The rationale for utilising a hybrid approach for the review were twofold; firstly, the inclusion of material from the systematic literature search and summary ensured quality-assured research and academic rigour (Jesson et al., 2011); secondly, by extending the systematic review to include literature identified by the traditional method, the researcher was able to include current material which related to the research questions more broadly. Given the limited research in the area of IE, it was important to extend the breath of the literature review to explore research on zero tolerance, conceptualisations of pupil behaviour, and include updated policy documents.

The review begins by exploring the national policy context, focusing on current behaviour policy, the function of IE in exclusion practices, the role of national benchmarks and accountability systems mandated to schools and the culture of zero tolerance. The review then weighs up the perceived pros and cons of IE as evident in the research literature. Discourses of behaviourism are discussed in relation to informal exclusion processes, before moving on to a reflection of research evidence outlining examples of current IE practices in schools. The role of the EP in IE is also explored. Taking a broader stance, IE is then framed in the context of other behaviour strategies schools may utilise.

3.2 Government guidance on behaviour in schools

A key feature of the current disciplinary policy context in England is the new £10 million behaviour hubs programme launched in April 2021 (DfE, 2021b). The Secretary of State for

Education publicises the programme as supporting pupils to re-engage with education following the pandemic, but DfE guidance on behaviour hubs was originally published pre-Covid-19, in February 2020 (DfE, 2020). Repackaging the same initiative highlights that a focus on discipline was already high on the government's agenda. However, rolling-out the pre-existing programme could be problematic given Harris and Jones (2020) assertion that existing training programmes in schools require a radical re-think: it is "a mistake to simply re-configure or re-badge what was relevant before COVID19, as much of this training and development may no longer fit for purpose" (Harris & Jones, 2020., P.245).

The foundation for the hubs programme is an independent review undertaken for the DfE in 2017: *Creating Culture: how school leaders can optimise behaviour*. This report includes a clear message on IE:

"removing a student from a mainstream classroom when necessary should never be seen as a failure but as a positive solution. If the teacher is unable to deliver a lesson due to the continued behaviour of a student, removal is not only unavoidable, but right" (Bennett, 2017., p. 44).

The report defines 'exclusion' as *any* form of removal from mainstream classrooms, but the author is careful to use the term 'internal *inclusion* units' in the final recommendations and emphasises an inclusive standpoint suggesting that internal inclusion should: "offer targeted early specialist intervention with the primary aim of reintegrating students back into the mainstream school community" (p. 9). The use of the term 'internal inclusion unit' appears to contradict the report's definition of 'exclusion' as presumably children attending the unit would not simultaneously be attending mainstream lessons.

Policy making in England has been criticised for its reactive nature and disconnection to the research-informed considerations of effective and ethical practice in school disciplinary strategy (Armstrong, 2018). In the case of the Bennett (2017) guidance report, there seems to be limited information about the methodology guiding the study. The report outlines that a

‘number’ of schools were contacted as they demonstrated best practice in terms of behaviour management, that interviews and round table discussions were held, but again does not say how many of these or with who. The report suggests that 20 independent case studies focusing on behaviour management strategies were also considered, but does not provide more detail about how. Presumably the reference refers to the DfE commissioned research study which aimed to: “undertake qualitative research into behaviour management practices in schools as part of the evidence base for the Bennett review” (Skipp & Hopwood, 2017, p. 3). Arguably, this is an acknowledgement of the limitations of the original evidence base for the report. The researchers of this study highlight that the results should be treated with caution due to a small sample size ($n=20$) and a lack of triangulation; only schools with Ofsted ‘Outstanding’ categorisation were included in the sample and approaches were not compared to schools that did not meet that criteria. This suggests that the same behaviour strategies could be used in both outstanding and non-outstanding schools with alternative variables accounting for variations in pupil behaviour.

Given the limitations in the evidence base used to support the behaviour hubs programme, and the fact that it is a re-packaged pre-pandemic initiative arguably no longer fit for purpose (Harris & Jones, 2020), it seems that criticisms levelled at national policy for its disconnect to research do have some foundation.

3.3 Exclusion and the role of IE

The Timpson report (2019), commissioned by the government to review exclusion practice (defined as fixed-term or permanent) begins with an explanation of the methodology underpinning the research and justifies the claim of a ‘broad’ evidence base to develop the paper. The report uses the term ‘internal inclusion unit’ and frames the strategy as best practice in developing alternative pathways for pupils at risk of exclusion. Internal inclusion is described as:

“including a short-term ‘out of circulation’ area led by school staff, where pupils are sent for breaching the school’s rules, as well as a longer-term ‘inclusion centre’”.

(Timpson et al., 2019, p. 48).

The definition here again seems to exemplify the competing tensions in IE strategy. More specifically, being ‘out of circulation’ for breaking school rules could fit the definition of disciplinary exclusion (Power & Taylor, 2018), but, as in the Bennett (2017) report, this exclusionary function is not visible in the strategy’s given label: internal *inclusion*.

In consideration of the long-term negative outcomes associated with exclusion (Pirrie et al., 2011), it is unsurprising that the Timpson report stresses that formal exclusion must be a last resort (Timpson et al., 2019). Yet, researchers have highlighted that pressure on schools to reduce exclusions and be ‘inclusive’, without adequate resource to do so, can result in the increase of non-regulated practices such as IE. For example, a study conducted by Power and Taylor (2018) found that IE was common practice and frequently referred to by headteachers as a way of managing the pressure of reducing exclusions. The researchers interviewed headteachers about the challenges their schools face in terms of discipline and the approaches that were used to address “challenging” behaviour. Whilst the number of interviews conducted was relatively small ($n=12$), the sample is particularly relevant to the context of the present study as it included secondary schools only. The findings highlight possible unintended consequences of navigating the competing tensions of inclusion and exclusion in schools: an increase in informal exclusionary practice such as IE.

The lack of regulation surrounding IE makes it less visible both internally and externally; for example, staff members do not always know that pupils have been internally excluded and pupils’ needs may not be brought to the attention of school staff, the Local Authority (LA), or EPs in the same way as if a child had been visibly excluded (Munn et al., 2015). The lack of empirical evidence on the impact of IE serves to call into question the support of the strategy evident in current government policy and best practice guidelines.

3.4 National benchmarks and accountability systems

National benchmarks and accountability systems mandated to schools have also been linked to levels of school exclusion and IE practice. The Education Committee's (2018) report investigating exclusions identified Progress 8 accountability measures and a focus on EBacc subjects as main factors in pupil exclusion and "off-rolling" practices. The report's findings are aligned with a study undertaken by Gazeley et al. (2015), which explored the interplay between national policy and in school exclusion practice. The study was conducted in four stages; focus groups with Initial Teacher Training departments ($n=8$); interviews with LA staff members ($n=7$); document analysis; semi structured interviews with school staff ($n= 55$) and pupils ($n=53$), across six secondary schools. Findings highlighted that meeting key performance indicators and working with pupils presenting with complex behaviour needs, particularly at Key Stage 4, were seen as a conflict of interests.

The researchers also make the point that current policy of performativity results in tensions at a curriculum level. A drive to improve key performance indicators can restrict access to vocational courses, not included in metrics, which are commonly used to engage pupils at risk of exclusion (permanent, fixed or internal). Overall, the study highlights the importance of broadening both the conceptualisation and measurement of exclusion to include IE in statutory reporting processes. This would provide contextualised readings of disciplinary processes and support understanding of the association with educational inequality.

3.5 The rise of zero tolerance

A commitment to "well ordered and disciplined classrooms" (Williamson, 2021) exemplifies government rhetoric underpinning current education policy and perhaps begins to explain a national trend in adopting a no excuses/zero tolerance discipline strategy in secondary schools (Adams, 2016; Reader, 2015). A philosophy originating in the US, zero tolerance

behaviour policies dictate strict, predetermined consequences to misbehaviour which are applied regardless of severity, mitigating circumstances or contextual factors (APA Zero Tolerance Task Force, 2008).

The benefits of zero tolerance approaches are thought to include promoting a safe and effective learning environment by increasing consistency in behaviour management approaches and deterring future disruptive behaviour. However, an extensive literature review undertaken by a task force convened by the American Psychological Association (APA) identified results that contradict these assumptions. The researchers underline they found no evidence to support that zero tolerance policies increased consistency in behaviour management processes and highlight that vulnerable populations were found to be disproportionately affected (APA, 2008).

Rather than acting as a deterrent, the report also finds predictions of higher rates of misbehaviour among the students who had been part of the zero-tolerance process. More broadly, findings also suggest the removal of pupils who breach school rules may not have the desired effect of creating a better learning environment for the pupils that remain. Schools utilising zero tolerance were found to have less satisfactory ratings of school climate and more negative achievement outcomes overall. These findings have implications for the use of IE, which rests on very similar assumptions.

It should be noted that the APA zero tolerance task force report accessed did not detail the methodology underpinning the literature review processes undertaken and thus precludes the researcher exploring the credibility of the report and its findings. However, the researchers helpfully challenge some of the most intuitive assumptions underpinning zero tolerance and the use of exclusionary practices like IE.

Over ten years on from the APA report, the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) highlights an absence of high-quality research investigating the use of zero tolerance in the UK (Rhodes & Long, 2019). The EEF report stays on the fence in its advice to schools in

their use of zero tolerance, suggesting that more robust evaluations of the policy are needed. Arguably, the guidance may highlight the international evidence available, which foregrounds the limitations of the strategy, and emphasise the risks of adopting zero tolerance behaviour policies without recourse to an evidence base to support best practice.

3.6 The perceived pros of IE

A key perceived benefit of IE is that pupils remain in school. Attending mainstream school is thought to be the strongest predictor of young people staying “on track” (Sanders et al., 2016) and IE sustains the routine of the pupil attending school, avoiding contexts where an externally excluded pupil may be at greater risk (Munn et al., 2015). Pupils can also be provided with some of the benefits of Alternative Provision such as smaller class sizes and being removed from a conflict situation, without the negative connotations of being offsite (Thomson, 2018).

Pupils report that strong teacher-pupil relationships can be built in IE and outline that mentors from the provision can advocate for them in their mainstream school experiences (Gillies & Robinson, 2012). Notably, pupils are thought to work harder whilst in IE contexts (Barker et al., 2010) and avoid the problem of not completing tasks and catching up on return from an external exclusion (McKeon, 2001).

A study by Barker et al. (2010) not only highlighted a consensus that pupils work harder and achieve more when in IE, but also transform their behaviour. However, the significant changes in behaviour produced in the IE space were found to be short term and only partially successful. Pupils were found to shift back to their original behaviour when they returned to mainstream classrooms. This finding was replicated in a study undertaken by Fipps (2011). The leadership implemented IE to reduce fixed-term exclusions, but the pattern of behaviour in school did not change, only its sanctioning. Thus, in both studies the

transformative impact of disciplinary IE was limited to the exclusion room itself and did not facilitate long term changes in pupils' behaviour regulation needs.

A study undertaken by Gilmore (2013) sought to investigate the impact of IE and identified several further positive outcomes. The study utilised a mixed methods approach of document analysis and pupil interviews ($n=5$) in one secondary school. Whilst the limited sample comprises a key limitation to the interpretation of this study's results, especially considering the high variability in the ways schools operationalise IE, findings are pertinent to the current study. The researcher highlights the reduction of fixed-term exclusions (FTE) and improvement in GCSE results during the period when IE had been introduced. Results were thought to illustrate that "retaining" students had not negatively impacted attainment data and favourably influenced exclusion data. On the surface, a winning strategy. Though the question as to whether "retaining" equates to "including" is not resolved, and it is possible that gains in outcomes resulted from a host of alternative variables.

The Gilmore (2013) study also found that few students returned to the exclusion room and adds that the school offered a range of pastoral care and support post IE. While the study does not report any quantitative data to highlight return rates, importantly the researcher did find that against national trends, pupils with SEN were no more likely to attend IE.

Gilmore (2013) argues that disciplinary IE provides an exclusionary process that also facilitates participation in school and therefore promotes social justice and equality. The pupils in the study certainly felt that being in school was more useful than being at home. Though they also comment that when they attended IE the teachers did not help them, inviting questions about the quality of learning.

3.7 The perceived cons of IE

Part of the inclusivity question rests on the length of time that the pupil spends in IE, the kind of work they complete, and the level of support and teaching they get (Munn et al., 2015). If

a pupil is referred frequently, there becomes a sustained loss of educational experience and mounting difficulty to reintegrate. For example, Nese & McIntosh (2016) highlight this risk, finding that pupils frequently referred have less opportunity to build their academic skills. In the longer term, it may be that a coercive cycle emerges whereby pupils fall further behind, leading to more behaviour problems, and are therefore (re-)referred to IE. Ironically then, the ‘inclusive’ strategy of retaining vulnerable pupils in school can serve to disadvantage their educational progress (Fripps, 2011).

In consideration of the risks to pupil progress, it is unsurprising that research has shown that simply being in the building in and of itself is not sufficient to keep a pupil “on track”. A study conducted by Sanders, Munford, and Thimasarn-Anwar (2016) in New Zealand followed the experience of students aged 13 to 17 ($n=605$). They found that staying in school was the strongest predictor for pupils to stay ‘on track’, but only when they were attending mainstream classes. Indeed, educational resources and interventions outside of the mainstream class did not lead to positive outcomes. Notably, it has also been found that pupils missing lessons makes future challenging behaviour more likely (Orsati & Causton-Theoharis, 2013). Though there is evidence that the degree of exclusion is related to the severity of long-term outcomes; external exclusion may be more strongly related to negative outcomes than internal exclusion (Nese & McIntosh, 2016). Overall however, findings in the research literature seem to undermine the claim that IE is an inclusive process because pupils remain in school. Retaining pupils in an IE provision may not lead to improved educational attainment and as it can deny the pupil access to the same curriculum as their peers.

Without official records, the question remains as to whether the use of IE complies with a child’s right to education, as outlined in the United Nations’ Convention on the Rights of the Child (UN General Assembly, *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, 1989). As Ferguson (2019) notes, education can be particularly unreceptive to children’s rights when compared with other areas of society.

3.8 The inclusion versus exclusion debate

A dialectical argument lies at the heart the debate about the practice of IE. The opposing forces of a) an exclusionary discipline practice and b) a form of inclusion where a pupil's needs are met within the school environment. Supporters of IE frame the strategy as a preventative one, a progressive alternative to external exclusion, which represents a commitment to inclusion in education where pupils' needs can be met within the school environment (Gilmore, 2012). Whereas, opponents of the policy argue that exclusion rooms are a kind of holding pen, which segregate pupils and ultimately undermine the principles of inclusion and a universal entitlement to education (Gillies, 2016). Arguably however, the positioning of IE as 'inclusion' versus 'exclusion' represents a false dichotomy which negates the opportunity to hold plural values and recognise tensions between them. As Norwich (2013) points out, it is both possible that an additional unit, in this case IE, in a mainstream school is *inclusive* in that it provides access to the mainstream school, but also *exclusive* as the children are sometimes outside of the regular class lessons.

Rather than adopting a dichotomous view in relation to IE, a possible alternative theoretical stance is to position IE practice within a dilemmatic framework, which acknowledges the difficulty of balancing ways of meeting individual's educational needs in inclusive ways, whilst at the same time trying to minimise any negative implications and consequences of this process (Norwich, 2008). IE is perhaps a good example of educational dilemma in that dilemmas are described as a situation where a choice exists, but that of the choices between the alternatives, none are necessarily favourable. Dilemmas are about "hard choices between options with negative consequences" (Norwich, 2013, p. 9), which "resist resolution" (Minow, 1985, p. 159). In consideration of the multiple perceived pros and cons of using IE as explored above, utilising the strategy certainly seems to fit the description of a "hard choice".

3.9 Behaviourism and IE

Behaviourism is thought to be the dominant psychological model guiding behaviour management practice in schools (Harold & Corcoran, 2013). IE is an example of a behaviourist approach and has roots in time-out punishment procedures. Time-out is the removal of a child for a specified period of time from a positive, reinforcing environment, to a less reinforcing environment, due to undesirable behaviour (Sterling et al., 1999). It is thought that this punitive process leads to behaviour change and creates a deterrent effect over time (Skinner, 1965).

A study conducted by Harold and Corcoran (2013) utilised staff focus groups and documentary analysis to investigate the discourse of behaviourism in one secondary school. Although the results of the study should be interpreted with caution as the sample is limited to a single school, selected opportunistically, and includes staff participants only ($n=21$). The study was conducted by an Educational Psychologist so is reported from a highly relevant perspective. The study found an emphasis on sanctions in the school's behaviour policy, which included IE, and a within-child discourse in staff interviews dominated by behaviourism. The researchers highlighted that staff used language to imply a fixed, within-child problem. Understanding behaviour in this way functions to direct attention towards the pupil's behaviour and away from relational contexts.

Arguably, individualistic approaches provide a rationale for disciplinary processes like IE; if the cause of the problem is within the child and fixed, the complexity of the interaction with their environment is negated, which, in turn, can lessen staff and school accountability for practices such as IE.

A study conducted by Stanforth and Rose (2018) investigated the trends in informal exclusionary practice and how this practice is contextualised within the talk of staff members and pupils. The researchers used a mixed methods research design, which included quantitative analysis of in-school data on pupils referred out of lessons and interviews with

staff ($n=55$) and pupils ($n=53$). The researchers use the term ‘referral’ to mean when a pupil is removed from lessons following challenging behaviour, but it is not clearly defined in terms of length of time excluded or surrounding protocol in the school. Despite this lack of clarity, the study does present relevant quantitative findings which indicate that pupils with SEN were significantly more likely to be ‘referred’ from lessons. This is in line with the over-representation of SEN pupils in national exclusion data (DfE, 2021c). Close pupil-teacher relationships were found to be a protective factor against referrals but teachers relatively new to the school, irrespective of previous experience, were more likely to use informal exclusion.

In line with the Harold and Corcoran (2013) study, findings from Stanforth and Rose (2018) highlighted a discourse of behaviourism. Within-child labels such as “difficult” and “disturbed” were used by staff and pupils to individualise behaviour. However, staff were not consistent in their within-child conceptualisations and also contextualised challenging behaviour within the home, placing blame on poor parenting. Whilst this study includes a good number of data points ($n= 2515$) and large interview sample ($n=108$), it was undertaken in a single school context. This comprises a serious limitation in the generalisation of results to other contexts. Arguably, the researchers demonstrate a lack of reflexivity as they do not acknowledge this limitation in the paper. Nevertheless, the study contributes to the research evidence that behaviourist conceptualisations dominate school discourse. The study illustrates that a lack of understanding about the causes of challenging behaviour can influence the use of informal disciplinary mechanisms like IE. Whilst a teacher’s relative inexperience in the local school context can increase the use of IE, close teacher-pupil relationships, developed over time, may help reduce it.

A study conducted by Gillies and Robinson (2012) extends the argument about within-child conceptualisations of behaviour to critique the interventions that are utilised to support pupils when they have been internally excluded to a behaviour support unit (BSU). The study

draws on ethnographic research conducted over a three-year period. Methods included participant observation, regular group work sessions with students and interviews with students, teachers and parents ($n=73$).

Gillies and Robinson (2012) suggest that the strategy of IE, in this case operationalised as BSUs, re-frames *exclusion* as a “state of mind” (Gillies & Robinson, 2012, p. 164) whilst *inclusion* becomes a remedial process to correct individual pupil deficit and dysfunction. The researchers consider this within-child framework in their critique of school interventions such as social and emotional aspects of learning (SEAL), as they reinforce the location of behaviour problems as within-child. The researchers identified an over-representation of black and minority ethnic pupils and pupils with high levels of deprivation and trauma attending the BSU. The authors conclude that BSUs “operate within an enduring context of institutional intolerance and patterns of discrimination, with unprocessed racialised narratives informing policies, procedures and exclusions” (Gillies & Robinson, 2012, p. 172). While the study’s ecological validity and ethnographic epistemology provide some foundation to this claim, there is a troubling assertion of opinion as fact. In terms of limitations, the authors do acknowledge that data were not available to support some of their results. For example, the finding related to over-representation of vulnerable groups in IE was based on qualitative observation only, and no in-school data was available to support this.

Although some ambiguity over the research findings comprise limitations to interpreting the study’s results, Gillies and Robinson (2012) deliver a pertinent message: the combination of behaviourism, informal disciplinary practice such as IE and interventions that negate the significance of school context, can limit opportunities for schools and teachers to reflect on their practice and perpetuate patterns of discrimination in education.

3.10 What is the prevalence of IE in secondary schools in England?

There are no central figures confirming the number of schools in England using IE as a strategy (Ferguson, 2019; Gazeley et al., 2015; Gillies & Robinson, 2012). A recent research investigation into alternative provision (Thomson, 2018) found that over half of secondary schools (in the sample of 276 schools) used IE to support pupils at risk of exclusion. IE was more likely to be used by mainstream secondary academies. These findings were consistent with results from a qualitative study commissioned by the DfE to investigate behaviour management practices. The study found that large secondary schools were more likely to use punitive approaches such as IE as a response to challenging behaviour (Skipp & Hopwood, 2017).

IE can be a widely used strategy within school; in one study almost a quarter (22%) of the student body were required to attend IE in one academic year. Frequently cited reasons for pupils attending IE were: verbal abuse, persistent disruptive behaviour, and failure to follow instruction from staff (Barker et al., 2010).

3.11 How frequently do pupils attend IE and how long for?

There are high levels of variability reported in the research literature relating to frequency and length of time in IE. As Power and Taylor (2018) note, pupils can attend from ½ day, to a few days, or even spend most of their time in school there. Government guidance unhelpfully hedges its bets and suggests that: “Removal can be temporary, or for a more extended period” (Bennett, 2017, p. 44).

Gazeley et al. (2015) found that it was unusual for pupils to attend IE for more than three days as after this point alternative discipline and pastoral systems were introduced. The study also identified a trend towards decreasing use of IE. In the case of BSUs, Gillies (2012) reports that pupils can stay for weeks or years and notes that several pupils in her study

entered the unit straight from primary level and remained there without attending mainstream lessons.

Given the limited amount of published data on the use of IE, and that it is a discretionary strategy, it is unsurprising that such high levels of variation in the frequency and length of the strategy exist both between and within school contexts.

3.12 Who attends IE and are any population groups over-represented?

There has been no independent analysis of the numbers and characteristics of pupils placed in IE (Ferguson, 2019; Gillies & Robinson, 2012). In-school monitoring of pupils attending IE can be undertaken, but this information is confidential and not always anonymised and shared with researchers (e.g. Gillies & Robinson, 2012). There are also questions as to what extent in-school data on IE is shared with school staff; researchers have found uncertainty in terms of where the responsibility for collecting and entering data on IE lies. The consequent lack of data has therefore made it difficult for researchers to identify if certain population groups are disproportionately affected by the strategy (e.g. Power & Taylor, 2018; Stanforth & Rose, 2018).

Research literature has both been aligned with national research on exclusions and found an over-representation of vulnerable groups and pupils with SEN (Gillies & Robinson, 2012; Stanforth & Rose, 2018), and divergent, finding no differences across pupil groups (Gilmore, 2012). In the latter study, however, the researcher did identify that when a pupil with SEN attended IE, they did not usually have a TA with them, as would be the case in mainstream lessons (Gilmore, 2012).

3.13 What are staff and pupil perspectives about the use and efficacy of IE?

Pupils and parents tend to support IE seeing it as a deserved punishment for misbehaviour (Barker et al., 2010). This has also been found to be the case for the very pupils that have been repeatedly referred to IE (Fripps, 2011).

Gilmore (2012) sought staff perspectives about IE and reported feelings that the strategy creates the space to develop educationally based disciplinary processes where educational goals such as the completion of work are achieved. The view was that IE promotes inclusion as the pupils remain on the school site. However, Stanforth and Rose (2018) identified more of a stigma in teacher perceptions; teachers felt highly accountable for referring a child out of class and even perceived it as a failure on their part.

3.14 How is IE operationalised in practice?

Supervision: The research literature suggests high levels of variability in descriptions of the amount and type of supervision in IE. This variability ranges from qualified teaching staff members specifically recruited to supervise behaviour units (Gilmore, 2012), to over stretched, under resourced teams of unqualified teachers (Gillies & Robinson, 2012). In the latter example, the authors note the unpopularity of teaching in the behaviour unit and its subsequent delegation to supply teachers, which created chaotic teaching sessions consisting of “little more than worksheets being handed out” (Gillies & Robinson, 2012, p. 170).

Barker et al. (2010) identify that the room for IE was supervised by a single staff member, either a higher-level Teaching Assistant or class teachers with free periods. In this study, supervision is conceptualised more as surveillance where adults use institutional power “to legitimise the control and containment of children in ways that would be unacceptable for many other sections of the population” (Barker et al., 2010, p. 384).

Timings of the day and breaks: IE spaces can operate a different timetable from the rest of the school. Pupils usually arrive and leave when their peers are in mainstream classes and have either separate breaktimes or none at all. For example, Gilmore (2013) found that pupils start their day at 12pm and finish at 5pm and were permitted a break when other students were leaving school. A DfE research report investigating behaviour practices found that IE in one secondary school was from 8.30am to 4.30pm. The pupils did not go out for breaks, but from 3.30pm to 4.30pm were moved into an inclusion room where restorative work took place. Another case study featured in the report operated a system of IE that involved students' lunch brought across to them in the exclusion room (Skipp & Hopwood, 2017).

The IE environment: As with other aspects of practice, there is high variability in the spaces to which pupils are moved to once they are excluded from classrooms. These include isolation units, seclusion rooms, internal pupil referral units, or separate buildings where the pupils can be sent (Power & Taylor, 2018). As the use of IE increases as an alternative to fixed-term exclusion (Thomson, 2018), new types of space need to be created to place the pupils in.

A study conducted by Barker et al. (2010) investigated the space of IE specifically. The study was undertaken in an inner-London academy that developed an IE strategy in response to widespread poor behaviour and increasing fixed-term exclusions. This was a mixed methods study that undertook a statistical analysis of in-school data which detailed the age, gender, ethnicity, year group, the reason for attendance and length of stay for each pupil. The qualitative data collection method was individual interviews ($n=29$) and focus group interviews ($n=39$ participants). Participants included school staff, parents and pupils who had and had not attended IE. Whilst the results of this study are limited to a single school context, the authors capture an interesting broader argument about IE rooms and their relationship to space and power dynamics.

Using Foucauldian conceptualisations, the authors highlight how spatial arrangements can place subjects under a kind of surveillance and liken IE rooms to penal spaces. For example, the authors report that the IE room was difficult to find and isolated from the rest of the school (Barker et al., 2010). A similarly uninviting environment was identified in another school by Gilmore (2012) where pupils sat in single isolation booths with no stimulus other than the rules of the unit and the work to be completed. Both studies suggest that secondary schools can use specific spatial arrangements in IE to reinforce a disciplinary function and influence the control and regulation of pupils in a different way to the mainstream classroom experience.

3.15 What is the role of EPs in relation to IE?

Addressing the challenges of how to respond to the needs of children with behaviour regulation difficulties is an ever-present priority for EPs; they work within behaviourist discourses and the related discipline systems and practices that accompany this paradigm (Harold & Corcoran, 2013).

A study undertaken by Hart (2010) investigating EP views on effective behaviour management strategies suggests that EPs play a significant role in supporting schools with behaviour. Consultation work in relation to individual pupils and staff training are cited as examples of the types of support EPs can give. Though this qualitative study included participants from a single Educational Psychology Service, and whilst it includes a good number of participants ($n=47$), the single setting means findings are not easily generalised to broader EP professional practice. To the authors knowledge, there are no studies specifically investigating the EP role in IE.

Interestingly, it may be that if a secondary school uses an IE strategy, there is *less* likelihood of an EP being involved. Thompson et al. (2018) found that while around half of the schools in their study ($n=276$) utilised external support from educational psychology

services for pupils at risk of exclusion, this was less likely for schools that reported having IE protocols.

Broadly speaking, the input of an EP per se has not yet been shown to necessarily impact reported exclusion rates in schools; both schools with high and low exclusion rates may take recourse to educational psychology services to support pupils at risk of exclusion (Munn et al., 2015). This suggests that irrespective of context, educational psychology services seem to be valued by schools to support pupils at risk of exclusion.

Recommendations from a DfE commissioned piece of research into the EP role emphasises the need to promote early intervention within services (Lyonette et al., 2019). As a reactive strategy, the use of IE would seem to fit the bill in terms of addressing this recommended strategic priority; especially as pupils affected by IE tend to be the most vulnerable and are likely to be at higher risk of permanent exclusion (Gillies & Robinson, 2012). EPs have a role to play in supporting schools to navigate the complexities of IE, they are well-placed to ask the right (perhaps challenging) questions, and begin to build some ethical and evidence-based answers in response.

3.16 IE in context

IE represents just one of the many strategies schools may employ when tackling misbehaviour. Whilst a thorough evaluation of alternative strategies is beyond the remit of the current study, it is useful to contextualise the use of IE within the more general scope of behaviour management strategies in school.

A large-scale behaviour improvement programme (BIP) conducted in 2005 spanned both primary ($n=557$) and secondary settings ($n=123$) in England. Evaluations of the programme suggested that more successful settings in improving behaviour focused on preventative initiatives and support at individual, school and community levels. For example, innovative teaching and learning strategies to promote inclusion as well as providing a range

of services, activities and additional learning opportunities for pupils, their families and the wider community (Hallam et al., 2005).

The recent EEF guidance report *Improving Behaviour in Schools* gives six recommendations across the themes of prevention, dealing with bad behaviour and consistency in approaches. Reinforcing the BIP findings, the guidance report promotes a proactive approach and highlights that interventions found to have a good effect on behaviour mostly focus on positive responses, rather than punitive measures (Rhodes et al., 2019).

Both reports suggest a range of alternative strategies that can be used in place or alongside IE. Though the emphasis on proactive, restorative approaches does not provide evidence for using a reactive strategy like IE.

3.17 An international perspective

Concerns about pupil behaviour in school are not restricted to English educational discourse; for example, the topic of disciplinary climate features in the OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) results from 2018. The report highlights that on average across the OECD countries, roughly one in three students reported that, in most lessons, students do not listen to the teacher or there is noise and disorder. In terms of IE use from an international perspective, a systematic review undertaken by Valdebenito et al., (2019) highlights recent data from the Department of Education in the USA, which reports that 7.4% (3.5 million) of students were suspended *in-school*. Suggesting that the practice of IE is adopted in the USA, but referred to using the term ‘in-school suspension’. More widely however, there is a lack of cross-cultural research in relation to school exclusionary practices, particularly informal exclusionary processes such as IE, and more international research needs to be undertaken (Valdebenito et al., 2019). Perhaps this is partly because investigating the nature and extent of exclusionary practices that operate informally, and not captured in official statistics, is extremely difficult (Power & Taylor, 2018).

3.18 This study

Internal exclusion (IE) is thought to be a common disciplinary practice in secondary schools, yet there is a paucity of research investigating the strategy. There are no statistics confirming the number of schools utilising IE and no independent analysis of how many pupils are placed in IE, how long they stay there for and what they do. This study aimed to begin to address this gap in the research literature by developing an indication of the prevalence of IE; seeking to understand the in-school practices that operationalise IE and to understand school staff and EP perspectives about the use and efficacy of IE. A final aim was to consider the implications of the research to inform a guidance framework with recommendations to assist secondary school staff and EPs. The main research questions and related sub-questions are grouped accordingly:

Prevalence:

- 1) How prevalent is the use of IE in mainstream secondary schools?
 - How many schools use IE?/ How many pupils attend?

Practice:

- 2) What are the in-school practices that operationalise an IE strategy (including the role of EPs)?

This research question will examine reasons for IE referral, length of IE referral and the IE environment (including a description of the space, rules, timetable and supervision).

Perspectives:

- 3) What are school staff and EP perspectives about the use and efficacy of IE?

This research question will explore staff and EP perspectives to understand whether there are perceived improvements to pupil behaviour; perceived strengths and limitations of IE; its importance in relation to other strategies and school ethos and culture.

4. Methodology

4.1 Overview

This chapter will begin by exploring the epistemological perspective adopted by the study and the researcher's own theoretical positioning and interests. Full details of research design, methods of data collection and ethical considerations will then be presented.

4.2 Epistemological perspective

This research is guided by a pragmatic viewpoint. A pragmatic epistemology emphasises shared meaning and joint action and does not sit well within the opposing paradigms of positivism and constructivism and the resulting differences in ontological positioning. From a pragmatic perspective, the research question guides methodology, which affords the possibility of any research strategy provided it best attends to the posed research problem (Creswell, 2014).

Morgan (2007) suggests that a pragmatic approach necessitates a focus on “what people can do with the knowledge they produce”. This pragmatic thinking enables the researcher to navigate the tension that knowledge can be both conceived as constructed, but also partly reflective of a reality and the world of individual experience. This is an appropriate epistemological position for this study as it supports the mixed methods approach adopted (Johnson et al., 2007).

In consideration that research from a pragmatic viewpoint focuses interpretation on practical considerations, this epistemological position complements the aims of the current research: that is, to identify implications for current practice and inform a guidance framework. More broadly, foregrounding practical consequences from empirical findings to better understand educational phenomena (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004) better suits the endeavour of completing a professional doctorate and pursuing the role of an applied EP.

4.3 Researcher position

Utilising qualitative research methods accompanies an acknowledgement that data collected and any inferences subsequently formed are shaped by the social and individual characteristics of the researcher themselves (Hammersley, 2013). Acknowledging the need for reflexive positioning (Schon, 2008), the researcher's own values, personal experience and beliefs will be shared so that readers may consider how these individual characteristics may have shaped the research process, results and discussion.

The researcher's professional interest in IE arose initially from personal experience as a senior leader in an inner London secondary school. In the ten years that the researcher worked in the setting, the school gained an Outstanding Ofsted rating and achieved some of the best added-value results in England. The use of IE was part of the school ethos and the strategy was seen to both reduce fixed-term exclusions and promote high standards and expectations, thereby protecting pupil outcomes and the school's results.

In line with national trends, the school subsequently developed a no excuses/zero tolerance discipline policy (Reader, 2015; Adams, 2016), which established high behavioural expectations with pupils receiving detentions for minor infractions, e.g. talking in the corridor, running or uniform irregularities, and automatic exclusions or IE for more serious offences (Steinberg et al., 2017). This policy led to a large increase in the use of IE and from the researcher's perspective, began to invite several questions in relation to impact, inclusion and evidence base. It appeared that there was no process to measure impact either qualitatively (in terms of staff and pupil perceptions), or quantitatively (how many pupils, how many referrals, patterns in the nature of referrals, etc.).

The researcher's interest in IE continued whilst undertaking the doctoral programme in Professional Educational, Child and Adolescent Psychology (DEdPsy). The trainee educational psychologist's (TEP) Year 1 research project involved interviews in a different secondary school; a senior leader being interviewed described IE as a "conveyor belt for

pupils with Special Educational Needs”. This prompted the researcher to consider her own experience of IE and its operationalisation within a secondary school and the continued absence of an evidence base to inform its use.

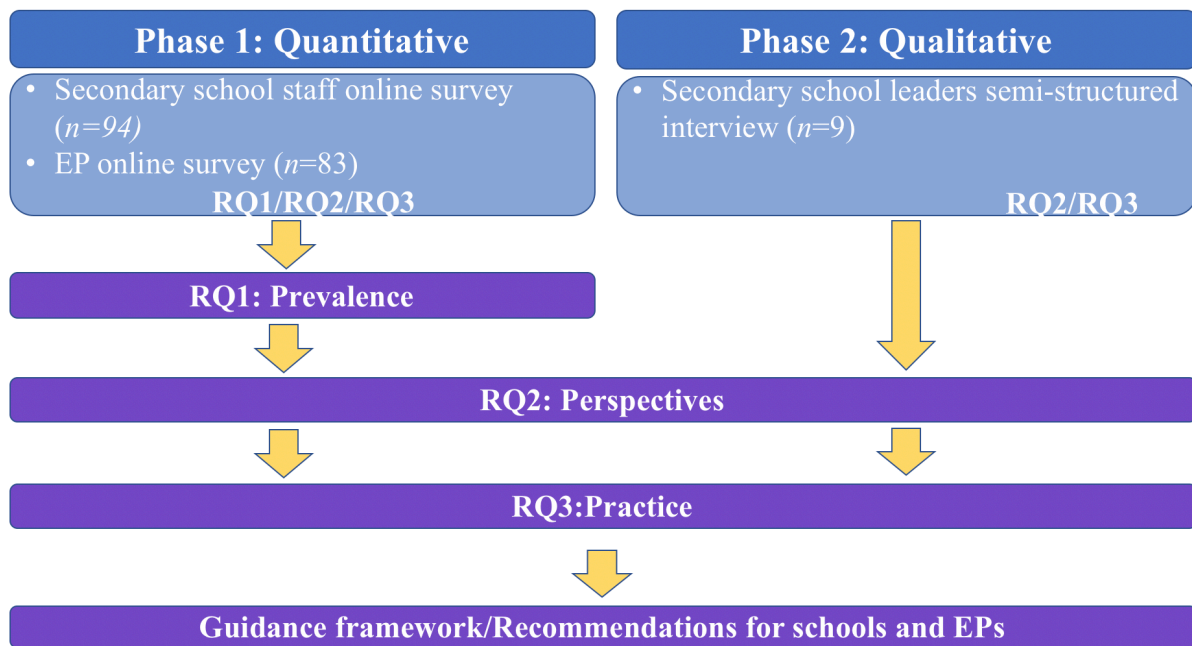
The use of IE remains contentious and has often been presented as a draconian behaviour management strategy in the media (e.g. Lightfoot, 2020). The researcher felt that both her experience as a senior leader in secondary school, and as a TEP, provided an interesting position in which to consider competing paradigms of within-child and social models of behaviour and the current polarised debate about IE: an inclusive strategy, or *de facto* exclusion. The intention of the researcher was to draw together an evidence base in which to engage with the (false) dichotomy surrounding IE, and add balance and clarity to the debate.

4.4 Design structure and overview of methodologies

The research adopted a multi-strategy approach and used a sequential explanatory design which involved collecting and analysing quantitative then qualitative data in two consecutive phases (Ivankova et al., 2006). The primary aim of Phase 1 was to generate quantitative data to address the first research question (RQ1) regarding the prevalence of IE. Survey data were also collected in relation to RQ2, the in-school operationalisation of IE, and included staff and EP perspectives about the benefits and challenges of using IE (RQ3). Phase 2 was the qualitative element of the study and involved semi-structured interviews with school leaders to enrich and clarify the survey data collected.

The rationale for using a mixed methodology and details of each research phase including: research tool development, sampling design, data analysis and collection, are outlined below.

Figure 1. Overview of the research structure, methods utilised and contribution to research questions



4.4.1 Rationale for using mixed methods

Johnson et al. (2007) suggest that mixed methods research aims to consider multiple perspectives, positions and viewpoints. Given the contentious nature of the research topic and the polarised discourse regarding the use of IE (Lightfoot, 2020), a methodology that provided both breadth and depth of perspective from a range of standpoints – quantitatively and qualitatively – was felt to be most appropriate.

Regarding the possible rationales for integrating quantitative and qualitative research as outlined by Bryman (2006), it was felt that a mixed methods design best addressed the different research questions; RQ1 necessitated quantitative methods to establish prevalence, whereas RQ3 required qualitative methods to gather perspectives regarding the use of IE. Additionally, the mixed methods design had a complementary function (Jang et al., 2008); the broad descriptions of IE from the survey were clarified and enriched with contextually pertinent accounts from the leadership perspectives offered in the interviews.

Research suggests that quantitative and qualitative research together yield more complete knowledge necessary to inform theory and practice (Jang et al., 2008), thus the mixed methods approach helped enhance the credibility of findings and improve the utility of results, which were intended to inform a guidance framework for schools and EPs.

A mixed method design also supported the data collection and data analysis processes; the quantitative data collection phase provided a sampling frame (Teddlie & Yu, 2007) for the qualitative phase.

The researcher took a “pure” mixed methods approach where equal value was given to the quantitative and qualitative methods (Johnson et al., 2007). The primary justification for using an equal status approach was that both quantitative and qualitative data and approaches would in a complementary way add value and insight into all of the RQ and sub questions.

4.4.2 Phase 1

Phase 1 of the study was conducted remotely and involved the distribution of two electronic surveys via the online programme ‘Qualtrics’: the first survey was directed at secondary school staff, the second survey to trainee or qualified EPs. Details of the development of the survey measure, sampling design, data analysis and collection for Phase 1 are outlined below.

4.4.3 Staff and EP survey

Quantitative measures were required to investigate the prevalence of IE and to provide indications of in-school practice. As such, it was decided that a survey tool would best answer these research aims. To preserve the design of the measure in terms of length and simplicity, whilst accessing breadth and specificity in terms of views, the decision was made to use two separate survey measures: one targeted at secondary school staff, the second targeted specifically at EPs. Given the lack of research investigating the use of IE (Ferguson,

2019; Gazeley et al., 2015), no current measures were available for the researcher to use or adapt for either survey.

To develop the survey items, the researcher began by identifying information and quantitative data that the survey would need to generate to address the study's research questions. This process formed a conceptual map detailing the key information required from the staff and EP surveys. Using this map, survey questions were developed in line with the following recommendations: items were short, simply worded, encouraged low levels of inference and carried only one idea; negatives and double negatives were avoided and questions were carefully constructed to discourage biased responses (Punch, 2003).

To improve the validity of the measures a pilot phase was undertaken. This important phase permitted the researcher to identify any problems with the measure and resolve them before administering to the final target sample (Robson & McCartan, 2016). The pilot involved three stages: firstly, gaining initial feedback in research supervision; secondly administering the survey via 'Qualtrics' to a) three secondary school staff members comprising a range of roles and b) two TEPs and one EP; thirdly, final review and evaluation during research supervision. Objectives of the pilot included reviewing the developed questions for clarity, assessing the survey length and evaluating completion time. The functionality of 'Qualtrics' was also reviewed to ensure appropriate access to the survey and confirm consent processes were in place.

Following the pilot phase, several amendments were made to questions in both surveys to improve clarity and functionality. Given the current pandemic and its impact on schools' capacity to cooperate in educational research projects, some questions were removed to reduce the time needed to complete the survey as shorter surveys are likely to have higher response rates (Punch, 2003).

The review function of 'Qualtrics' was also evaluated and highlighted that display logic, optimization for mobile devices, translation, and formatting to support those with

visual impairment were all effective. The evaluation led to text entry boxes being reduced, which further increased the functionality score of the review. A copy of the finalised surveys can be found in Appendix B.

4.4.4 Sampling strategy

As highlighted by Teddlie and Yu (2007), it is important to outline the sampling techniques utilised in any mixed methods study as typically multiple samples are used, which may vary in size.

The sampling strategy used for this study was designed to ensure compatibility with the research questions and promote validity in terms of drawing inferences from both the quantitative and qualitative data generated. As such, a sequential sampling strategy was utilised. This is the most common mixed methods sampling strategy and complements mixed methodology as information from the first sample can be used to form the second sample (Teddlie & Yu, 2007). This approach also supported the current study's exploratory purpose regarding the prevalence, practice and perspectives on IE.

As sample size should be informed primarily by the research objective and questions (Onwuegbuzie & Collins, 2007), and as quantitative research typically aims to achieve representativeness (Teddlie & Yu, 2007), the researcher decided to adopt a quota scheme where the sample size would be a function of the total number of mainstream secondary schools in the UK.

The researcher's limited resources precluded a random probability sampling strategy. Indeed, quota sampling is a non-random sampling technique and this impacts the generalisability of the quantitative findings as the sample did not form a representative random statistical sample of the population. However, as Onwuegbuzie (2007) highlights, in reality most quantitative research studies utilize non-random samples as sampling methods

must be feasible, practical and congruent with the experience of the researcher (Teddlie & Yu, 2007).

To mitigate the impact of using a non-random sampling method, the researcher aimed to generate a total sample size representing 10% of the total parent population from both surveys, as recommended in survey research (Alreck & Settle, 2004).

There are currently 3456 mainstream secondary schools in England (DfE, 2021), thus the researcher aimed to meet a sample quota of 345 secondary schools meeting the desired participant characteristics of being: a) working in a mainstream secondary school for quota 1, or b) a trainee or qualified EP for quota 2. It was expected that quota 2 would yield a greater proportion of the target sample. The reasoning being that each EP respondent may work with a number of secondary schools and thus provide an indication of prevalence across multiple settings per survey response, whereas participants in the school staff survey would be representing a single school.

4.4.5 Data collection procedure

To access the quota sample of secondary school staff, the researcher used a combination of professional networks, contacts and social media platforms. Emails detailing information about the survey with the survey link and a request to participate were sent to the researcher's contacts in the secondary school sector, Local Authority and UCL Institute of Education. The researcher also used a database, gained from a Freedom of Information request, containing contact email addresses of secondary schools in England. This provided 3115 email addresses in total, but due to a number of invalid entries, 3053 emails were subsequently sent to secondary schools in England inviting them to participate in the research. In addition, the researcher created a Twitter profile and posted a link to the survey on this platform.

To access the quota sample of TEPs and EPs, the researcher emailed professional contacts within the LA, university and posted on the EPNET forum. EPNET is a mailing list for EPs and other professionals working in education.

It is important to note the unprecedented context of the Covid-19 pandemic at the time of data collection. The resulting school closures and challenging work context for staff significantly restricted the capacity of schools to take part in research. Therefore the Covid-19 pandemic is highly likely to have negatively impacted participant response rates in this study.

4.4.6 Final sample

Table 2 details the final sample of participants from phase 1 of the study. A range of school roles were represented in the staff survey with members of the senior leadership team most likely to have completed a response (39% of respondents). Participants with roles in middle leadership comprised 21% of the sample and headteachers a further 20%, highlighting that staff with leadership roles in school were more likely to have completed the school survey.

The EP survey was also completed by participants representing a range of roles, with main grade EPs (47% of respondents) and Trainees (28% of respondents) most likely to complete the survey. In contrast to the school measure, EPs without leadership responsibility were more likely to participate in the survey.

A total of 177 participants took part in phase 1 of the study. Participants represented 301 schools, which comprised an 8.6% sample size, just shy of the 10% target. However, the sample size should be interpreted with caution as it was not possible to rule out multiple respondents from a single setting. Thus, the number of schools reported may not all be different settings, thereby potentially inflating the sample size. This limitation is discussed further in the results and discussion chapters.

Table 2. Frequency data relating to survey participant demographics

School Staff Survey			EP Survey		
Headteacher	19	20.2%	Main Grade EP	39	47.0%
SLT*	37	39.4%	Trainee EP	23	27.7%
MLT**	20	21.3%	Senior EP/Specialist EP	10	12.0%
Teacher	13	13.8%	Principal/Deputy EP	6	7.2%
Specialist Role***	5	5.3%	Other	4	5%
Total Participants	94		Total Participants	83	
LA	63		Regions	9	

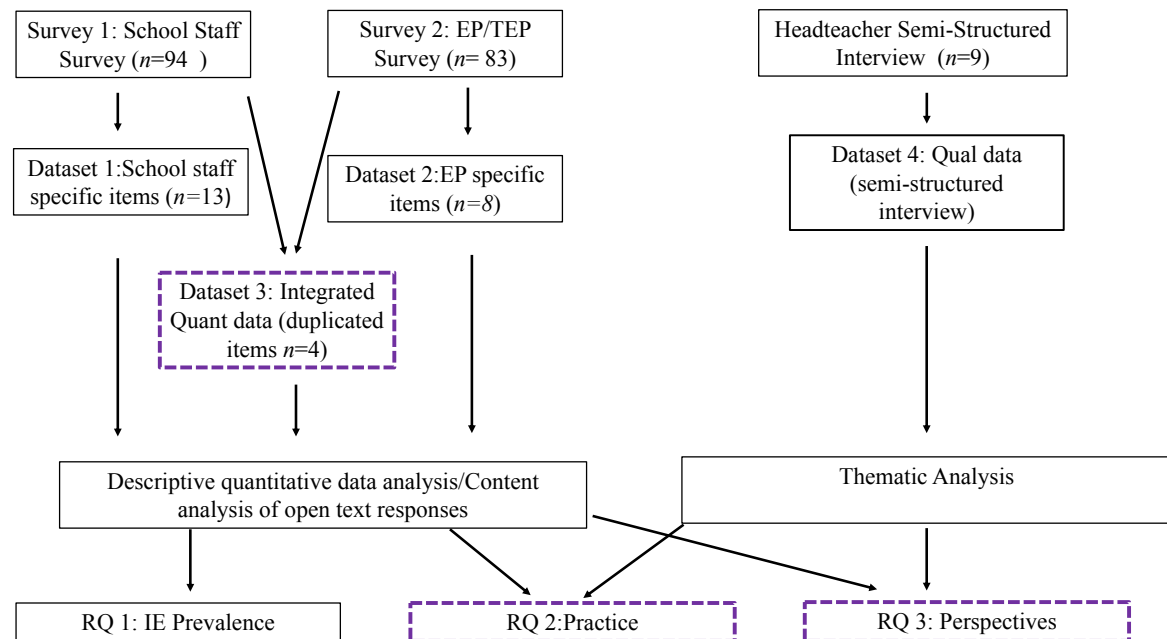
Note. * Member of Senior Leadership Team (SLT) ** Member of Middle Leadership Team (MLT) ***This category includes members of staff with specialist non-teaching roles managing IE ($n=4$) and teaching assistants ($n=1$).

4.4.7 Data analysis procedure

Initially, the school staff survey (survey 1), and the EP survey (survey 2), were analysed separately to preserve homogeneity within each sample group and support validity of results and their interpretation. Where the same questions were asked on both surveys ($n=4$) an additional dataset was created. The rationale for combining responses to these questions was that it supported the comparison of findings across the two survey groups.

In line with research aims, the data analysis procedure was exploratory and responsive to the data captured from both surveys. As is typical with survey data, non-parametric data was collected from the two surveys (Cohen et al., 2007). As the survey items utilised different response types, the range of analysis techniques used depended on the type of question and the information being sought. The researcher used exploratory data analysis techniques including frequencies, percentages and cross-tabulations. For interval data gained, mean and standard deviation were also calculated. Content analysis was used to quantify and categorise the open-ended questions (see Appendix N and O for worked example of content analysis coding system). The statistical software platform SPSS was used to support data analysis. Figure 2 provides an outline of data integration and analysis processes for each phase of the research.

Figure 2. Outline of data analysis and integration processes undertaken



Note. Boxes with dashed outlines denote data integration.

4.5 Phase 2

Phase 2 comprised the qualitative component of the mixed methods study and aimed to address the research questions regarding staff and EP perspectives about the use and efficacy of IE. Phase 2 involved semi-structured interviews with secondary school leaders ($n=9$). Details of the development of the interview schedule, sampling design, data analysis and collection for phase 2 are outlined below.

4.5.1 Research Tool

Research objectives and questions were used as a framework to develop the interview schedules for the school leader interviews. Two questions were derived from the original school staff survey used in phase 1 and included in the final interview schedule.

Questions were both direct and indirect, which intended to create a balance between specificity and depth. Additionally, open ended questions were selected to put participants at

ease to share their perspectives (Cohen et al., 2007). This was felt to be particularly important given the contentious nature of IE. A semi-structured interview approach was utilised as it offered the researcher greater flexibility, the opportunity to probe, if greater depth or clarity was required, and was more likely to facilitate unexpected responses (Cohen et al., 2007).

Once the interview schedules were devised, they were reviewed through supervision with the researcher's supervisors and minor amendments were made to ensure question clarity. The interview schedule was piloted with a senior leader from a secondary school. Following the pilot, changes were made to the recording and transcribing set-up; an additional device was used for sound recording and Microsoft Office dictate was used to simultaneously scribe the text of the recording.

The final interview schedule sought to elicit participants' perceptions across the following topics; IE and relationship to wider school behaviour policy and ethos; perceived importance of IE as a strategy; the values and challenges of using IE; descriptions of IE environment. The researcher also asked an additional question regarding differences in the use of IE during the Covid-19 pandemic. The interview schedule included nine questions. A copy of the final schedule can be found in Appendix D.

4.5.2 Sample

As phase 2 of the study aimed to obtain further insight into perspectives on the use of IE in mainstream secondary schools, the researcher purposefully selected individuals to maximise understanding of the phenomenon.

As Teddlie and Yu (2007) note, the quantitative data can assist the qualitative component in a mixed methods study by identifying representative sample members. In the current study, survey participants from phase 1 were invited to participate in the interview stage. Thus the final sample in the quantitative phase 1 provided a sampling frame for the qualitative stage of the study. As a purposive sample is typically designed to identify a

limited amount of cases that would yield the most amount of information (Teddlie & Yu, 2007), the researcher decided to select headteachers and senior leaders for the interview phase. Headteachers and senior leaders are in key strategic positions to evaluate the translation of policy into practice and evaluate consequences for school culture (Grace, 1995). Headteachers and senior leaders were selected as it was felt this perspective would afford the most information rich cases in terms of sharing an understanding of IE at policy and whole school implementation levels.

Of the 19 Headteachers that participated in the staff survey, 9 opted into the interview phase and were subsequently contacted to take part. After initial contact was made, 6 headteachers were able to commit to participate in the interview phase. A total of 37 senior leaders responded to the staff survey, 18 opted to be interviewed. Two candidates were selected at random from this number to participate in the interviews. The pilot interview, which was conducted with a senior leader that worked in a school that the researcher has links with, made up the final interview sample.

To identify the potential representativeness of the interview sample, the researcher undertook an analysis of the selected participants' demographic information. The final participant sample was identified to represent a range of different contexts, as follows; each participant school was located in a different LA; a range of school types were represented and included mixed, girls only and boys only settings; differing school sizes were included falling below and above the average secondary school size; a mixture of Ofsted ratings from 'Requires Improvement' to 'Outstanding' were also represented; and finally, settings that had both non-selective and selective admissions were amongst the sample. Thus, whilst a degree of homogeneity was preserved by limiting the purposive sample to a single group of school leaders, representativeness of findings was increased in the range of perspectives from different geographical locations and school contexts. Demographic information for interview participants can be found in Table 3.

The final number of interviews conducted was nine. The researcher felt that this was potentially sufficient to generate a pattern of themes across the data to provide a rich and relevant description in response to the research questions.

Table 3. *Demographic information of interview participants school setting*

Role*	Gender	Region **	School Type	Age range	Ofsted***
HT	M	East of England	Mixed	11 -18	Good
HT	M	South East England	Mixed	11-16	Good
HT	M	West Midlands	Mixed	11-16	RI
HT	F	South East	Girls	11-16	Outstanding
HT	M	South West England	Boys	11-18	Outstanding
HT	F	West Midlands	Boys	11-16	Outstanding
DHT	M	North East England	Mixed	11-18	RI
DHT	M	West Midlands	Mixed	11-16	RI
DHT	F	London	Mixed	4-18	Outstanding

Note * HT = Headteacher; DHT= Deputy Headteacher **Participant settings were in located in 9 different LAs. The corresponding region is detailed in this table to preserve participant anonymity. ***RI= Requires Improvement. There is 1 selective school in the sample, this is not indicated in the table to preserve anonymity.

4.5.3 Data collection

In person interviews are thought to be the “gold-standard in qualitative research” (Krouwel et al., 2019; ‘Qualitative Online Interviews’, 2015), however the Covid-19 pandemic and resulting restrictions regarding travel and contact precluded this type of interview. Video calls provide the closest substitute to face to face interviews as they allow the synchronicity of seeing and hearing another (Bertrand, 2010). Consequently, the videoconferencing platform Microsoft Teams was used for interviews.

Although videoconferencing has received criticism for its limitations including: technical difficulties, restricted eye contact and body language and an increased possibility of interruption (Krouwel et al., 2019), emerging research is beginning to highlight benefits of using this approach. For example, a study comparing Skype (video calling) and in-person

qualitative interview modes found that both contexts produced a comparable amount of data and breadth of topics (Krouwel et al., 2019). In addition, the researchers found no differences in establishing rapport.

For the present study, video conferencing was found to be time-efficient and afforded access to participants in geographical locations that would not have been possible if an in-person context had been used.

Following the identification of the final sample, participants were contacted and invited to be interviewed using Microsoft Teams. After participants confirmed availability, an online calendar invite and digital consent form was emailed, with instructions to return the consent form before the interview date. The researcher ensured that informed consent was in place prior to all interviews and kept secure records of returned digital consent forms. Where technical and connectivity issues precluded the use of videoconferencing, interviews were conducted via telephone and recorded using a voice memo app ($n=1$). All interviews were undertaken by the researcher to ensure consistency in the way the schedule was administered, topics covered and responses probed.

4.5.4 Data analysis

To support the rigour of data analysis process, the initial interview transcripts generated by MS dictate were reviewed by the researcher. The data were then analysed using thematic analysis. The reasoning for this choice of analytic method was driven by the exploratory research aims and the intention to create a rich description across the data set in response to the research questions. Alternative approaches to data analysis such as Interpretative Phenological Analysis (IPA) and Grounded Theory were rejected given their theoretical constraints. For example, IPA accompanies a phenomenological epistemology where detailed understanding of the individual's experience is given primacy, this position did not compliment a school leader's perspective in relation to IE where there is no "lived

experience” of the IE process per se. Also, prioritising the individual perspective was not necessary to meet the more generalised exploratory descriptions required for the current study. Furthermore, the research aims did not connect to theory development of the IE phenomenon, as such Grounded Theory was discounted as an appropriate qualitative analytic method.

A six-phase approach to thematic analysis was undertaken as outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006). The first analysis phase comprised a preliminary familiarisation with the data, which included reviewing the MS dictate scribed text for errors and re-reading, whilst listening to the data, to identify initial ideas. Following the familiarisation process, initial codes were identified. A semantic approach (Braun & Clarke, 2006) was used for the analysis whereby the researcher identified codes within the explicit or surface meanings of the data, taking what participants said at “face value”, rather than seeking to identify underlying ideas and assumptions. An inductive approach was used for analysis whereby themes emerged from analysing the data as opposed to using a pre-existing coding scheme.

The transcripts were analysed for all potential codes and emerging patterns. This process generated a list of identified codes to reflect the interview data corpus, which were then grouped into potential themes. During peer supervision with a TEP colleague, a selection of the analysed transcripts were shared and re-coded providing an opportunity to compare coding and interpretation. Generally, there was consensus between the researchers, however some alterations of the code descriptions were made to enhance clarity and consistency in the analysis.

The codes, sub-themes and themes were reviewed again in peer supervision and in research supervision and then subsequently refined. Finally, once the themes and sub-themes had been defined, the original transcripts were reviewed to ensure that the analysis process and resulting themes accurately reflected the original data. The researcher then consolidated

the analysis by defining and naming a final version of the main themes and sub-themes. A worked example of the thematic analysis process can be found in Appendix L.

4.6 Integration of Phase 1 and Phase 2 data

Whilst the integration of quantitative and qualitative research is increasingly more common (Bryman, 2006), the complexity of mixing data at the analysis stage continues to be problematic (Hall & Howard, 2008). In this context, Bryman (2006) advocates for clarity about the stage and function of qualitative and quantitative data integration in multi-strategy research. The present study involves multiple data strands being integrated at different stages of the research process; survey items from separate surveys were integrated at the data analysis phase where items were replicated ($n=4$), whereas items unique to each survey were analysed separately. As is typical with mixed methods studies the qualitative and quantitative data were not integrated until the interpretation phase (Jang et al., 2008). Phase 1 and Phase 2 strands were integrated in the interpretation stage to support the researcher's inferences in relation to the research questions and the study's explanatory aims. See Figure 2 for an overview of data analysis and integration processes undertaken.

4.7 Research integrity

Quantitative research predicates the use of measures of validity and reliability to determine the overall quality of research studies. However, this tends not to be the case in qualitative research where ideas of validity and reliability are often rejected in favour of more general conceptions including believability, trustworthiness, credibility and dependability (Robson, 2002). Given the possible confusion of using different terms to describe the same notion, this study will use the term 'research integrity' in reference to the trustworthiness of the methods used.

The integrity of the current research was supported by various methodological decisions. The mixed methods design was intended to enable a more robust analysis, benefitting from the strengths of each method in a complementary way (Ivankova et al., 2006). For example, the mixed methods design made possible a sampling strategy that balances qualitative and quantitative considerations. This entailed a manageable number of participants for in-depth qualitative analysis and a larger sample size for quantitative statistical analysis (Castro et al., 2010). In addressing both qualitative and quantitative sampling considerations, this study also intended to add to the integrity of the research.

4.8 Ethical considerations

Ethical approval for this research study was obtained in May 2020 from the Faculty Research Ethics Committee at the UCL Institute of Education. The study followed the British Psychological Society Code of Ethics and Conduct (British Psychological Society, 2018) to ensure the research was ethically sound. Full details of ethical processes can be found in Appendices E - K.

5. Results

5.1 Overview

Results from the research study are presented in this chapter. Phase 1 results are explored initially and reflect on pertinent findings from the staff and EP surveys. Results are organised according to the main research questions and themes. Firstly, results relating to the prevalence of IE are detailed; secondly, the research theme of IE in practice is explored and thirdly, results for the research question relating to perspectives on the use and efficacy of IE are presented. Finally, the results from phase 2 of the study are set out, whereby the themes and sub-themes arising from the semi-structured interviews with school leaders are considered.

5.2 The prevalence of IE across the UK

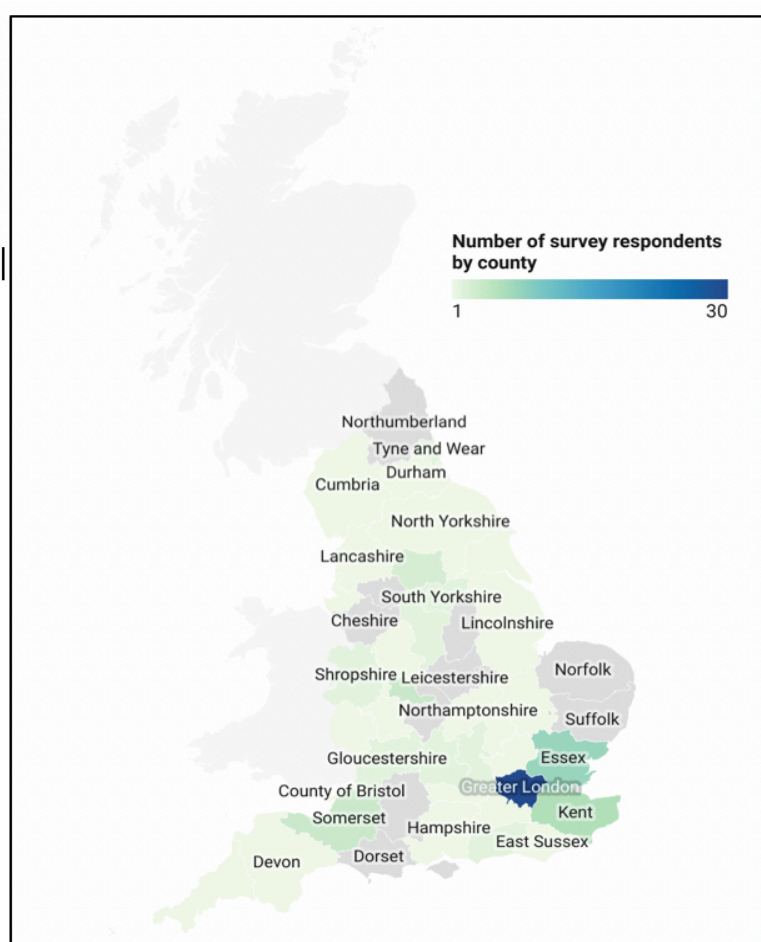
Table 4 shows prevalence of IE across three indicators. Firstly, frequency data arising from the staff survey highlighted that of the 94 survey respondents, 98% indicated that an IE strategy was being used in their schools at the time of completion ($n=92$). Whilst this finding indicates high rates of prevalence, it is important to note that all respondents did not choose to share school name, therefore precluding the possibility of identifying multiple responses from single schools. However, all respondents shared the school's LA which provides an indication of the *minimum* number of different schools represented in the survey sample ($n=63$). See Appendix P, Table 22 detailing representation of LAs in the survey data. Figure 3 below shows the geographical location of the respondents' school settings and illustrates that IE is a non-localised strategy and used across a range of counties in England.

Table 4. Frequency of schools that use an IE strategy

	Staff Survey	EP Survey	Integrated Data
Number of responses	94	83	177
Number of schools	94*	207	301***
Number using IE	92**	164	256
% of schools using IE	98%	79%	85%

* One school had stopped using IE due to Covid-19 restrictions. Pre-Covid-19 number of schools using IE was 93. ** As not all respondents shared the name of school referring to, there may be multiple responses for single schools. As such, the 'number of schools' category and 'number of responses' should be read as an approximation. ***As the researcher was not able to identify if respondents from the staff and EP surveys were commenting on the same setting, the total number of schools may include multiple responses from single schools and should be read as an approximation.

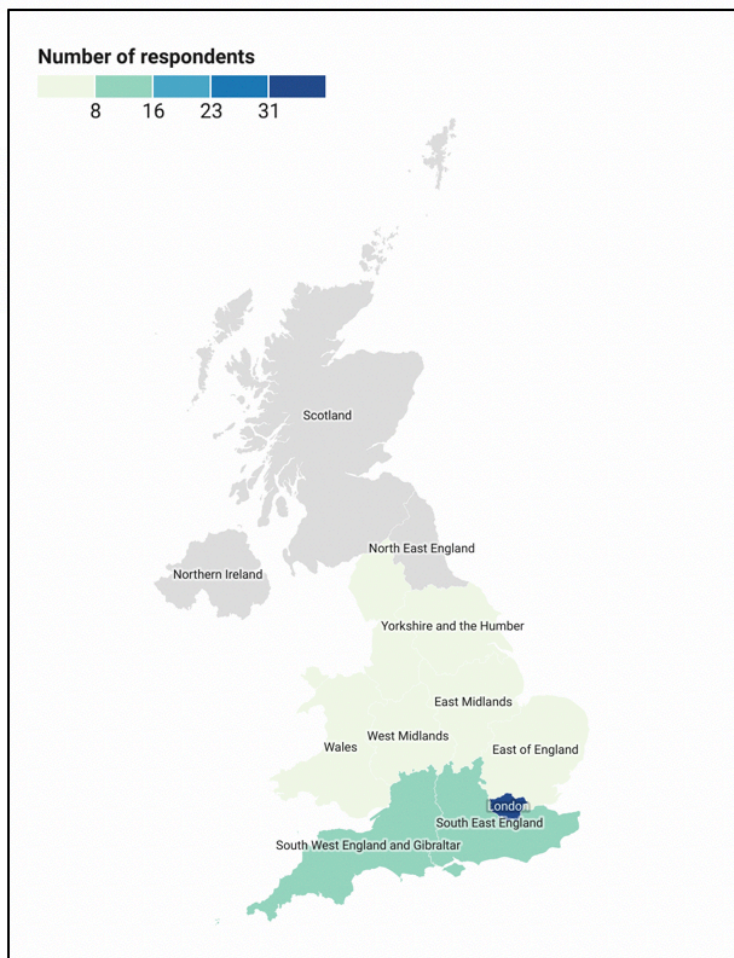
Figure 3. Map displaying school staff survey respondents by county in England.



Note. This figure was created using the LA information provided by each respondent in the staff survey. The LA data was transferred into the corresponding county to increase the visual clarity of the map. See Appendix P, Table 22 for a full breakdown of number of respondents by LA.

Secondly, frequency data from the EP survey showed that EPs generally work with multiple secondary schools ($M= 2.7$); the total number of schools indicated were 207 with 79% of these using an IE strategy ($n=164$). This percentage was calculated by analysing the EP survey data; EPs were asked how many secondary schools they worked with and then asked how many of these schools use an IE strategy. As such, the researcher was able to ascertain the percentage of EP schools using an IE strategy. Figure 4 illustrates the regions in which participant EPs were practicing. Whilst a high number of participants were from the London area (47%), there were respondents spanning nine regions across England and Wales, which supports the school staff survey indications that IE is a non-localised strategy, used across the UK.

Figure 4. Map displaying EP survey respondents by region of work in UK



Note. This diagram was created using EP survey data which showed responses region of work. See Table 23 in Appendix Q for full table.

Finally, staff and EP data were integrated to give an indication of overall IE prevalence. The total number of schools included ($n=301$) comprised 9% of the total number of state-funded secondary schools ($n=3456$)¹ in England. In this sample, 85% of schools were found to use IE. However, the integrated data should be interpreted with caution as the researcher was not able to identify if respondents from the staff survey and EP survey were commenting on the same setting. As such, the total number of schools using IE indicated in the integrated data shown in Table 5 may contain duplicate responses for a single setting, potentially inflating the *Number of schools* and *Number using IE* categories. Nevertheless, given the high percentage of schools using IE in both the staff and EP surveys, and that these data span 63 LA and nine regions in England, results do strongly indicate that IE is a highly prevalent, non-localised strategy used across the England.

5.2.1 The prevalence of IE use in schools: daily referral numbers

Table 5 shows the frequency of responses regarding daily IE referral numbers in school, the data is organised by participant role. The ‘0-5 pupil’ category was the most frequently selected (66%), with the frequency of responses decreasing as pupil referral numbers increased (6-10 pupils 18.%; 11-15 pupils 7.%; 16-20 or more 3.%). As the average number of pupils attending a state-funded secondary school is 986², results suggest that IE impacts a relatively small percentage of the total school population. Results also suggest that teachers are less likely to be aware of daily referral numbers.

¹ Data taken from DfE (2021) *Schools, pupils and their characteristics*: <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/school-pupils-and-their-characteristics>

² Data taken from DfE (2021) *Schools, pupils and their characteristics*: <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/school-pupils-and-their-characteristics>

Table 5. *Frequencies of responses relating to daily IE referral numbers by staff role*

Role	Numbers of pupils referred daily				
	0-5	6-10	11-15	16-20 (or more)	Don't know
Headteacher	17	2	0	0	0
SLT	24	7	3	2	1
MLT	12	4	4	0	0
Teacher	5	3	0	1	4
Specialist IE Role	4	1	0	0	0
Total	62	17	7	3	5
Percentage of responses	66%	18.1%	7.4%	3.2%	5.3%

5.2.2 The prevalence of IE use in schools: referral numbers over time

Results showing perceptions of how referral numbers are changing over time are displayed in Table 6. Analysis of frequencies indicate that over half of respondents (62%) perceive IE referral numbers as ‘remaining consistent’. This finding was unexpected as intuitively, if respondents considered IE to have an impact on pupil behaviour, one may expect them to be more likely to report decreasing referral numbers.

Further results indicated 18% of respondents perceived IE referral numbers as decreasing; 14% increasing and 6% of respondents did not know.

Table 6. *Frequencies of responses relating to IR referral numbers over time by staff role*

Role	IE referral numbers over time			
	Increasing	Remaining consistent	Decreasing	Don't know
Headteacher	2	11	6	0
SLT	2	26	8	1
MLT	3	12	3	2
Teacher	6	4	0	3
Specialist IE Role	0	5	0	0
Total	13	58	17	6
Percentage of responses	13.8%	61.7%	18.1%	6.4%

5.3. The practice of operationalising IE in schools

The survey measure sought information across the following operational domains: the amount of time pupils spend in the IE; how the IE is supervised; the level of talk permitted in

the IE and reasons for IE referral. Additionally, respondents were asked to identify other strategies their schools used to support behaviour to help contextualise the data. Table 8 shows the frequency of participant responses regarding the length of time a pupil attends IE. One full school day was the most frequent response (59.6%). This was surprising given the findings discussed in the literature review that a single day's absence can impact a child's life chance (DfE & Gibb, 2016). The category '1/2 a day or less' comprised 28% of responses. The longer categories '2 days' and '3 days or more' each comprised 5% of the responses, suggesting that whilst less likely, schools can use IE for relatively long periods of time. A total of three respondents did not know how long pupils spend in the IE.

Results pertaining to the type of supervision pupils receive in the IE are presented in Table 7. Unexpectedly, the highest frequency category was 'support staff/TA' (36%), suggesting that a substantial portion of schools use unqualified teaching staff to supervise pupils in IE.

Table 7 shows frequencies of responses regarding the extent to which pupils are permitted to talk in IE. Results indicate that pupils are most likely to be in silence whilst they are attending IE, with 77% of respondents selecting the 'not permitted to talk' category ($n=73$); only eight respondents indicated that pupils were able to talk to their peers (8%), and three respondents indicated that pupils were permitted to talk with staff (3%). The finding that over three-quarters of respondents indicated that pupils were in silence whilst attending IE is perhaps particularly pertinent considering that over 70% of respondents indicated that pupils spend one day or more in IE. Interestingly, ten respondents that completed the questionnaire did not know whether pupil talk was permitted in IE, which invites questions as to the extent of whole school communication of IE rules and practice.

Cross-tabulations were undertaken to identify possible relationships in the operational categories of time in the IE, type of supervision, whether pupils are permitted to talk and the prevalence categories of perceptions of daily referral numbers and the use of IE over time.

Interestingly, analysis of standardised residuals on the cross-tabulations indicated no effects, which suggests that operational features do not necessarily influence staff perceptions of the impact of IE. This finding therefore invites questions on whether the length of time a pupil stays in IE, who supervises them, and if they can talk actually makes a difference to whether staff perceive it to have had an impact.

Table 7. *Frequencies of participant responses relating to IE in Practice: Time, Talk and Supervision*

	Categories of IE practice	Frequency of responses	
		N	%
Length of time spent in the IE	1 Day	56	59.6%
	½ day or less	26	27.7%
	2 Days	5	5.3%
	3 Days or more	5	5.3%
	Don't Know	3	3%
Type of supervision	Support Staff/TA	34	36%
	Teacher	23	25%
	Senior Leader	17	18%
	Range of staff members	10	11%
	Specialist Role	7	7%
	Don't Know	3	3%
Talk in the IE	Not permitted to talk	73	77.7%
	Talk with Peers	8	8.5%
	Talk with staff	3	3.2%
	Don't Know	10	10.6%

5.3.1. Reasons for IE referral

Results from the school staff survey detailing respondents' perceptions of potential reasons that pupils are referred to IE are displayed in Table 8. Survey participants were posed a multiple response question allowing them to select the range of reasons most consistent with their perceptions of in-school practice. The category 'Disruption of Learning' was most frequently selected (65 % of participants) as a reason for IE referral. This finding suggests

that the protection of other pupils' learning is an important factor when school staff are considering the use of IE.

As expected, examples of serious behaviour incidents such as physical aggression and verbal abuse were also frequently selected as reasons for IE referral. IE also appears to be used when other, less punitive, sanctions fail; nearly half of the survey participants indicated IE referrals were used when pupils had failed to complete detentions.

The category 'Incorrect uniform' was selected by 15% of participants. This was surprising given the highly punitive nature of IE and suggests that perceived 'lower' forms of behaviour infringements, such as uniform irregularities, also represent possible reasons for IE referral.

Table 8. *Frequencies of responses relating to reasons for IE referral (respondents able to select multiple options)*

Referral Reason	Frequency of referral reason selected *		Percentage of respondents that selected referral reason**
	N	%	%
Disruption of learning	58	17.2%	65.2%
Physical aggression	56	16.6%	62.9%
Verbal abuse	56	16.6%	62.9%
Failure to complete detention	44	13%	49.4%
Refusal to follow instructions	33	9.8%	37.1%
Inappropriate language	30	8.9%	33.7%
Truancy	23	6.8%	25.8%
Vandalism	22	6.5%	24.7%
Incorrect uniform	13	3.8%	14.6%
Online behaviour	2	0.6%	2.2.%
Lateness	1	0.3%	1.1%
Total	338	100%	

**These results demonstrate the number of times a referral reason was selected within the multiple-choice question. The total of responses given were n=338 ** This result highlights the percentage of cases that selected the referral option and thus uses the total number of participants to create the percentage n=94 , rather than the total number of responses. For example, 58 participants selected the option 'disruption of learning' which comprised 17.2% of the total 338 multiple responses given. This means that of the 94 participants, 65.2% of them chose 'disruption of learning' as a reason for IE referral.*

5.3.2 Other behaviour support strategies used in school

Participants from both the staff and EP surveys were asked to provide information on other behaviour support strategies schools may use in addition to IE. This was to provide additional context to that data and support the identification of strategies that schools may use alternative to, or in conjunction with, IE. This question was posed as a multiple response option where participants could select the range of reasons most consistent with their perceptions of in-school practice. Results are shown in Table 9 below.

Interestingly, both school staff and EP respondents selected the use of behaviour mentors and key workers as the most frequently used strategy to support behaviour in schools; 91% and 87% of respondents respectively. This high degree of commonality between the survey participants suggests that school staff and EP perceptions are aligned regarding the frequency of use of mentors in schools and underscores the prevalent nature of this strategy.

A particularly pertinent finding to the present study was the high number of school staff participants (77%) that indicated EPs were frequently used to support schools with pupil behaviour. This finding suggests that school staff perceive EPs playing a key role in their behaviour support strategies. Counselling services and interventions to support behaviour regulation were also frequently selected by participants. Again, this high degree of commonality in the responses from both the staff and EP surveys across these two categories emphasises the frequency of these approaches.

However, there was some divergence in perceptions across the staff and EP survey. The biggest discrepancy was in the 'Inclusion Panel' category. This is a meeting where senior leaders meet with members of the pastoral and SEN teams to discuss any concerns about pupils. Nearly half of the participants in the school staff survey sample selected this practice (48%), but only 7% of EPs. One explanation for this disparity may be that EPs are unaware

of some of the pastoral support systems utilised in school if their remit precludes wider support, and is based on 1:1 SEN casework.

Conversely, the category 'ELSA' was selected by a higher number of EPs than staff survey participants (staff 39 %; EPs 61%). Given that EPs deliver ELSA training, it is perhaps more likely that schools using EP services may also use trained ELSAs as part of their behaviour support strategies. This finding may have implications for equity of provision of ELSAs as a behaviour support strategy in secondary schools.

Table 9. *Frequencies of responses relating to other behaviour support strategies (respondents able to select multiple options)*

Strategy	Staff survey			EP Survey		
	Frequency of other behaviour support strategies*		Percentage of respondents that selected strategy**	Frequency of other behaviour support strategies		Percentage of respondents that selected strategy
	n	%	%	n	%	%
Behaviour mentors/key workers	84	12.4%	91.3%	61	15.8%	87.1%
Educational Psychologists	71	10.5%	77.2%	<i>n/a</i> ***	<i>n/a</i>	<i>n/a</i>
Counselling services	71	10.5%	77.2%	47	12.2%	67.1%
Intervention to support emotion regulation	71	10.5%	77.2%	43	11.1%	62.4%
Alternative curriculum pathways	62	9.2%	67.4%	30	7.8%	42.9%
Restorative Justice Approaches	60	8.9%	65.2%	22	5.7%	31.4%
Extra-curricular activities	54	8%	58.7%	25	6.5%	37.5%
Behaviour support/inclusion unit	49	7.2%	53.3%	38	9.8%	54.3%
Inclusion/pupil support panel	44	6.5%	47.8%	5	1.3%	7.1%
ELSA****	36	5.3%	39.1%	43	11.1%	61.4%
Parent Support	37	5.5%	40.2%			
Police Officer	37	5.5%	40.2%	12	3.1%	17.1%
Outside Agencies/behaviour specialists	<i>n/a</i> *****	<i>n/a</i>	<i>n/a</i>	54	14%	77.1%
Total	676	100%		386	100%	

**These results demonstrate the number of times a support strategy was selected within the multiple-choice question. The total of responses given were n=676. ** This result highlights the percentage of participants that selected the behaviour support option and thus uses the total number of participants to create the percentage n=94, rather than the total number of responses (n=676). For example, 84 participants selected the option 'Behaviour mentors/Key workers' which comprised 12.4% of the total 676 multiple responses given. This means that of the 94 participants, 91.3% of them chose 'Behaviour mentors/key workers' as a behaviour support strategy used in their schools.*

**** Option only appeared on staff survey. **** Emotional Literacy Support Assistant. ***** Option only appeared on EP survey.*

5.4 Perspectives on the use and efficacy of IE

Perspectives on the use and efficacy of IE were gathered from several survey items; these related to perceptions of the importance of IE, its relationship to behaviour change and included analysis of open text responses describing the benefits and challenges of using IE.

5.4.1 Perspectives on the importance of IE

Results from the staff survey indicating perceptions of the importance of IE in the school's behaviour policy are detailed in Table 10. The results are organised by staff role. The average perception of the importance of IE was relatively high, $M = 7.24$ on a scale of one to ten, where ten was of upmost importance. Results from a one-way ANOVA indicated no significant differences in perceptions according to school role. This finding suggests that IE is perceived as an important strategy irrespective of role in school.

Table 10. Mean frequency of school staff perceptions of the importance of IE in school behaviour policy

Role	Perception of the importance of IE			
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Minimum	Maximum
Headteacher	7.16	2.33	2	10
SLT	7.50	2.32	2	10
MLT	6.85	2.03	3	10
Teacher	6.58	2.43	3	10
Specialist IE Role	8.80	1.64	7	10
Total	7.24	2.26	2	10

5.4.2 Perspectives on pupil behaviour change following implementation of IE

Table 11 explores the results of whether staff perceived pupil behaviour to have changed following the introduction of an IE strategy. Staff were most likely to perceive either improvements in behaviour (47% of respondents), or feel there had been no change (32%).

Two respondents felt that behaviour had declined since using an IE strategy and a relatively

high percentage of respondents (19%), did not know if behaviour had changed. The latter finding perhaps indicating that it may be difficult to perceive the impact of using an IE strategy.

In contrast to school staff respondents, only two EPs perceived that pupil behaviour improved following the introduction of IE. EPs were most likely to perceive either no changes in behaviour (34% of responses), or a decline in behaviour (25%). As with the staff survey, a high number of EPs selected the option ‘don’t know’(33%), again emphasising the difficulty of perceiving impact on pupil behaviour resulting from the use of IE.

Given the contrasting perceptions as to whether IE led to improved behaviour or not across the two survey samples, an additional dataset was created to integrate data from both the staff and EP surveys to explore perceptions of impact on behaviour change in more detail. A Chi-square test was conducted to examine the relationship between school staff perceptions of IE and behaviour change, and EP perceptions of IE and behaviour change, $\chi^2(3)=58.29, p= .000$. Analysis of adjusted residuals indicated that this significant effect was due to school staff perceiving the introduction of IE as resulting in improved behaviour, whereas EPs are significantly more likely to perceive a decline in behaviour. The polarised perspectives across the Staff and EP surveys in relation to impact on behaviour change highlights a key tension between the way that schools and EPs view IE.

Table 11. *Perceptions of IE leading to changes in pupil behaviour*

Perception of Pupil Behaviour	Staff Survey Respondents		EP Survey Respondents	
	N	%	N	%
Improved	44	46.8%	2	2.4%
Not changed	30	31.9%	28	33.7%
Declined	2	2.1%	21	25.3%
Don’t know	18	19.2%	27	32.5%

5.4.3 Relationship between perceptions of behaviour change, following the introduction of IE, and other behaviour support strategies used by schools

The integrated dataset was also used to conduct a series of Chi-square tests to examine the relationship between perceptions of behaviour change, following the introduction of IE, and schools' other behaviour support strategies. A significant effect was found in the interaction between perceptions of improved behaviour following the introduction of IE, and the use of a school counsellor, $\chi^2 (3) = 8.98, p = .030$. Analysis of standardised residuals indicated that the significant effect was if participants selected that the school did not use a school counsellor, they were also less likely to rate that behaviour had improved as a result of IE.

Further Chi-square analysis indicated several interesting relationships between perceptions of behaviour change, IE and other strategies used. Analysis of standardised residuals highlighted the following significant effects:

- If participants selected that they used pupil support panels as a support strategy, they were significantly more likely to perceive improvements in pupil behaviour following the introduction of IE, $\chi^2 (3) = 29.103, p = .000$;
- If restorative justice approaches were selected as a support strategy, participants were significantly more likely to perceive improvements in behaviour, $\chi^2 (3) = 14.45, p = .002$;
- If alternative curriculum pathways were selected as a support strategy, participants were significantly more likely to perceive improvements in pupil behaviour, $\chi^2 (3) = 18.42, p = .000$;
- If parent support programmes were selected as a support strategy, participants were significantly more likely to perceive improvements in behaviour, $\chi^2 (3) = 16.82, p = .001$;

- If extra-curricular activities was selected by participants as a support strategy, they were significantly more likely to perceive improved behaviour following the introduction of IE, $\chi^2 (3)=14.89, p=.002$;
- If the participant indicated the use of a police officer, they were significantly more likely to indicate a perceived improvement of behaviour following the introduction of IE, $\chi^2 (3)= 12.36, p=.006$.
- If emotion regulation strategies were not selected as a support strategy, participants were significantly less likely to perceive improved behaviour, $\chi^2 (3)= 12.36, p=.017$;

The above findings highlight the importance of viewing the use of IE in a broader context of other behaviour strategies schools use and highlight a complex interaction between these.

Pertinently, there was no effect between the use of behaviour mentors and educational psychologists, two of the three most frequently selected strategies, on participants perceptions of behaviour change following IE. No effect was found in the use of ELSA and behaviour support units also.

5.4.4 The perceived benefits and value of using an IE strategy

Content analysis was used to explore the open text responses in relation to the perceived value of using IE in the staff and EP surveys. Table 12 details the results arising from the analysis of the staff survey, and Table 13 from the EP survey.

5.4.4.1 Staff survey content analysis of open text boxes: the perceived benefits

Table 12 demonstrates the frequencies of responses relating to the perceived benefits of using an IE strategy arising from the staff survey.

Table 12. Staff survey: Frequencies of responses relating the perceived benefits of using an IE strategy

Theme	Code	Frequency of Code
Time to process the behaviour	Time to reflect/calm down	35
	Time to Implement restorative interventions	15
	Time to develop relationships	11
	Time to investigate behaviour incident	2
		Total
		63
Emphasise expectations of pupil behaviour	Provides consistency in consequences for poor behaviour	28
	Acts as deterrent for breaking behaviour policy	17
		Total
		45
Punitive Sanction	Alternative to Fixed Term Exclusion	27
	Can be used when other less punitive sanctions fail	10
	Taken seriously by staff, parents and pupils	5
		Total
		42
Mechanism of support for staff and the other pupils	Peers get a break from poor behaviour/get on with learning	17
	Teacher able to reinstate good behaviour	12
	Teacher respite from poor behaviour	8
	Teachers feel empowered to manage behaviour	5
		Total
		42
Provides a different environment	Pupils are able to focus on work in silence	9
	Pupils are separated from their peers	6
		Total
		15
No benefits	There are no benefits for the pupil that has been referred to IE	3
		Total
		3

The theme most frequently coded was ‘Time to process the behaviour’. This theme comprised four codes. The most commonly cited as a benefit was the reflection and calming

time IE can afford ($n=35$). Participants also highlighted time to implement restorative interventions ($n=15$). Time to develop relationships ($n=11$) and time to investigate the behaviour incident ($n=2$) were also coded.

IE as a tool to emphasise expectations of pupil behaviour in school was the second most frequently identified theme. Participants perceived that IE offered consistency in sanctions for poor behaviour ($n=28$), and also described it acting as a deterrent ($n=17$) preventing poor behaviour in others as it is “*a visible sanction in school that students want to avoid*”.

Another key theme arising was the benefit of a sanction which is perceived as highly punitive. The punitive nature of IE means the strategy can be used as an alternative to fixed term exclusions ($n=28$), which removes possible danger to the pupil when they are not on site and “*reduces exclusions for accountability purposes*”. A further benefit perceived was that IE can be used when other less punitive sanctions fail ($n=10$). For example, one participant described IE as “*a step between detention and exclusion*”. Finally, the punitive nature of IE was perceived as a benefit because it means that the sanction is “*taken very seriously*” by pupils, staff and parents ($n=5$).

The theme ‘Mechanism of support for staff and the other pupils’ was also coded as a perceived benefit of IE. The most prevalent code ‘peers get a break from poor behaviour/get on with learning’ ($n=17$) highlighted the perceived benefit of “*protecting the learning environment for the rest of the class*”. Perceived benefits for staff included being able to reinstate good behaviour ($n=12$), and teacher respite from poor behaviour ($n=8$). Participants also perceived the benefit of ‘empowering teachers to manage behaviour’ ($n=5$). Sharing that “*the centralised nature of [IE] means staff feel supported in behaviour management*”.

A further perceived benefit was that IE provides a different environment to the classroom so that ‘pupils are able to focus on work in silence’ ($n=9$). Also, that the IE space separates pupils from their peers ($n=6$) which “*removes socialising with friends*”.

Notably, three participants from the staff survey indicated that there are no benefits for the pupil that has been referred to IE. For example; “*I’m unsure as to whether it has a positive impact on the student being isolated*”.

5.4.4.2 EP survey content analysis of open text boxes: the perceived benefits of using an IE strategy and key points of comparison with responses from the staff survey

Frequencies of responses relating to the perceived benefits of using an IE strategy are presented in Table 13. The theme most frequently coded as a perceived benefit in the EP survey was ‘Respite for teachers and the rest of the class’. Interestingly, whereas the staff participants highlight benefits associated with the child being referred to IE most frequently, the EP participants emphasise the possible benefits to the class teacher and peers instead. The most frequently coded was ‘teachers get a break from the pupil/poor behaviour’ ($n=21$). Teachers being able to ‘focus on the rest of the class’ ($n=16$) and ‘peers able to focus on their learning’ ($n=5$) were also coded within this theme.

Given the finding suggesting significant differences in the perceptions of EP and school staff in relation to the introduction of IE and changes in pupil behaviour, it was perhaps unsurprising that a much higher proportion of EP participants indicated they saw no value in using IE ($n=21$). Nevertheless, nearly one quarter of EPs responding to the survey perceive IE to have no benefit whatsoever, which indicates that IE is a contentious issue and a possible source of tension between school practice and EP practice.

Table 13. *EP survey: Frequencies of responses relating to the perceived benefits of using an IE strategy*

Theme	Code	Frequency of code
Respite for teachers and the rest of the class	Teachers get a break from the pupil/poor behaviour	21
	Teachers can focus on teaching the rest of the class	16
	Peers are able to focus on their learning	5
		Total
		42
No benefits	The strategy is without value	21
	Total	
		21
Time away from negative situation	Calms the situation	16
	Gives pupil opportunity to reflect	2
	Total	
		18
Reinforces behaviour policy	A deterrent/encourages pupils to follow the rules	6
	Supports teachers in setting boundaries and expectations	4
	Total	
		10

Similar to the school survey participants, EPs noted the possible benefit of time away from the negative situation affording ‘pupils the opportunity to calm down’ ($n=16$) and ‘reflect’ ($n=2$), and the potential of IE to ‘reinforce the school behaviour policy’; ‘acting as a deterrent’ ($n=6$) and ‘supports teachers in setting boundaries and expectations’ ($n=4$).

5.4.5 The perceived challenges in using an IE strategy

Content analysis was used to explore the open text responses in relation to the perceived challenges of using IE in the staff and EP surveys. Table 14 details the results arising from the analysis of the staff survey and Table 15 from the EP survey.

5.4.5.1: Staff survey content analysis of open text boxes: the perceived challenges of using an IE strategy

Frequencies of responses regarding the perceived challenges of using IE are presented in Table 14. The most frequently coded theme was that ‘IE does not lead to behaviour change for all pupils and often the same pupils repeat the IE process for the same behaviour’ ($n=27$): “*Same kids being isolated for the same behaviour shows that for some, this strategy doesn’t work*”. As one participant shared “[IE is] *very difficult to set up in a way that reforms behaviour rather than entrenching it*”. This finding appeared to contradict the finding above indicating that nearly half of the school staff survey respondents felt that behaviour had improved following the introduction of IE. However, considering the variety of perceived benefits discussed above, it may be important to consider the range of functions an IE strategy serves and that these do not necessarily include behaviour change per se; as one participant shared: “*I’m not convinced that it has much impact on student behaviour - but I also think that is not necessarily the only reason it exists!*”. There is an emerging ethical tension between balancing the support for the individual child’s behaviour, against what may be perceived to benefit the rest of the school.

Several other codes were also developed to describe the theme of IE not leading to behaviour change for all pupils. The perception that IE requires follow-up to be effective was shared by a number of participants ($n=11$), as one shared: “*IE needs to include meaningful pastoral intervention as part of the experience*”. Unexpectedly, an additional code for the main behaviour change theme was that some pupils prefer IE to lessons ($n=7$). Counter-intuitively, rather than working as a deterrent, “*some students would rather be in IE than in their lessons and deliberately get themselves sent there*”. One possible reason given for this was that IE can be “*lower pressure and the work is less challenging*”.

The second most frequently coded theme was operational challenges to implementing IE. The codes identified included the following: IE is difficult for staff and takes up valuable staffing resources ($n=14$) and inconsistency in the way staff use IE ($n=12$). Participants seemed to feel inconsistency was partly due to differences in perceptions of IE protocol, for example: *“When staff see it as a dumping ground - leapfrogging lower level consequences to avoid ownership of a problem”*.

The difficulty of parental buy-in ($n=9$), the challenges of finding space for an IE room ($n=6$), the damage that IE can do to staff-pupil relationships ($n=4$) and responding to the guidance relating to Covid-19 and maintaining pupil bubbles ($n=2$) were also coded.

Missed learning for the pupil attending IE was also identified as a challenge to IE. Participants felt that there was relatively low-quality work both set by teacher and produced by pupil ($n=10$) when compared with the mainstream classroom. There was additional concern about pupils in IE not accessing their own teacher’s support/expertise ($n=9$). The resulting gaps in learning were shared as a concern ($n=8$), as pupils may be *“set up to fail on return to the lesson because they missed out on what happened in that lesson”*.

The perceived challenging nature of the IE environment was also identified as a theme. Participants shared that it can be difficult to create a positive environment for IE ($n=9$) and that staff can find it difficult to manage the behaviour of the pupils ($n=7$). One participant commented *“It’s a miserable experience for everyone involved”*.

A pertinent theme was that IE can be used inappropriately for pupils that have SEN. Some participants felt that IE does not identify/address underlying SEN issues ($n=5$), especially when *“some students end up in IE too often and the underlining cause is not picked up as quickly as it should be”*. Some participants noted a higher ratio of pupils with SEN attending IE. Others reflected on levels of classroom differentiation ($n=5$): *“how often do we ask the extent to which the lesson they were referred from was differentiated*

sufficiently to meet the student's needs?''. These findings highlight an important tension in the use of IE with SEN pupils.

Table 14. *Staff Survey: Frequencies of responses relating the perceived challenges of using an IE strategy*

Theme	Code	Frequency of code
Does not lead to behaviour change (for all pupils)	Does not necessarily lead to long term behaviour change as often same pupils repeat IE.	27
	Requires follow-up to be effective (intervention and monitoring)	11
	Some pupils prefer it to lessons	7
	Damages relationships between staff - pupil	4
	Total	49
Operational Challenges	Difficult to staff (takes up staff resources)	14
	Inconsistency in the way staff use IE	12
	Parental buy-in can be difficult	9
	Staff lack of expertise in supporting behaviour regulation	8
	Covid-19 – maintaining bubbles	2
Total	45	
Missed Learning	Low quality of work (set by teacher/ produced by pupil)	10
	Not accessing own teacher's support/expertise	9
	Missed-learning creates gaps and potential for more behavioural problems when pupil doesn't understand next lesson	8
	Total	27
Challenging negative environment	A negative environment for the pupils in IE	9
	Can be difficult for staff member to manage behaviour in IE	7
Total	16	
Can be used inappropriately with pupils that have SEN	Doesn't identify /address underlying SEN issues	5
	Teachers do not always differentiate work/lesson appropriately for SEN pupils which leads to IE	5
Total	10	

The final theme coded was the level of staff training of those members of staff supervising IE. There was a feeling that the supervising staff lack expertise ($n=8$). As the majority group supervising IE were found to be TAs, this is perhaps unsurprising. However, there is also a question as to what extent qualified teachers are trained to support pupils that are referred to IE; the demands of supervising IE are likely to be different from a typical classroom.

5.4.5.2: EP survey content analysis of open text boxes: the perceived challenges of using an IE strategy and key points of comparison with the staff survey.

Frequencies of responses relating to the perceived challenges of using an IE strategy emerging from the EP survey can be found in Table 15. The most frequently coded theme on the EP survey was the perceived negative impact of IE on the pupil being referred. This was an interesting divergence to the staff survey where this theme did not specifically emerge.

Whilst staff survey participants acknowledged the possible negative impact of the IE environment on the pupil, EPs' perceptions appeared much broader and considered how IE undermines a sense of belonging to school, teachers and peers ($n=19$), and negatively impacts self-esteem ($n=13$) where IE "*can intensify feelings of rejection and isolation for our most vulnerable young people*". The different emphases around the impact of IE on the pupil arising from the staff and EP surveys may, in part, explain the differences in perceptions about the impact of IE across the surveys.

A further perceived challenge coded in the theme 'negative impact on the child' was the harmful impact on relationships with other staff members and peers ($n=17$). This code did appear in the staff survey, but was much less prominent ($n=4$) and did not highlight potential problems around peer dynamics, such as this example from the EP survey: "*placing a number of students together who are all experiencing difficulties managing in the mainstream can lead to a negative peer group building up*".

Additionally, EPs shared that IE can preclude opportunity for the pupil to express what they feel about the particular incident and “*feel heard*” ($n=5$).

The second most frequently coded theme was that IE does not work in changing pupil behaviour. This was also the most commonly coded theme on the staff survey, and triangulates previous findings highlighting that the majority of EPs feel that IE does not lead to positive behaviour change. EPs noted that IE was not an effective deterrent ($n=26$), which can lead to repeated patterns of behaviour ($n=10$) where IE becomes a “*revolving door*” and even makes the situation worse ($n=9$). As one participant shared:

“young people either love going to isolation because they like the teacher there and get proper connection with somebody, or they feel rejected and it conforms to their internal working model (‘I am bad’). In both cases the difficult behaviour is MORE likely to continue in the classroom.”

Perhaps expectedly, challenges around the use of IE and pupils with SEN were a more prominent theme in the EP survey. However, frustrations around IE not addressing underlying needs appear in both surveys which highlights the importance of this perceived challenge in the implementation of an IE strategy. EPs shared a perception that a key challenge is that while IE functions to punish a behaviour, it does not address the cause of the problem ($n=22$); as one EP put it “*the idea that punishment in some way teaches them the skill they lack*”. Secondly, the code ‘does not address potential/diagnosed SEN or provide the additional support that may be needed’ was developed ($n=21$) to describe how IE may not address underlying pupil needs. For example, one participant wrote: “*often the young people have underlying difficulties which have not been addressed. These remain unaddressed and their presentation continues to be perceived as challenging behaviour*”.

Table 15. *EP survey frequencies of responses relating the perceived challenges of using an IE strategy*

Theme	Code	Frequency of code
Negative impact on the pupil in IE	Reduces sense of school belonging	19
	Negatively impacts relationships with staff and/or peers	17
	Negatively impacts self-esteem	13
	Pupil does not “feel heard”	5
	Total	53
IE doesn't work (to change behaviour)	Not effective deterrent/doesn't lead to behaviour change	26
	Leads to repeated patterns of behaviour where same pupils keep attending IE	10
	It worsens the situation/presentation of behaviour	9
	Total	45
Does not address the pupil's underlying needs	Punishes the behaviour but does not address the cause of the problem	22
	Does not address potential/diagnosed SEN or provide the additional support that may be needed*	21
	Total	43
Operational Issues	IE is used inconsistently (due to different understanding and/or expertise among staff relating to pupil behaviour)	23
	IE staff need to be trained to support pupils with SEMH needs	9
	IE takes up lots of valuable schools resources (e.g. support staff)	5
	Total	37
Punitive approach to behaviour	IE promotes feelings of fear and shame for pupils	17
	IE is not restorative, it only punishes the behaviour	10
	IE is enforced in a rigid way	3
Total	30	
Missed learning	Pupils miss their classroom learning/access to their teacher's support	21
	Low quality of work (set by teacher/produced by pupil)	3
Total	24	

* Respondents also commented that the issue of underlying pupil needs not being met was exacerbated by a disconnect in the school structure between SEN and Pastoral teams (n=2).

There was a degree of overlap in the theme ‘operational issues’ across both surveys. The code ‘IE is used inconsistently’ described perceived operational challenges in both surveys. Whereas the staff survey highlighted inconsistencies in the way teachers followed the protocol around IE, EPs focused more on equity of use and issues surrounding potential teacher bias where there was a perception that some children were “*targeted*” and “*picked on*” more than others.

The need for staff training is also coded across both surveys as an operational challenge. As one EP participant noted, “*the staff managing/monitoring IE are not always appropriately trained and struggle to meet the SEMH needs as well as the learning needs of these students*”.

The final code within the theme of ‘operational issues’ was that IE takes up lots of valuable staffing resource ($n=5$), this theme was also coded relatively frequently in the staff survey ($n=14$), again establishing a form of triangulation in perceived challenges to the IE process across surveys.

The theme that IE is a ‘punitive approach to behaviour’ comprised a key challenge in the perceptions of EPs. Interestingly, this theme appeared as a perceived benefit in the staff survey and thus highlights a central difference of opinion amongst the two samples. EPs described a perceived challenge of IE is that it can promote feelings of fear and shame ($n=17$) where “*schools are a place to be feared rather than a nurturing environment to build resilience*”. EPs also commented on the absence of a restorative element to IE ($n=10$) and that “*IE terminology such as seclusion and isolation is prison terminology and is extremely punitive*”. There was also a feeling that IE can be enforced in a rigid way ($n=3$) “*which are extremely difficult for schools to adjust even if the adjustment is reasonable*”.

The final theme in the EP survey regarding perceived challenges was ‘missed learning’. This theme was also in the staff survey, emphasising consistency of perceptions of

pupils falling behind in their learning as a challenge to implementing IE. EPs acknowledged that pupils miss their classroom learning/access to their teacher's support ($n=21$) and that there can be a low quality of work (set by teacher/produced by pupil) ($n=3$).

5.5: EPs perceptions in relation to the level and type of support provided to schools

Results detailing EPs' perceptions in relation to the level and type of support provided to schools to support with IE and pupil behaviour more generally are explored below.

5.5.1: EP perceptions about the level of support provided

Table 16 highlights EP perceptions about the level of support EPs typically provide. Results show the most frequent response was providing individual support to pupils that have been referred to IE; 90% of respondents indicated that they adopted this level of practice.

Interestingly, frequencies for systemic work (33% of respondents), and group work (7%) are noticeably lower, emphasising that EPs are much less likely to support schools at the systemic or groups levels with IE strategy and pupil behaviour more generally.

A review of cross-tabulations exploring the relationship between EP role (whether they were a trainee or qualified EP for example) and level of practice (individual, group or systemic), did not highlight any clear patterns, which suggests that the level of support given is not necessarily affected by role and therefore level of EP experience or expertise.

Table 16. *Frequencies indicating level of EP support to schools*

Type of support	Frequency of level of support selected *		Percentage of respondents that selected level of support**
Supporting Individual pupils that have been internally excluded	52	63.9%	89.7%
Supporting groups of pupils that have been internally excluded	4	5.3%	6.9%
Systemic work to support school with IE strategy/policy	19	25.3%	32.8%
Total	75	100%	

* These results demonstrate the number of times a level of support was selected within the multiple-choice question. The total of responses given were n=75. ** This result highlights the percentage of cases that selected the level of support option and thus uses the total number of participants to create the percentage n=58, rather than the total number of responses. For example, the option 'supporting the individual' was selected 52 times, which comprised 89.7% of the total 75 multiple responses given. This means that of the 58 participants, 89.7% of them chose 'Supporting the individual' as a level of support they offer in the secondary schools currently practicing in. Although there were 83 EP survey participants, 25 participants chose not to complete a response for this question.

5.5.2: EP perceptions about the types of support provided

Table 17. presents the frequency of responses relating to types of support that EPs provide to secondary schools to support pupil behaviour. EPs were asked to provide detail about the types of support and work they do in relation to supporting pupil behaviour and IE. Content analysis was used to explore EPs' responses. Table 18 details the results of the analysis.

The most prominent theme emerging was EPs communicating and implementing a psychological understanding of behaviour. Consultation was perceived as a key mechanism to explore behaviour as communication and challenge within-child labels with staff and parents (n=34). For example, an EP shared that they “*spend a considerable amount of time reframing situations with staff through consultation and ensuring the young person is viewed in context, rather than associated with labels that I have heard staff use e.g. 'vile', 'trouble', 'difficult'.*”

Table 17. *Frequency of responses relating to types of support that EPs provide to Secondary Schools to support pupil behaviour*

Theme	Code	Frequency of code
Communication and implementation of psychological understanding of behaviour	Consultation with staff and parents to explore behaviour as communication and challenge within-child labels (e.g. 'feral')	34
	Provide staff training to support psychological understanding of behaviour	23
	Recommend evidenced-based strategies to support the pupil/ teacher	17
	Supervision of staff using psychological models	6
	Support development/review of policy with psychological understanding of behaviour	6
	Total	86
Individual work with pupil	Behaviour support arising from casework	22
	Accessing pupil voice/perspective	14
	Delivering interventions (including therapeutic work)*	13
	Individual assessment (including EHC needs assessment)	12
	Total	59
Other points made	EPs have difficulty commissioning systemic work relating to behaviour as individual work is prioritised for allocation	10
	Behaviour seen as separate from SEN in school creates difficulty for EP referrals	2
	Total	12

*Note: * Delivering group interventions was collapsed into this code as there were relatively low frequency of this type of work (n=3).*

Training staff to support a psychological understanding of behaviour ($n=23$) was also coded; examples of training included trauma and attachment informed approaches to supporting behaviour, emotion coaching, zones of regulation and restorative justice approaches. Recommending evidenced-based strategies to support pupils and teachers with behaviour was also coded ($n=17$). Additionally, six EPs shared that they provided supervision

for key staff including the SENCo and ELSA. Finally, six EPs shared that they supported the development/review of policy with psychological understanding of behaviour.

The second theme arising from the analysis was types of individual work with the pupil. This was perhaps expected given the finding above that EPs are more likely to work at an individual level to support IE strategy and behaviour. Most commonly, EPs shared that behaviour support arose from individual casework ($n=22$). There was also the code ‘Accessing pupil voice/perspective’ ($n=14$), where EP work included sessions “*with individual pupils to gather their views and encourage them to think about their strengths*”. Delivering interventions, including therapeutic work, also formed a key part of EP work with individual pupils ($n=13$); cognitive behavioural therapy, play therapy and motivational interviewing were the examples given. Individual assessment work, including EHC needs assessment, comprised this theme’s final code ($n=12$).

The final theme, ‘Other points made’, does not directly answer the question posed to EPs about the types of work they undertake in schools, but the decision was made to capture these responses to give a more complete picture of EP viewpoints. A number of EPs expressed that commissioning systemic work relating to behaviour is challenging as individual work is prioritised for their school visit allocation ($n=10$). For example, one participant shared: “*I feel there is a mismatch between the work that I perceive as being beneficial and as having potential impact [...] versus the work that school commission*”.

Another point made in relation to the type of work EPs conduct to support with behaviour, was that behaviour is often considered separate from SEN and in turn creates difficulty for EP referrals ($n=2$).

5.6 Summary of phase 1 results

Results from phase 1 of the study indicated that IE is a prevalent, non-localised strategy, found to be used across 63 different Local Authorities in England. IE is perceived to impact a relatively small number of pupils with the 0-5 category most frequently selected in the staff survey. Unexpectedly, IE use was most likely to be perceived as remaining consistent (staff survey), or increasing (EP survey), which invites questions to be addressed in the discussion regarding the strategy's efficacy.

In terms of IE in practice, results indicated that pupils are most likely to attend IE for one day and be supervised by a TA. They are also most likely to be in silence whilst they are attending IE. Chi-square analysis investigating relationships between perceptions of behaviour change, IE and other strategies used highlighted a number of significant effects. This showed the importance of viewing the use of IE in the broader context of other behaviour strategies schools use and highlighted the complex interaction between these.

IE was perceived to be an important strategy by school staff, irrespective of their role. However, significant differences in perceptions regarding the impact of IE on behaviour change between the EP and staff survey were found; school staff were more likely to perceive the introduction of IE as resulting in improved behaviour, whereas EPs are significantly more likely to perceive a decline in behaviour. The polarised perspectives highlighted a key tension between the way that schools and EPs view IE.

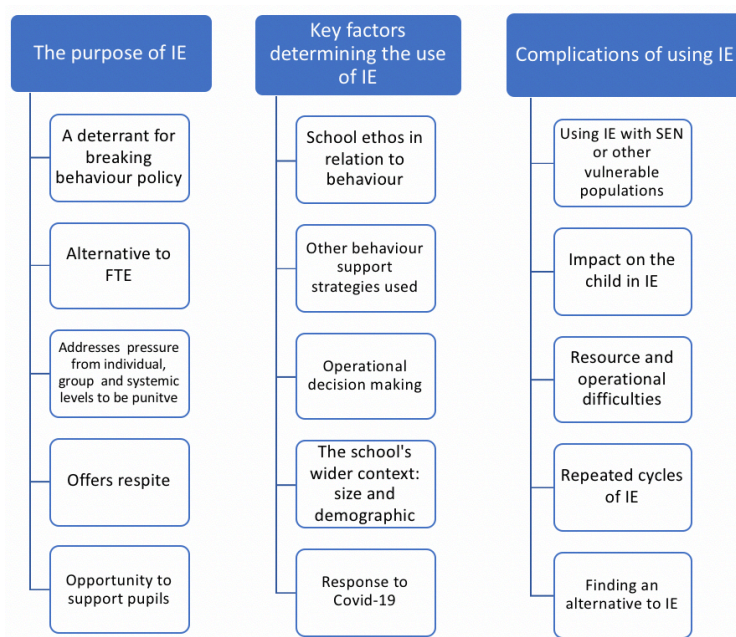
Content analysis of the open text survey questions identified the theme 'time to process the behaviour' as most frequently perceived as a benefit of using IE in the staff survey. Providing 'Respite' was the most frequently coded theme in the EP survey. The biggest challenges to implementation identified were the perceptions of repeated cycles of IE (staff survey), and that it can have a negative impact on the child (EP survey).

5.7 Phase 2 results: thematic analysis of semi-structured interviews

Three overarching themes across the interview corpus were identified: ‘The purpose of IE’, which considers school leader perceptions of *why* it is used; ‘Key factors determining the use of IE’, which considers perceptions of *how* IE is used and ‘Complications of IE’, which explores the perceived complexities of implementing an IE strategy.

The overarching themes were split into sub-themes; these were identified during the thematic analysis and are used to explain the overarching themes and capture pertinent findings. A thematic map illustrating themes and subthemes is illustrated in figure 5. The complete thematic map arising from the analysis including main themes, subthemes and codes can be found in appendix L. Quotations from the interviews are embedded in the text to exemplify results. Longer quotes are attributed to interview participants (I) and a given line number from the transcript. Word count restrictions precluded the same identifying process for shorter quotes embedded within the text. As such, Table 21, in Appendix M, details the full attribution of quotations.

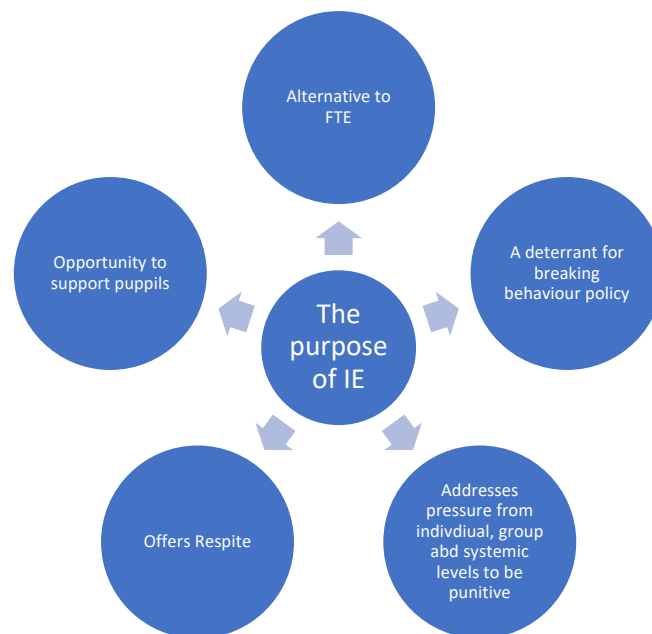
Figure 5. Thematic map detailing main themes and subthemes arising from thematic analysis of interviews.



5.7.1 Theme1: The purpose of IE

The main theme ‘The purpose of IE’ explores headteacher perceptions of the possible rationales for using IE. The subthemes illustrated in figure 6 capture the most prominent themes conceptualised from the interviews and are explored in detail below.

Figure 6. Diagram of sub-themes contributing to theme 1: The purpose of IE



5.7 .1.1 A deterrent for breaking behaviour policy

Reflecting the survey data exploring the benefits of IE, a prominent theme across the interviews was the perception that IE acted as a deterrent against poor behaviour in the school. This theme functioned across two levels: firstly, the removal of a pupil to IE makes the strategy highly visible to others; *“it makes a point to the other 160/ 70 people...a show of power”*. Thus IE is perceived to act as deterrent for breaking the behaviour policy and support high standards because it is a visible consequence that other pupils would want to avoid. Secondly, IE is thought to deter pupils that have been given the sanction from repeating the behaviour infringement.

5.7.1.2 Alternative to Fixed Term Exclusion (FTE)

As evident in the questionnaire data, IE was perceived as an alternative to FTE. IE was seen to be preferable for a number of reasons. Interviewees shared the feeling that using IE as an alternative to FTE meant that more vulnerable pupils are kept safer. A perception that IE is more of a punishment than FTE also emerged as a rationale; *“actual external exclusion doesn't normally hit children hard”*, whereas IE is *“more of a punishment, because they've got all the less good things about school”* and at home they are *“on their Xbox, etc, and not doing anything”*.

A further consideration shared for using IE as an alternative to FTE was that *“it doesn't show on the school's external exclusion figures”*. Indeed a number of interviewees shared how their exclusion numbers had reduced following the implementation of IE.

IE was also described as sanction that can be used when other lower consequences have failed, without having to formally exclude. IE was thought to bridge the gap where behaviour infringements don't quite meet exclusion criteria, or when other sanctions are not working: As one school leader shared: *“detentions aren't working and other sanctions aren't working [...]we need something that is going to be the next notch up really”*. Notably, one interviewee shared that using IE in this way can lead to problems such as an increase in referrals: *“when we are using it a lot, and I'm not happy about this, is where children do not turn up to their after-school detentions”*.

5.7.1.3. Addresses pressure from individual, group and systemic levels to be punitive.

External pressures placed on school leaders in relation to IE emerged as another purpose driving the use of the strategy. This sub-theme was not evident in the questionnaire data, perhaps illustrating that the leadership perspectives offered in the interviews had an additive function and convey a broader, systemic perspective.

Parents were described as needing to see the consequences for poor behaviour; “*wrong has been done, they'd like them to be punished*”. Similarly, “*staff knowing that students aren't going to be able to get away with really serious things*” was also an important consideration.

Reflecting on pressure from staff, school leaders also shared the way that IE can empower and support teachers to challenge poor behaviour.: *I know it's given them more confidence to challenge behaviour [...]it's very important that they know that it's there [...] in order to feel empowered*. This idea of IE empowering teachers was evident in the staff survey responses to the benefits of using IE also.

From a systemic level, one interviewee shared that she had felt pressure to be more punitive in approaches to behaviour following government guidance; highlighting the upsurge in the use of IE and a “*back to basics movement that came out*” with guidance from “*the behaviour tsar with the government*”.

5.7.1.4. Offers Respite

IE as a respite tool was a consistent theme in the survey results and emerged again across the interview data. For school leaders, IE was perceived to provide respite in a range of ways; it “*gives the rest of the school and the staff respite from a child's behaviour*”, it is thought to protect the learning of the other young people that remain in the class, it also disconnects the child “*from the situation which they have got horribly wrong*”. The respite that removing the child affords was also used by schools to investigate incidents and give staff time to repair relationships: “*making peace with that child and starting again*”.

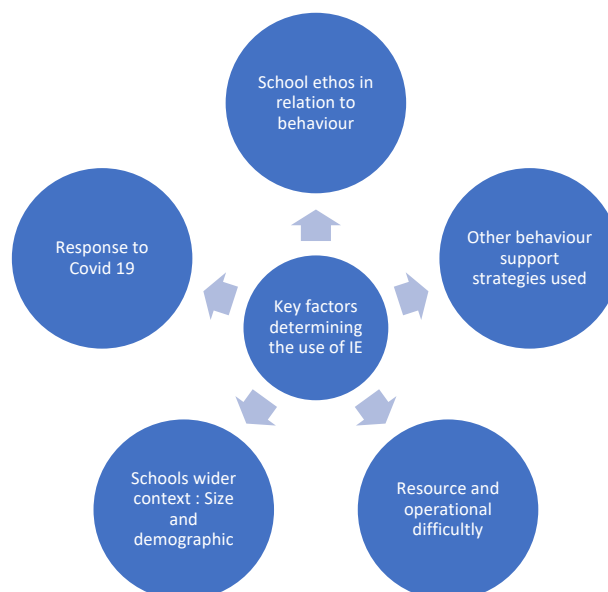
5.7.1.6. Opportunity to support the student

A number of headteachers emphasised the restorative potential of IE perceiving it as a mechanism to support the student that had been referred. As in the content analysis for the staff survey, where ‘time to implement restorative interventions’ was coded, it was felt that IE gives the students an opportunity to talk, reflect and build relationships with those members of staff supervising the IE. It was also seen as a way of identifying possible unmet needs and “*put in place things to help that young person not be in this position again*”.

5.7.2 Theme 2: Key factors determining the use of IE

The main theme of the key factors determining the use of IE explores school leaders’ perceptions of both how the strategy is used and the emerging factors that underpin its operationalisation. The subthemes informing theme 2 are illustrated in figure 7.

Figure 7. Diagram of sub-themes contributing to theme 2: Key factors determining the use of IE



5.7.2.1. School ethos in relation to behaviour

School ethos regarding behaviour emerged as a key theme in the interviews. Interestingly, this theme was not coded in the survey data, but comprised a prominent theme in the interviews and appeared to inform the way that IE was used. For example, some leaders emphasised a positive framing of behaviour, separating the behaviour from judgement of the individual student:

“I want a positive behaviour management structure in the school, I don't want any negativity, even if they do something wrong, it's the behaviour that's wrong, not the child. I've been in places where they you know, they just want to hang them high [...] they just want them punished” (I3, line 88-91).

Other leaders stressed the importance of behaviour as a form of communication: *“The worst behaviour I see, the bigger call for help there is”*, or of contextualising and exploring the reasons for behaviour:

“you identify low self-esteem, the need to be validated, and to contribute. And when that is denied, or when other people are asked, that can be a trigger for lots of negative behaviours” (I4, line 225-228).

School ethos regarding behaviour was also reflected in notions around punishment and whether restorative or punitive processes were emphasised. For example, *“I just think that the key to it is not to be punitive, but to try and solve the issues that have been presented”*.

Whereas others seemed to prioritise the punitive: *“I've got so much in my budget, what am I going to have an inclusion base or an internal exclusion unit ?I'll go for internal exclusion”*.

Generally though, across the interviews there seemed to be a shift towards more restorative views underpinning the operationalisation of IE and interviewees highlighted taking this restorative view was *“not a soft option”*, and a *“labour intensive”* approach.

The school ethos relating to behaviour also appeared to be reflected in the school's training priorities; for example, *“they're not disciplinarians in the traditional sense, they're more trained in mental health, they're trained in lots of small group work, there's a counsellor on staff”*.

Another headteacher stressed the importance of linking pastoral and SEN teams so that the understanding of pupil behaviour can be linked to potential SEN need: *“So the SEND area [...] is alongside the inclusion. And I've got a new assistant head [...] who oversees the two parts together”*.

5.7.2.2. Other behaviour support strategies used

Linking to the school behavioural ethos was the subtheme of other strategies used to support pupil behaviour. Decisions about the other strategies used in school, as well as or instead of IE, again appeared to be driven by how the school leader conceptualised pupil behaviour. For example, several of the headteachers described inclusion programmes that ran alongside IE and the positive impact of these:

“The children who are on the inclusive program are those most at risk of exclusion [...] we have seen two things: the first one is you've seen a big reduction in the use of fixed term exclusion and isolation [...] we've also seen a big increase in attendance”
(I4, line 230-234).

Other schools have replaced IE entirely; one example was a reflection facility where the students will:

Go through several sessions of why did it happen? Why did you do that? What was the purpose of it? How did you feel about it? What do you think would help to make it right? (I6, line 32 - 35).

Others have both IE and inclusion centres, but they work more in isolation: *“They are completely different. There is no link. Except, there’s a lot of people on our inclusion register, do get internally excluded”*.

Some behavioural support mechanisms appeared to operate fairly reactively and informally; *“you will have a conversation with them[...] just happens ad hoc as it does in the moment, it's about.. do you realise why you're in here?”*. Whilst others are more formal and proactive including anxiety groups, anger management, self-esteem and mentoring for young carers.

5.7.2.3. Operational decision making

A key component around operational decision making was the IE environment schools created. Some headteachers chose to reinforce the punitive element of the strategy. For example;

“We were a school that went down the booth route[...]they are very deep, so you can't see anybody at the side you can't see anybody over the top either [...] You've not even got the space to move your arms” (I8, line 17- 19).

Another interviewee shared that *“it is designed so that nobody looks in, nobody looks out. It's horrible. It's not nice”*.

Other schools create less punitive spaces: *“it’s a smaller classroom with 3 or 4 computers and desk space it is kind of nice room really. It is sort of decorated a bit nicer than a normal classroom”*. One headteacher had moved the room to encourage an inclusionary function: *“we moved it, it's now in the main body in the school, it's right in the middle of the main school”*.

The IE timetable and rules governing the IE space were also perceived as important decisions in relation to the implementation of IE. In some settings, the exclusionary nature of

IE was established by removing pupils' breaktimes and opportunities to interact with their peers and the normal day-to-day life of school. For example, one school leader shared:

They'll just get a toilet break really at break time [...] they don't get any kind of fresh air [...] they are kept separate from the main body of the school (I2, line 145 – 148).

As another interviewee shared, the high degree of separation that some schools use in their operationalisation of IE “*really is exclusion*”. The level of social exclusion that can accompany IE was perceived as an important facet of the strategy, as one headteacher shared: “*an afterschool detention, that's water off a duck's back for some of them. But losing their social time, that's really important*”.

The decision making about who gets referred to IE varied across the interviews. Some headteachers ensured that only senior or selected members of staff could make referral decisions, it was felt that this supported consistency in the implementation of the strategy. Reporting referral numbers to school governors was also shared as a strategy to support the rigour and uniformity of IE use.

In other schools, any member of staff could make the IE referral decision. As one headteacher explained: “*every teacher has the authority to discipline, and therefore, they need to have the full range of the kind of internal processes available to them*”.

5.7.2.3. School's wider context: size and demographic

The school's size and demographic were perceived to be key factors in how IE (and alternative behaviour) strategies were applied. Again, this theme was unique to the leadership interviews and reflects the more systemic perspective of the participants.

There was a perception that if schools were taking a needs-led, restorative approach this was “*a lot more complex to operate*” and “*therefore more cost intensive than it is to stick them in a room all day and then let them out at the end*”. School leaders made the point about

the varying level of need in schools and highlighted the difficulty of implementing personalised alternatives to IE at scale: *“for me it would be very different wouldn't it, if I had, I don't know 10 or 20 a week[...] I wouldn't be able to provide, you know quite such a bespoke opportunity”*. Whilst reflecting on the inclusion programme, one interviewee reflected: *“because it is so thorough [...]we've only got capacity for 9/10 children on it [...] and so the next tier down, are not benefiting from that”*. Overall, there was a sense that the individual context of the school is a key factor in the implementation of IE and one headteacher cautioned against the possibility of *“a one size fits all”* approach.

5.7.2.4. Response to Covid-19

School rules developed in response to Covid -19 were perceived to have impacted the implementation of IE. As in the content analysis for the staff survey where operational difficulties arising from Covid-19 were coded, Headteachers shared that zoning and bubbles precluded mixing year groups and therefore placed limitations on who can attend IE and when. In some cases, this has reduced the amount of time pupils spend in IE, in others it has led to an increase in FTE; *“I externally excluded someone because we just felt we couldn't quite sanitize the area”*. Social distancing rules were found to be restricting the type of support pupils were receiving in the IE, but some participants noted that the availability of online provision meant *“we're able to have students tune in to lessons still. So we don't restrict the learning as much”*.

More generally, there were varying perceptions in how Covid-19 had impacted pupil behaviour in school. Whilst some leaders reported a deterioration in behaviour because there were *“more children in smaller spaces”* and some refusal to follow Covid guidelines, others reported noticeable improvements in pupil behaviour. For example, *“our behaviour data for*

both parts of the autumn term [...]was ridiculously low compared to the same time last year, we were really taken aback”.

Perceived reasons for improvements in pupil behaviour were: “a recognition that perhaps education in the classroom was valued more, because they'd had lock- down 1, where it had been taken away” and zoning, where schools were able to split breaks and lunchtimes so there were less students in more space.

Interestingly, one interviewee shared that pupils had wanted to maintain some of the new schools rules that had been implemented in response to Covid-19. These included: staggered starts, separation into different zones, and more restricted movement around the building.

5.7.3 Theme 3: Complications of using IE

The main theme of the ‘Complications of using IE’ explores perceptions about the complexities of using the strategy and the various ethical considerations that emerged from the interviews. The subthemes informing theme 3 are illustrated in figure 8.

Figure 8. Diagram of sub-themes contributing to theme 3: Complications of using IE



5.7.3.1 Impact on the child in IE

A common concern emerging from the interviews was the perception that IE referrals create learning gaps for the students attending. This theme also arose in the content analysis where ‘missed learning’ was coded as a perceived challenge to implementing IE. One interviewee explained the dilemma as follows: *“if you put a student in there [...]they miss more of that lesson. So that means I'm adding to their learning deficit”*. Another school leader warned: *“without any shadow of a doubt, anybody that says ‘they still learn’. They're kidding themselves”*.

A number of perceived ethical considerations were also evident in the interview data. Concerns around the impact of IE on mental health and school belonging emerged; *“what you're saying is, [...] you're not part of us, you're not our team, you're not part of the community, you're isolated.”* Interviewees stressed the importance of making IE a supportive place:

“Where children still have dignity and which respects their mental health. I'm very, I'm very conscious that nationally, the narrative has been around, blacked out rooms, no windows, booths. And, to my mind that's humiliates children” (I4, line 369 – 371).

A further ethical consideration seemed to be weighing up the potential cost to the child, as outlined above, with the potential benefits of the strategy to the rest of the school. As one headteacher explains: *“so for the individual child, yeah, this isn't there's no real benefit is there really, and you know, I am acutely aware of that, but it's for the greater good kind of thing”*.

There was a feeling that the exclusionary nature of IE may also undermine other behaviour strategies:

“We are doing lots of mentoring and coaching and, you know, self-esteem work and anger management work with these kids. But I'm conflicted; is all the good work that we've been doing being undermined by the fact that they're going to have to have a day in isolation?” (I4, line 172 – 176).

5.7.3.2 Repeated cycles of IE

A prominent theme emerging from the interview data was that school leaders were observing repeated cycles of IE. This was also one of the most frequently coded examples of perceived challenges to implementing IE on both the EP and staff surveys. This triangulation of findings emphasises the importance of the theme. As one school leader comments: *“I would bet money that every school is seeing the same children in and out of them all the time”*. This was perceived as a key limitation to the strategy; *“we've ultimately failed, if all we're doing is they do it, they get that sanction, they do it again”*. Another interviewee emphasised that *“it doesn't work[...]it didn't really work for us. So the children that we were putting repeatedly in internal exclusion, it had absolutely no effect whatsoever”*. The issue of repeated cycles of IE were evident in some of the school's data: *“we had a massive fall in exclusions in the last two years, but I haven't really seen the same sort of fall in isolation [IE]”*.

A perception shared was that IE, in and of itself, does not address the reasons for the pupil's behaviour, or give them the skills to manage emotion regulation in the future.

Therefore, increasing the risk of embedding poor behaviour, or even making it worse:

They go into isolation, then nobody speaks to that kid again for the day. So how do you expect them to come in the following day, being a really positive frame of mind come to school and wanting to learn, the cycle just keeps on going. And eventually those kids are going to become disenfranchised with school (I8, line 129 – 132).

5.7.3.3 Using IE with SEN and other vulnerable populations

A number of the interviews highlighted the perceived potential for over-representation of vulnerable or SEN population groups in IE: *“everybody who comes to a seclusion has got one of those needs: they are either vulnerable, SEND, or they are pupil premium”*. One reason given for the overrepresentation of population groups was IE being used without differentiation or reasonable adjustments for pupils with SEN. Another reason posited was the perception that some teachers do not have the necessary skills to support SEMH needs and therefore *“the child’s needs are not being addressed in the classroom”*.

Generally there was a consensus across the interviews in the perception that IE was not an appropriate strategy for pupils with SEN.

5.7.3.4 Resource and operational difficulties

A perceived operational difficulty in implementing IE was staffing. Firstly, the cost of staffing an IE room:

“So staffing of it is quite significant, you're effectively allocating 50 periods on the timetable. So that's over one member of staff. So the cost of supervising it, it's probably the thick end of 70 or 80,000 pounds” (I5, Line 313 – 316).

Given that IE rooms tend to have a fairly small capacity for pupils, the staff: pupil ratio is typically small, in one school *“the ratio is, at most one to six”*. This is fairly unusual in a secondary school, as one leader reflects; *“If we had six people wanting to do a course in in sixth form, we probably wouldn't run that course. Because that's not enough.”*

Deployment of staff was also perceived as complicated; for example one leader found that IE needed to be supervised by a range of staff members as *“when it was manned by one person. And that was awful. Because all their whole work experience was, was dealing with*

kids who were really struggling". At the same time, consistency in staffing was thought to be an important feature of IE.

Consistency in the way that IE is used was also raised as an operational difficulty, some leaders reflected that it can be *"used like a sin bin"* or *"almost a real sort of timeout dumping ground"*.

A further operational difficulty was the timing of IE. It was felt that IE implementation needed to be experienced as an immediate consequence by the pupil, but that sometimes there were delays due to limited capacity in the space for example. This can lead to situations where the student works really hard to improve their behaviour following an incident, but then still gets put in IE, thereby devaluing their attempts to improve.

5.7.3.5 Finding an alternative to IE

A prominent theme across the interviews was a sense of unease or deliberation about the use of IE, as one school leader questions: *"is there not a better way to change behaviours, because the numbers are not going down?"*. School leaders also showed great interest in what other schools were doing and a number of interviewees cited this as their reason for taking part in the research.

Finding an alternative to replace IE seemed to contribute to the feeling of uncertainty around the strategy, for example:

"I also feel if I was to take it away, I'm very fearful that we would go back to some of the behaviours which we've removed. And, I'd also worry that the deterrent wouldn't be there, and that the staff would feel less empowered" (I4, line 378 – 380).

Overall, being reflective about the use of IE was perceived to be important, for example: *"you have to resist saying we've always done it like that"*. As one interviewee summarised: *"it's almost about getting us to reconceptualise what a good internal exclusion could look like"*.

5.8 Summary of phase 2 results

Phase 2 results identified three main themes arising from the interview data: ‘The purpose of IE’, ‘Key factors determining the use of IE’ and ‘complications of using IE’. Overall, there was a high level of agreement evident in the phase 1 and phase 2 results, with the data across the study highlighting the important perception of IE working as a deterrent, representing a good alternative to FTE and offering respite. Again, variability was evident in the way that IE was operationalised and school leaders had particularly strong views about the IE environment. Complications associated with using IE also echoed themes from phase 1 results. Main perceived concerns included: repeated cycles of IE, the impact of the strategy on pupil mental health, potential learning gaps and over-representation of SEN populations. These perceived limitations to using IE perhaps begin to explain the apparent dissonance of the interviewees towards using the strategy. The triangulation of findings between phase 1 and 2 may support the validity and interpretation of themes arising from the data.

Interview results also served to elaborate perspectives on IE by introducing additional themes, perhaps unique to a leadership perspective. For example, pressure to be punitive at local and national levels, the role of school ethos and culture in framing pupil behaviour, school demographics and the expense of IE. An important moral tension also emerged where school leaders appeared to be weighing up the potential cost of IE to the child, with the potential benefits of the strategy to the rest of the school.

6. Discussion

6.1 Overview

This study set out to begin addressing the gap in the research literature in relation to IE. It had four aims, as follows: to explore the prevalence of the use of IE; to assess the in-school practices that operationalise IE; to understand school staff and EP perspectives about the use of IE; and to consider the implications of findings for school and EP practice.

This chapter discusses findings from the current study in relation to the related and relevant research literature. Addressing each research question in turn, the discussion explores main findings regarding prevalence of IE at national and in-school levels, the operationalisation of IE and finally participant perspectives. The current context of Covid-19 is also considered in relation to the use and operationalisation of IE. After exploring the study's strengths and limitations, implications for school and EP practice are presented and used to generate a series of recommendations, which are summarised to conclude the chapter.

6.2 RQ1 Prevalence: How prevalent is the use of IE in mainstream secondary schools?

Results from this study showed that IE is a highly prevalent strategy used across England. Although the number of pupils referred to IE within schools was typically small, high variability was found with some schools referring twenty or more pupils per day. Worryingly, three-quarters of participants perceived IE numbers as either stable or increasing, emphasising the need for schools to formally evaluate the strategy and assess its impact.

6.2.1 How many schools use IE?

Although limitations in the data collection process made it difficult to ascertain the precise number of schools using IE, even the most cautious readings of the numbers suggest prevalence rates within the high range.

To preserve anonymity, participants on the staff survey were not required to share the name of the school they worked in. This had implications for interpreting the data on IE prevalence: firstly, it precluded the possibility of identifying multiple responses from single schools; secondly, it prevented the researcher identifying if colleagues completing the EP survey were commenting on the same setting as participants in the staff survey. Thus, whilst the staff survey data indicated that IE was used in 98% of the respondent's schools, and in 79% of schools represented in the EP survey, these numbers may include multiple responses from single settings.

However, all respondents did share either the school's LA (staff survey) or region of work (EP survey), which provided an indication of the *minimum* number of different schools and geographical locations represented in the sample. For example, as the 94 staff survey respondents spanned 63 LAs, the minimum, and therefore lowest point in possible range of schools using IE, was 67%. Given that even the most cautious reading of the staff survey data indicates that over two thirds of the schools in the sample were using IE, results highlight that IE is a prevalent strategy used across England. Arguably, the 'tacit' understanding that IE is used in most secondary schools (McBeath & National Union of Teachers, 2006) should now be made 'explicit'.

Headteacher interviews illustrated pressures at individual, group, and systemic levels to utilise an IE strategy. This offers a possible reason for the high prevalence rates in secondary schools. Findings indicated that staff and parents seeing visible consequences for poor behaviour was an important consideration in utilising IE. This aligns with previous research where school leaders were found to be conscious of their duty to support colleagues in decision-making processes (Hammersley-Fletcher, 2015). The small-scale qualitative study by Hammersley-Fletcher (2015) considers the experiences of English headteachers when facing government initiatives which can be antagonistic to their own values. The study posits

that headteachers are increasingly constrained by government edicts and highlights headteacher perceptions of the complex balance between the “pupil being at the heart of education” with imperatives to meet external government targets (p.211). This notion is reflected in the present study’s data; one headteacher described being in a “straight jacket”, and another referred to the pressure of a national trend in more punitive approaches. The education secretary’s recent proclamation to “support schools taking a firm approach” (DfE, 2021b), shows government rhetoric does appear to be in full-swing in relation to behaviour in schools.

The use of IE may also be an unintended consequence of government policy decisions such as the Progress 8 accountability system and the focus on EBacc subjects, which were found to be main factors in exclusion and off-rolling in the Education Committee’s (2018) report investigating exclusion rates in England. Mounting systemic pressure, coupled with that from parents and staff, shows that external sources seem to be a driver in school leaders’ decision-making about IE.

A further motivation for the use of IE cited in the data was that it can be used alternatively to FTE. This finding aligns with previous research (e.g. Thomson, 2018), where reduced use of FTE is posited as evidence of the success of IE. Although here we return to the role of national policy, arguably the use of IE can also be seen as a symptom of the pressure on headteachers to reduce exclusions (Power & Taylor, 2018). Indeed, IE does not show on schools’ exclusion figures. Yet, it is being used in place of a formal exclusion and utilises a punitive environment, which isolates the pupil from their typical education and social interaction with their peers. This invites important questions as to the lack of regulation surrounding IE and it is possible that the lack of accountability at national level may be contributing to high prevalence rates.

The perception that IE is more draconian than FTE also emerged as a rationale for using IE in place of FTE. It was felt that IE provided the structure of school, but in a context where pupils get “*all the less good things*” and do not have access to rewarding activities such as gaming consoles, which they may have at home.

A further reason was that more vulnerable pupils were felt to be safer in school and their learning protected to some extent. This rationale links with previous findings such as that from Munn et al., (2015) which found that sustaining the routine of the pupil attending school avoided contexts where an externally excluded pupil may be at greater risk.

Whilst the use of IE to keep vulnerable pupils safe is undoubtedly well intentioned, there are implications for policy and practice if IE is to be used as an alternative to FTE. It is important to introduce statutory reporting processes to increase accountability for using IE, especially given that one of the rationales is that it is more punitive than other formal mechanisms of exclusion and that the potential impact of IE on student wellbeing and learning is not well understood.

6.2.2 How many pupils attend IE?

Over half of school survey respondents indicated that daily referral numbers were within the 0-5 pupil range suggesting that, in most cases, IE impacts a relatively small percentage of the total school student population. As Rhodes and Collins (2019) remind us “most pupils in most lessons behave well” (p. 4).

A broader, and perhaps more accurate claim to the present study’s results is to underscore the variability found in daily pupil referral numbers to IE. Whilst only a small percentage, a number of schools did select the higher pupil referral ranges as typical daily practice (3.2% for 16-20 and 7.4% for 11-15). These findings are in line with the Barker (2010) study which found that just over twenty percent of the pupils in one school were

required to attend IE in one academic year and suggests that IE can be a more pervasive strategy.

Nearly two thirds of staff survey respondents perceived IE referral numbers as ‘remaining consistent’, with a further 14% indicating that referrals were ‘increasing’. Intuitively, if respondents considered IE to have an impact on pupil behaviour, either in terms of pupils learning from their mistakes, or IE deterring poor behaviour generally, one may expect decreasing referral numbers to be reported. Therefore a conflict in understanding the impact of IE emerges: if the desired outcome of IE is positioned as improved pupil behaviour, this position becomes undermined with the perception of stable/ increasing IE numbers, as surely both perceptions cannot, at the same time, be true. This finding has implications for understanding the desired outcomes of IE and how these are measured. It is important that schools evaluate IE practice and appropriately evidence impact.

6.3 RQ2 Practice: What are the in-school practices that operationalise an IE strategy (including the role of EPs)?

Responding to a dearth in national data regarding the operationalisation of IE, this study found high variability in practice and demonstrates the need for an urgent review of government guidance to clarify the strategy’s use. Other main findings highlight that, in the majority of cases, the IE environment is used to reinforce a punitive, disciplinary function. In relation to the role of EPs, results demonstrated that the profession could potentially play a big role in IE, but EPs currently mostly work at the individual level and have little influence over IE policy and implementation. The three main findings relating to RQ2 are discussed below.

6.3.1 IE is operationalised in highly variable ways

In line with previous studies (Power & Taylor, 2018), results showed that IE is operationalised in highly variable ways. Typically pupils were found to attend IE for one day, though this could be shorter with 28% of responses indicating half a day or less. While longer categories were less likely, they still comprised over ten percent of responses, suggesting that some schools do use IE for relatively long periods of time.

The most frequently cited reason for referral was ‘disruption of learning’. However, seemingly less serious behaviour infringements, such as uniform irregularities, also represented possible reasons for IE referral. Schools in England have been using uniforms in educational settings since the sixteenth century (Davidson, 1990), perhaps this long history coupled with arguments that uniforms contribute to better levels of discipline (Baumann & Krskova, 2016) begin to explain why schools take uniform irregularities so seriously. Nevertheless, the results highlight a broad range of reasons for IE referral which include a surprising spectrum of behaviours.

Arguably, the variations in IE practice reflect the opacity of current government guidance for headteachers and staff. For example, the DfE recommends that IE can be used with “disruptive pupils” for “a limited period” (p.12., DfE, 2016). These terms are rather vague and thus it is perhaps unsurprising that practice in schools differs so much. One researcher reports that a pupil had spent the entirety of Year 9 in IE (Wenham, 2019) and although this is at the extreme end of the referral spectrum, highlights the risks associated with leaving IE practices open to interpretation. At the very least, results from this study reinforce previous literature highlighting the importance of an urgent review of government guidance to improve clarity of IE practice in terms of the length of IE referrals and reasons.

Again, in line with current research literature there was variability in the type of supervision provided in IE (e.g. Gillies & Robinson, 2012; Gilmore, 2012). This ranged from

senior staff members, to staff specifically appointed to run IE, in one case this was a retired police officer, to teachers and support staff with additional capacity on their timetables. The most prominent form of supervision was TA or support staff, accounting for over one-third of responses. This finding highlights several points: firstly, that pupils are likely to be supervised by unqualified teaching staff and this invites questions regarding the quality of teaching and subject specialist support they are likely to receive; secondly, that TAs may be re-deployed away from SEN support to IE supervision; and, thirdly, TAs do perform key pastoral roles in secondary schools. This adds to research highlighting that TAs comprise a key mechanism for inclusion (Webster & Blatchford, 2019) and heavily contribute to pupils' perception of school (Dimitrellou & Hurry, 2018).

More broadly, headteachers perceived the deployment of staff in IE as complicated. For example, balancing the need for consistency in staffing, and therefore pupil experiences of IE, and deploying a range of staff members to share the burden. A further complication was the cost of staffing; as one headteacher shared this amounted to an eye-watering £70,000 to £80,000.

Interestingly, because IE rooms tend to have fairly limited capacity (most likely 0-5 pupils following results above), the staff:pupil ratio is typically very small. This is an unusually small class size in consideration that the average is 22 pupils (DfE, 2021). Too small in fact, as one headteacher shared, to justify a particular course or KS4/KS5 option in the main school context. IE then, provides a unique opportunity for uncommonly small class sizes which have the potential for a range of positive processes. For example, smaller class sizes mean staff can give increased attention to individual pupils and provide a context where stronger relationships and connections with pupils are developed (Blatchford & Russell, 2020). Schools should consider how they are currently utilising their staff:pupil ratio in IE and the opportunities that this context can afford pupils and staff.

6.3.2 In the majority of cases, the IE environment was used to reinforce a punitive, disciplinary function.

Over three quarters of respondents on the staff survey indicated that pupils are not permitted to talk whilst attending IE. This was surprising as pupils are also most likely to be in IE for a day, but is consistent with other research highlighting that the rules governing IE are different from the rest of school and reinforce its punitive nature (Barker et al., 2010; Gilmore, 2012).

Findings are also consistent with previous research indicating that IE can operate on a different timetable to the rest of the school, limiting, or even removing break and lunchtimes (Skipp & Hopwood, 2017). Describing IE as a controlled environment where pupils get just a toilet break at breaktime, their lunch in the IE room itself, and “no fresh air”, one headteacher felt that the timetabling of the IE functioned to separate pupils from the rest of the school.

Results suggested that this level of social exclusion was perceived as an important facet of IE, as losing social time was thought to be something that pupils find particularly troubling. Given that pupils report that the best thing about school is the chance to meet friends (Baines & Blatchford 2019), it is unsurprising that this is the case. However, the decision to prevent pupils from interacting with their peers at break and lunchtimes has several implications. Peer interactions and relationships are connected to the development of social cognitive skills (Blatchford & Baines, 2010). This is particularly important in secondary school contexts as pupils transfer from a more parent-orientated attachment focus to a peer-oriented one (Goldstein et al., 2005). A possible unforeseen consequence here is that the IE space can generate a problematic peer sub-culture; as one EP participant shared, several pupils all experiencing difficulties being grouped together can lead to a negative peer group developing. There is a risk of creating an anti-school, anti-learning subculture which may have the potential to influence the rest of the school population.

Findings also echo previous literature (Gilmore, 2012) suggesting that secondary schools use specific spatial arrangements in IE to reinforce disciplinary functions. For example, one headteacher described the use of deep booths so that pupils cannot see anybody else in the room, whilst another described the environment as “horrible”, sharing that you are not able to see in or out. Given these spatial arrangements, it is unsurprising that participants from the staff survey highlighted that IE can be a negative environment and a “miserable experience for all”.

However, whilst draconian representations of IE capture the news headlines (e.g. Lightfoot 2020), there were divergent findings and a number of school leaders stressed the importance of making IE a supportive place when interviewed. One headteacher shared that he felt that blacked out rooms and booths humiliate children and emphasised that the IE environment should maintain pupil dignity and respect their mental health.

As other researchers have noted (e.g. Ferguson, 2019), there is a risk that some examples of in-school IE practice could be understood as a denial of liberty and negate the rights of a child. Worryingly, in its most punitive form, IE practice could fit the Department of Health’s (2014) definition of seclusion in that it is the “supervised isolation of a person, away from other users of services, in an area from which the person is prevented from leaving”. If the child perceives they are prevented from leaving IE, this is perhaps enough to fit the definition. As the code of practice underscoring the Mental Health Act (1983) emphasises, seclusion can be a traumatic experience and “can have particularly adverse implications for the emotional development of a child”. This is a pertinent warning given the current context of Covid-19 and the associated risks to young people’s mental health (Harris & Jones, 2020).

Interestingly, where the rules of IE lie on the punitive spectrum may not make a difference to the perceived impact of the strategy. Results from the current study indicated

that the length of time a pupil was in IE, and whether they can talk or not, did not affect staff perceptions about IE's efficacy. Given the lack of evidence underpinning the use of punitive IE environments, the concerns about risks to pupil mental health and the importance of safeguarding children's rights and welfare, a further recommendation arising from this study is for schools to carefully reconsider the negative effects of the IE environment.

6.3.3 EPs could potentially play a big role, but currently work mostly at the individual level and have little influence over IE policy and implementation.

Over three quarters of staff survey participants indicated that EPs supported schools with behaviour suggesting that the profession has a big role to play. However, findings also highlighted that EP work is most likely to be at the individual level, working with pupils involved in IE. Indications of systemic work and group work were much lower and were not found to be affected by the EPs role and status, as a trainee or senior EP for example. This suggests that the prominence of individual work is about more than levels of experience and expertise in engaging in systemic projects.

Arguably, the heavy skew towards individual work demonstrates how EP work is commissioned and that this can impact levels of EP practice. For example, one EP reflected that there was a mismatch between the level of work they felt would be beneficial and the work the school commissioned. One reason for the disparity could be that in the traded service model, schools assume the role of a 'customer' of EP services and are more able to direct the work of EPs (Lee & Woods, 2017). This can present difficulties when commissioning systemic work given the predisposition of schools to look for solutions through within-child, rather than context dependent, explanations (Buck, 2015).

School organisational structures were also identified as a potential obstacle in engaging in systemic work. EPs highlighted that pupil behaviour is often categorised under a

pastoral rather than a SEN remit. This can create problems for EPs supporting with behaviour as typically they work with the school SENCo. As such, the segregation of behavioural concerns from SEN were perceived to make commissioning systemic work across teams difficult for EPs. It may also explain the divergence in EP and school staff understanding in relation to other behaviour strategies used in schools; EPs could be unaware of some of the pastoral support systems utilised in school if their remit precludes wider support, and is based on 1:1 SEN casework.

Findings also illustrated central tensions in the perceptions of school staff and EPs in relation to IE. For example, a comparison of results from both surveys indicated notable differences of opinion as to whether the introduction of IE had led to changes in pupil behaviour. Nearly half of school staff participants considered IE had improved behaviour. This finding appears to contradict the previous findings that IE referral numbers are stable or increasing, and again highlights the lack of clarity in how the strategy is evaluated by staff. It also raises questions as to what information staff are using to inform their perception. Notably though, whereas 44 respondents on the staff survey indicated improved behaviour, only two EPs indicated this response. EPs were also much more likely to say they saw no benefit in using IE (EPs: $n=21$; Staff: $n=3$). Arguably, this is to be expected given that it is school staff interacting with pupil behaviour on a daily basis, not EPs. Nevertheless, the polarised perspectives have a number of implications. Firstly, the differences in perspectives underscore the lack of clarity around the impact of IE and further signal the important need for close monitoring and evaluation of the effects of the strategy. Secondly, if EPs are to shift to adopting a more systemic approach to supporting schools with IE and behaviour more generally, they may need to acknowledge the school perspective on IE to a greater extent. In consideration that IE was consistently perceived to be an important strategy by school staff, it

will be key for EPs to understand the reasons underscoring this perspective so that these can be addressed in EPs work.

Considering that EPs communicating and implementing a psychological understanding of behaviour was the most prominent theme in the types of support provided to schools, this may be an important route for EPs to support schools in their use of IE. As Wilding and Griffey (2015) note, anti-deficit conceptualisations in educational psychology have enabled more strength-based approaches, encouraging positive expectations, competency and affirming characteristics. A change to more contextualised paradigms in the way behaviour is conceptualised in schools is likely to have an impact on the way that IE is implemented. Indeed, a number of the school leaders interviewed adopted a psychological perspective to understanding disruptive behaviour in their schools which in turn seemed to heavily influence the operationalisation, or indeed rejection, of IE.

The theme 'School ethos in relation to behaviour' highlighted that some school leaders emphasised behaviour as a form of communication. They considered that behaviour conveys meaning and viewed difficult behaviour as an expression of need. This psychological framing of behaviour aligns itself with attachment-orientated conceptualisations which allow for reflection and understanding of behaviour (Bombèr, 2007). One school leader stressed an incompatibility between school culture and the punitive ethos of IE and shared that it had been replaced entirely with a reflection facility where pupils explore their behaviour and regulation strategies with trained members of staff. This is consistent with research literature identifying that school ethos largely determines the ways in which children's needs are met (Munn et al., 2015) and by extension, the way that IE is used (or not).

EPs can support school leaders to create a shared ethos in relation to a psychological understanding of behaviour in their schools. Results indicated that consultation was perceived

as a key mechanism to explore behaviour as communication and challenge within-child labels with staff and parents. Consultation adopts an interactionist perspective and explores patterns, processes and possible issues in a collaborative way. Useful strategies and approaches are identified and the function of the child's behaviour is explored (Wagner 1995). This process comprises an important way for EPs to support young people who are at risk of being, or have already been, referred to IE.

Whilst only a small number, six EPs also indicated that they provided supervision for school staff to promote reflective practice in dealing with behaviour. Unlike most professions concerned with the education and wellbeing of children and young people, including educational psychology, there is no formal tradition of supervision in schools (Garland et al., 2019). Supervision has been found to result in an increased sense of support, self-efficacy and self-awareness, as well as enriched skills and understanding (Osborne & Burton, 2014) and thus highly appropriate for staff members working with behaviour needs and IE.

The supervision process is scalable to a systemic level, peer supervision groups across the school can promote best practice through reflection, problem solving, and managing the emotional and psychological impact of work (Reid & Westergaard, 2013). The process of peer supervision can also have a strong influence on the school as a whole as teachers become increasingly used to supporting each other in their work (Farouk, 2004). Intuitively, a process such as this is likely to positively impact school staff capacity to manage behaviour.

Staff training was a common way that EPs supported schools. Examples included trauma and attachment informed approaches to support behaviour, emotion coaching, zones of regulation and restorative justice. A small number of EPs also shared that they had supported the development/review of policy.

Overall however, results indicated that the majority of EPs support pupils that have been referred to IE and are working at the individual level. EPs seem to have limited

influence on the way that schools use IE at a systemic level. Whether this is due to commissioning issues, organisational issues, or differences of opinion, there is a risk that EPs are side-lined on the issue of IE, when it is important that they are much more involved. This finding has implications for EP practice and going forward: it will be important for the profession to identify and develop ways to support schools with IE at policy and implementation levels, as well as supporting the individuals involved.

6.4 RQ3 Perspectives: What are school staff and EP perspectives about the use and efficacy of IE?

Considering that the public debate around IE presents a ‘battleground’ of divided opinion (Adams, 2020), it was perhaps unsurprising that one of the main themes arising from the study was ‘complications of using IE’. A key finding was the belief that SEND pupils attend IE more frequently, which raises important questions about the extent of differentiation and reasonable adjustments for pupils with SEN. The theme ‘Purpose of IE’ highlighted a complex range of perceived functions driving the use of IE in secondary schools. The most prominent justification for utilising the strategy was the perception that IE acts as a deterrent. However, findings suggest this assumption is fundamentally flawed as IE referrals are perceived to be stable or increasing. Main findings in relation to school staff and EP perspectives about the use and efficacy of IE are explored below.

6.4.1 There is a belief that SEND pupils attend IE more frequently than their peers

Somewhat paradoxically, there was a consensus across the data in the perception that both a) IE was not an appropriate strategy for pupils with SEND but that b) SEND or vulnerable pupils were actually over-represented groups in IE referral data. The latter point is reflected in the research literature finding that pupils with SEND were more likely to be referred to IE

(Gillies & Robinson, 2012; Stanforth & Rose, 2018). Given the troubling inequalities that persist in exclusion data (DfE, 2021), there are risks of similar patterns emerging at IE level.

The SEND Code of Practice (2015) directs schools to make reasonable adjustments so that expectations of students with SEND are developmentally suitable and just. Yet the overrepresentation of SEND pupils in IE invites questions regarding the extent that reasonable adjustments are being made. Interestingly, there were a number of identified codes in the qualitative data analysis which highlighted possible reasons for the overrepresentation of SEN population groups in IE. For example the code ‘Teachers do not always differentiate work/lesson appropriately for SEN pupils which leads to IE’ was identified in the staff survey. Another point coded in the school leader interviews was the perception that some teachers do not have the necessary skills to support SEMH needs, nor differentiate for SEN in the classroom itself.

The perception that differentiation for SEN pupils comprises a teaching issue is reflected in Webster and Blatchford’s (2019) study, which explored the educational experiences of pupils with EHC plans. The study found an ambiguity in the conceptualisation and operationalisation of differentiation and suggests a gap in teachers’ knowledge regarding SEND and relating pedagogy (Webster & Blatchford, 2019). This finding begins to explain some of the perceived inconsistency in the way staff use IE. For example, where it was described as a “dumping ground” avoiding ownership of the problem/SEND need. As Gillies and Robinson (2012) note in their research, informal disciplinary practice such as IE can negate the significance of school context, in this case the level of differentiation, and can limit opportunities for schools and teachers to reflect on their practice. At worst, the researchers argue, practices such as IE can perpetuate patterns of discrimination in education. Sadly, this point came up in the EP survey data where participants highlighted issues around

potential teacher bias and children being “*targeted*” and “*picked on*” more than others in IE referrals.

Considering that disruptive behaviour at school often masks underlying learning difficulties or SEMH needs (Nash et al., 2016), it makes sense that SEND pupils are at high risk of IE referrals – especially if adequate differentiation and reasonable adjustments have not taken place. Indeed, one headteacher cited IE as a way of identifying possible unmet needs, though this raises a broader, systemic issue in secondary schools. Surely there is a better way of identifying pupils that need additional support than for those pupils to experience repeated IE referrals.

Arguably, IE is part of a bigger problem in terms of how schools may not be meeting the needs of pupils with SEND. The Education Committee’s report, *Special Educational Needs and Disabilities* (2019), emphasises the tension between the child’s needs and the provision available. The report blames significant funding shortfalls, accountability and a focus on attainment and behaviour. IE appears to be a symptom of these shortfalls, especially when it is (over-)populated by pupils with SEND needs.

From a theoretical perspective, the vulnerability of SEND pupils attending IE and more broadly the debate about the “inclusivity” of IE sits within Minow’s (1985) conceptualisation of the dilemma of difference. The dilemma of difference explores the tension of the possibility of reinforcing the stigma associated with assigned difference, such as SEND, when *both* the difference is *reinforced* by mechanisms which separate such as IE, *or* the SEND is *ignored* so the attempts to fully integrate the pupil are unsuccessful, which also accompanies the risk of IE. The dilemma of difference is a “double-edged risk” (Minow, 1985, p. 157). In terms of resolving the dilemma, Norwich (2008) proposes a balancing of needs by conceiving those needs which are a) common to all, b) specific to subgroups and c) unique to individuals. In terms of IE, this theoretical analysis could be applied to policy and

protocol surrounding the strategy's implementation and begin to resolve the dilemma of difference as regards to identification of whether IE is meeting pupil needs.

The perception that SEND pupils are frequently attending IE has a number of implications for policy and practice. At government level, there is mounting pressure to change guidance on the use of IE with SEND pupils evident in the threat of judicial review. A pre-action statement was submitted to the DfE demanding it consider the impact of isolation on pupils with additional needs on behalf of two families with children with SEND needs that were placed in isolation for extended periods (Staufenberg 2019). At the local level, it is important for schools to develop further guidance on the use of IE with SEN pupils. Schools should review their current behaviour policy to ensure it is appropriately differentiated for pupils with SEN and that reasonable adjustments are being made.

6.4.2 The assumption that IE acts as a deterrent against poor behaviour does not hold up.

The sub-theme 'A deterrent for breaking behaviour policy' emerged from the interviews with school leaders and was coded in the survey data for staff and EPs. This notion is not new: a deterrent effect is conceptualised as a defining characteristic of effective punishment in behaviourist discourses (Skinner, 1965). In the case of IE, the deterrent effect was perceived to preserve high standards and deter poor behaviour because it is a visible, punitive consequence that pupils would want to avoid getting, or repeat getting, if they did end up in IE.

However, there was a prominent perception of IE as a kind of revolving door with the "*same kids being isolated for the same behaviour*" across the data. This perception was supported by quantitative findings which indicated that IE referral numbers are not decreasing and this mirrors previous study findings (e.g. Barker et al., 2010; Fipps, 2011). If

IE does not consistently work to change behaviour, and the same pupils end up being in IE time and time again, it becomes unclear what the purpose or developmental goal of the strategy is.

Counter-intuitively, rather than working as a deterrent, school staff shared a perception that some students would rather be in IE than in lessons and deliberately get themselves sent there. Another possible explanation repeatedly given in both the school staff and EP survey responses was that using IE in a punitive way, does not address the underlying cause of the behaviour.

Another factor implicated in repeated IE cycles is that pupils referred to IE miss their lessons, usually a day's worth or more, which can make future challenging behaviour more likely (Orsati & Causton-Theoharis, 2013). The pupil attending IE does not have access to their own teacher's specialist expertise, this can create learning gaps and over time carries the risk of sustained loss of educational experience and difficulties to reintegrate and catch-up. Thus, rather than acting as a deterrent, IE could initiate a kind of self-fulfilling prophecy that promotes future misbehaviour and therefore more IE referrals.

The sub-theme 'Impact on the child in IE' highlighted that some school leaders were troubled when reflecting on the developmental outcomes of the child being referred to IE. One shared that whilst the strategy was not beneficial to the individual child, it was justified as it was "*for the greater good*". However, there is a key ethical consideration here: headteachers appear to be balancing the impact on an individual child, against what may be perceived to benefit the rest of the school. This tension perhaps fits within an educational dilemmatic framework (Norwich, 2008), where headteachers are negotiating conflicting values, making "hard choices", resulting in solutions that involve compromise and, to a certain extent, a degree of loss (Norwich, 2013). Minow (1985) frames the acknowledgement of dilemma as a hopeful position as this standpoint facilitates acting on competing tensions

whilst holding strong commitments to the children. Norwich (2008) extends this position to highlight that recognising educational dilemma can accept plural values and promote realistic but creative options and resolutions.

Interestingly, all the school leaders interviewed showed great interest in what other schools were doing regarding use of IE and some indicated a sense of dissonance towards the strategy. Since leaders are making decisions about IE without recourse to an evidence base (Rhodes et al. 2019), and experiencing repeated referral patterns, the relevance of other schools' approaches are probably of more interest.

The perceived lack of viable alternatives in the face of government, parent and staff pressure about how to respond to poor behaviour and pupil non-compliance certainly seemed to contribute to the feeling of uncertainty. As did a perception that needs-led, restorative alternatives were highly complex to operate at scale. Individualised approaches were also seen to be more cost-intensive than using IE.

School leaders' apparent dissonance towards the strategy presents an opportunity for change and provides a window for EP involvement. EPs are well placed to support schools in evaluating IE and testing the assumptions underpinning it, and to facilitate Knowledge Exchange programmes. These use existing research to support schools in creating new and viable, practice-based research (Carroll & Cameron, 2017).

6.5 The current context of Covid-19 and the use and operationalisation of IE

The current education secretary's claim that children have "lacked discipline and order" (Toynbee, 2021), suggests that government rhetoric promoted an expectation of declining pupil behaviour following the national lockdown. However, findings from this study overall did not support this presupposition. The theme 'Response to Covid-19' highlighted that while some school leaders reported a deterioration in behaviour due to more children in smaller

spaces, and some also shared that some pupils had refused to follow Covid guidelines, others reported noticeable improvements in pupil behaviour. One leader shared that analysis of in-school data showed behaviour incidents were “ridiculously low” compared to the previous year. Perceived reasons for improvements included pupils valuing school more after the experience of lockdown and that staggered starts, zoning, split breaks and lunchtimes, meant there was generally more space for students.

As Toynbee (2021) points out, there is no formal evidence to suggest pupils’ behaviour has deteriorated following the national lockdown, indeed the variable findings from the present study go some way in contradicting the assertion that it has. Sadly however, there is evidence that Covid-19 has had a profound impact on young people, exacerbating wellbeing issues, inequality, abuse and neglect (Harris & Jones, 2020; Willow, 2021). School closures have also impacted students’ sense of belonging at school (OECD, 2020).

The impact of Covid-19 on children’s mental health has implications for the use of IE given that a prominent theme emerging from the data was a concern that the strategy can negatively impact self-esteem and undermine a sense of belonging at school. EPs described that IE can promote feelings of fear and shame, highlighting that prison terminology such as seclusion and isolation has extremely punitive connotations. A report from the Centre for Mental Health (Wilton, 2020) suggests that the effects of exclusion and IE can echo relational and systemic trauma, which suggests that these concerns are valid. More widely, the report highlights that young people exposed to trauma are more likely to present with behavioural problems and indicates the possibility of negative feedback cycle where the use of IE echoes the child’s experience of trauma, which in turn only exacerbates poor behaviour.

From an international perspective, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) has produced global guidance for schools to support vulnerable students in response to Covid-19. The report highlights the need for extra services and posits

that the pandemic be seen as an opportunity to establish a more holistic approach to education that considers the social emotional needs of the most vulnerable pupils (OECD, 2020). As a member country, the UK government should perhaps heed OECD advice and make the core mission of our education system the promotion of pupil well-being, rather than discipline. Arguably, the immeasurable impact of Covid-19 and the resulting OECD recommendations raise fundamental questions about the use and operationalisation of IE: it is difficult to see where IE would support the promotion of pupil well-being, especially when it is operationalised in its most punitive form and experienced by the most vulnerable students.

6.6 Strengths and limitations of the study

This study represents an important contribution to the research literature; it is the first to develop an indication of the national prevalence of IE and the range of practices operationalising the strategy. Furthermore, the research reports for the first time on Educational Psychologists' (EPs) perspectives on the use of IE, giving valuable insights to the EP profession in the use of the strategy.

Sample sizes in the current study far exceed those utilised in the research literature: of the studies included in the systematic literature search, the majority utilised a single setting and the largest number of secondary schools represented in a single study was twelve. As such, conservative readings of the present study's results allow for cautious transferability of findings highlighting new, quantitative evidence that IE is prevalent across England.

However, several limitations in the survey data impacted the interpretation of results regarding IE prevalence. A decision was made to allow participants to withhold their school name. Given that IE is such a contentious issue, it was felt that this greater level of anonymity may encourage increased participation. This decision had several implications: it prevented the identification of multiple responses from single schools, and it precluded the

researcher from identifying if colleagues completing the EP survey were commenting on the same setting as staff survey participants. Therefore school LA, rather than participant entry, was used to provide a minimum estimate of the number of schools using IE.

There are several ways in which the present study may have been further improved. The research design did not include pupils' experiences of IE. Whilst this data has been collected and evaluated by other researchers (e.g. Gilmore, 2013), this could have supported explanations regarding the strategy's perceived limited efficacy. Future studies should explore pupil perceptions of why IE may not function as a deterrent for example. In addition, this study did not explicitly collect data exploring the characteristics of pupils referred to IE. Whilst perceptions of over-representation of SEND pupils and other vulnerable populations emerged in the interviews and survey data, quantitative data illustrating possible disproportionality continues to comprise a gap in the research literature.

Other limitations regarding the survey should also be noted; survey data represents participants' opinions and perceptions (Robson, 2016), which limits the 'objectivity' of findings. Further, a non-random sampling technique was utilised, potentially impacting the representativeness of the quantitative findings. Samples were not necessarily representative of their populations and regional skews were evident; London was substantially (over-) represented on both surveys (46% of respondents on EP survey, and 32% on the staff survey). Overall, however, the geographic reach of the sample is a possible strength; EP participants represented all English regions bar the north-east, and staff participants represented 35 (of 48) different counties across England. There is therefore a platform for *cautious* transferability of survey findings to a national level. In light of the pandemic at the time of data collection, the study's sample represents what was most feasible, practical and congruent with the researcher's capacity and helps address gaps in the literature regarding the national prevalence and practice of IE.

The qualitative phase utilised a purposive sample, selected using a sampling frame from the staff survey where participants indicated if they wished to be contacted for interview. This may have encouraged participants with particularly strong views on IE to volunteer for interview. Whilst the survey questions allowed for a “no IE” response, it was probably unlikely that schools not using IE were as likely to respond [as those who do use IE]. Therefore, the prevalence estimate reflected in the EP data may be more accurate (79%).

EP participants were not included in the qualitative phase largely due to pressures of time, but perhaps limited the level of comparison between school and EP views. Whilst pertinent data was collected via open responses in the EP survey, further research may wish to interview EPs to develop a finer-grained evaluation of their role in IE and strengthen the present study’s recommendations for EP practice.

A further limitation is that the guidance framework to support school and EP practice has not been piloted. Time constraints prevented the researcher from evaluating it in applied contexts.

Overall, there was a high level of triangulation between the survey and interview data. More broadly, the present study’s results were reflected in several other published studies, reinforcing the research’s credibility and suggesting a degree of cautious generalisability of findings to schools in general.

6.7 Implications for policy and practice

IE may represent a “battleground” of opinion (Adams, 2020), but it is a strategy that the majority of secondary schools in England seem to be using. However, no two schools are the same and IE protocols are affected by school size, location and demographic makeup (Mallet, 2016). Whilst it is important to note the value of local knowledge, that “a one size fits all approach” may not be appropriate for IE practice and policy, and the unavoidable level of

uncertainty in applying research-based knowledge to professional practice (Hammersley, 2013), findings from this study have a number of possible implications for school practice, the work of EPs and government policy.

Without wishing to over-estimate professional implications following the findings from the present study, this research has generated contextual “evidence”, relative to the strengths and limitations of the study, which arguably provide a platform to posit a number of recommendations for professional practice.

Possible recommendations arising from this research are explored below and presented in the guidance framework for schools and EPs, illustrated in Figure 9. However, it should be noted that this guidance framework has not yet been piloted. It is conceived as a tool for practitioners to promote engagement with the research findings and collaboration between professionals. It is hoped that the framework leads to reflection and challenge in relation to the use of IE, as it is within this collaborative context that school professionals are thought to gain most from their engagement with educational research (Brown, 2015).

The guidance framework is organised under the following themes: Evaluation of IE, SEN and IE, the IE environment, and School Ethos in relation to IE and behaviour. Recommendations for government policy are also considered. The EP role is conceptualised as supporting all of the recommendations in the present study’s guidance framework.

6.7.1. Recommendation 1: clear government guidance on use of IE

In consideration of the data captured in the present study, there is arguably a platform for cautious and contextual transferability of findings. For example, the high level of agreement between data captured in phase 1 and phase 2, and that these results are reflected more widely in other published papers (e.g. Power & Taylor, 2018 and the sample covers a broad

geographical reach across England and a size that far exceeds that of other published research in relation to IE.

One central finding was that IE is operationalised in varying ways, which is perhaps a reflection of discretionary practice. As such, the variability evident in this study's findings signal the need for an urgent review of government guidance to improve clarity on best practice in terms of the operationalisation of IE to support schools in their decision making about the operationalisation of IE.

6.7.2 Recommendation 2: Identify purpose, evaluate impact and introduce tighter accountability processes

Results from this study were gathered from a sample of participants that represented all English regions bar the north-east, and staff participants which represented 35 (of 48) different counties across England, far exceeding sample sizes utilised in the extant research literature relating to IE. Results indicated high rates of IE prevalence across England. This finding has a number of implications for policy and practice. Firstly, as there are such a high number of schools using IE, it is troubling that there is no evidence base underpinning the strategy and how it is employed. The lack of evaluation is more of a problem considering findings from the present study indicate that IE referral numbers are typically not decreasing. Therefore, the first recommendation arising from this research is for schools to evaluate the impact of IE appropriately.

The EEF guidance on improving behaviour in schools suggests a framework for considering the effectiveness of an approach against intended pupil outcomes (Rhodes et al. 2019). Yet, herein lies a problem: in many cases, IE appeared to not have a clearly defined purpose, or represented a range of (at times competing) aims which makes identifying desired outcomes difficult. Thus, a further recommendation is that schools clearly define the purpose

of IE and the desired outcome(s) of the strategy, this will support schools to evaluate the impact of IE more effectively.

EPs' professional training in psychological intervention and evaluation and research enquiry means they have expertise to support schools in their evaluations of IE (Hill & Turner, 2016). The theme 'Finding an alternative to IE' emerged from school leader interviews, indicating the lack of viable, scalable alternatives to IE. EPs are also able to introduce other evidenced-based strategies. For example, research suggests that successful interventions for changing behaviour involve encouraging awareness of behaviour, self-regulation and coping skills (Rhodes et al., 2019) and rely on much more than the sanction in itself (Ellis & Tod, 2018).

Brown and Zhang (2016) argue that discrepancy between teachers beliefs about evidence-informed- practice, which are largely positive, and the degree to which research evidence translates to changes in practice, is in part due to the absence of research use at school-level. Knowledge Exchange programmes, which use existing research to support schools in creating new and viable, practice-based research (Carroll & Cameron, 2017) provide an alternative to traditional research dissemination. A knowledge exchange framework could promote engagement and inetractive collaboration between school leadership teams and EPs to develop appropraite IE evaluation processes.

6.7.3 Recommendation 3: Ensure that pupils are not placed in IE due to unmet SEN needs.

Whilst the researcher did not explicitly collect quantitative data detailing the number of SEND pupils referred to IE, a perception that SEND pupils are more frequently attending IE than their peers emerged in the survey and interview data. Although this data represents participants opinions, which limits the 'objectivity' of this finding (Robson, 2016) to a certain

extent, it is still important to consider possible implications for government guidance, school policy and EP practice.

Currently, there is no statutory guidance to support schools navigating the use of IE for pupils with SEND. Given that SEND pupils are at high risk of repeated IE referrals, it is important that government attends to this gap and produces guidance in line with the SEN CoP (2015) and the advancement of equal opportunity in schools (DfE, 2014).

For schools, it is important to consider the relationship between pupil behaviour and SEND and as such ensure that pastoral and SEN teams work in collaboration. This could involve being line-managed by the same member of the senior team. Greater connectivity between pastoral and SEN teams would hopefully reduce the reactive practice of identifying SEN need through repeated IE referrals, where proactive systems for identifying unmet needs could be established. Furthermore, greater collaboration between pastoral and SEN teams may facilitate proactive EP involvement both at systemic and individual levels.

It is important for schools to review their current behaviour policy to ensure it is appropriately differentiated for pupils with SEN and that reasonable adjustments are being made. EPs are well placed to support with this process. At a systemic level, they may support schools in bridging training gaps regarding SEN and relating pedagogy to support differentiation for behaviour needs.

6.7.4 Recommendation 4: Create a shared psychological understanding of behaviour across the school.

EPs are trained to contextualise pupil behaviour and consider the social and psychological dimensions surrounding a child (Hill & Turner, 2016). Seeing as three quarters of schools represented in this study use EPs to support with behaviour, the profession seems well placed to support schools in their use of IE.

As Brown and Zhang (2016) reflect, schools are a multifaceted, contextually situated environments, accompanying a range of goals and values. This complexity may lead to some disagreement or absence in shared understanding in relation to pupil behaviour. Results from the EP survey suggested that EPs consistently communicate and implement a psychological understanding of behaviour at an individual level. Though their influence appears not to carry through to school policy regarding the use and evaluation of IE. Going forward, EPs could carve out a way in which to increase their work with IE at the systemic level. Findings from the EP survey suggest that systemic projects may include peer supervision groups for school staff and school-wide training on a psychological understanding of behaviour to promote an inclusive ethos.

6.7.5 Recommendation 5: consider the impact of Covid-19 on pupil mental health and wellbeing and make the focus of IE a holistic rehabilitative one.

The impact of Covid-19 on children's mental health has implications for the use of IE. In consideration that the survey and interview data triangulated to highlight a perception that the strategy can negatively impact self-esteem and undermine a sense of belonging at school, schools should exercise additional caution when using the strategy. In following OECD advice, schools may want to consider the social emotional needs of the most vulnerable pupils (OECD, 2020) and make the focus of IE a more holistic, rehabilitative one.

6.7.6 Recommendation 6: Review the IE environment to ensure that the pupil's surroundings support targeted developmental outcomes

Analysis of survey data which sought to identify possible relationships between the IE environment, and perceptions of the impact of the introduction of IE on pupil behaviour, indicated that the extent to which schools make IE a punitive environment may not make a

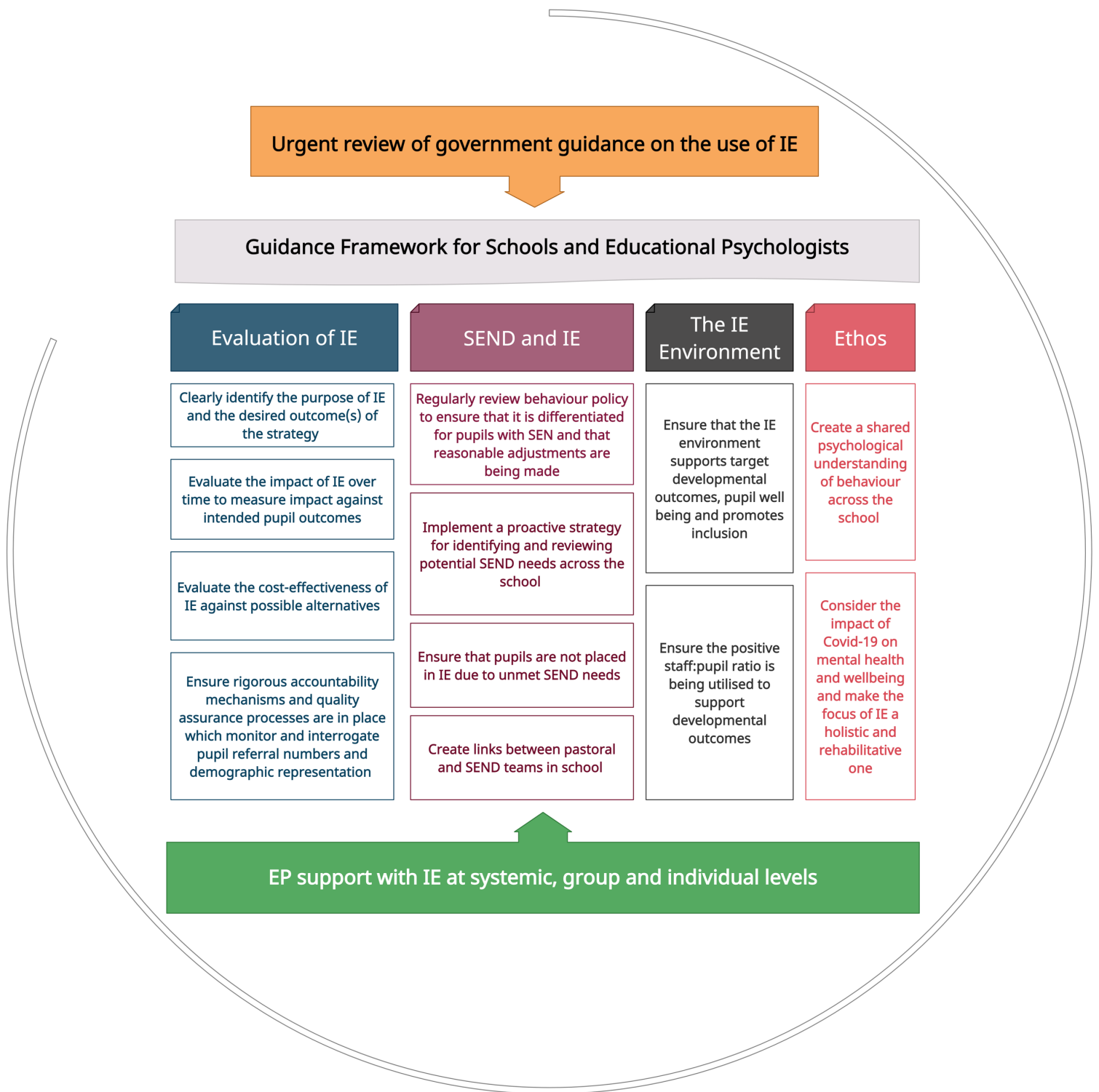
difference to perceptions of the impact of the strategy. In addition, the theme ‘Impact on the child’ highlighted concerns regarding the impact of punitive IE environments to pupils’ mental health and wellbeing. Whilst the research design of the current study did not include pupils’ experiences of IE and therefore results do not capture “lived-experience” of IE, these findings suggest that schools could carefully review their IE environment to ensure that the pupil’s surroundings support targeted developmental outcomes. Schools could consider advice from OFSTED (2006) to create positive learning environments which include displays of pupil work and are clean and bright to support the improvement of pupil behaviour. The promotion of positive peer dynamics should also be carefully considered.

More broadly, government guidance should develop current advice that time in IE should be “constructive” and “allow pupils time to eat or use the toilet” (DfE 2016b). Clearer guidance on suitable IE environments that facilitate developmental outcomes and protect the wellbeing of children is much needed to support schools in their operationalisation of IE.

6.7.7 Recommendation 7: Utilise the positive staff:pupil ratio in IE contexts

Results from this study indicated that IE spaces tend to have limited capacity, most typically 0-5 pupils are referred per day. This finding highlighted that IE provides a unique opportunity for uncommonly small class sizes which have the potential for a range of positive processes (Blatchford & Russell, 2020). Schools could ensure that the beneficial staff:pupil ratio in IE is not a wasted opportunity, but used to provide greater levels of individual pupil attention and a context to develop positive relationships.

Figure 9. *Guidance framework for schools and EPs*



6.8 Conclusion

This research investigated the prevalence, practice and perspectives of the use of IE in mainstream secondary schools. Results demonstrate that IE is prevalent across England, but is operationalised in highly variable ways. This signals the need for an urgent review of government guidance to clarify practice guidelines regarding the use of IE as an informal exclusion practice. Furthermore, there is no evidence base underpinning the use of IE which indicates a vital need for proper evaluation of its impact.

Despite these issues, it is clear from the research that most schools see a need for IE and perceive it as an important strategy. Whilst headteachers are unsure about how best to deploy the strategy, they remain concerned about the implications of removing IE. This is where EPs can play a key role: using their professional training in research enquiry to effectively evaluate IE; facilitating Knowledge Exchange programmes to create new, viable, practice-based research; and developing a psychological understanding of behaviour across school environments.

The recommendations and guidance framework arising from this study provide actions to help support the EP profession and school leaders navigate the complexities of IE in an ethical and evidence-informed way. However, there remain considerable gaps in the research literature. For example, future research could evaluate the impact of IE against clearly defined outcomes. More broadly, case studies and knowledge exchange projects would help support schools navigate IE and provide viable restorative alternatives, which can be operated at scale.

References

- Adams, R. (2016, 30 December). 'No excuses': Inside Britain's strictest school. *The Guardian*. Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2016/dec/30/no-excuses-inside-britains-strictest-school>
- Allen, K.-A., & Boyle, C. (Eds.). (2018). *Pathways to belonging: Contemporary perspectives of school belonging*. Brill Sense.
- Alreck, P. L., & Settle, R. B. (2004). *The survey research handbook* (3rd ed). McGraw-Hill/Irwin.
- American Psychological Association Zero Tolerance Task Force. (2008). Are Zero Tolerance Policies Effective in the Schools? *The American Psychologist*, *63*(9), 852-862.
- Armstrong, D. (2018). Addressing the wicked problem of behaviour in schools. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, *22*(9), 997–1013.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13603116.2017.1413732>
- Ashton, R., & Roberts, E. (2006). What is Valuable and Unique about the Educational Psychologist? *Educational Psychology in Practice*, *22*(2), 111–123.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/02667360600668204>
- Ball, S. J. (2003). The teacher's soul and the terrors of performativity. *Journal of Education Policy*, *18*(2), 215–228. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0268093022000043065>
- Barker, J., Alldred, P., Watts, M., & Dodman, H. (2010). Pupils or prisoners? Institutional geographies and internal exclusion in UK secondary schools. *Area*.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1475-4762.2009.00932.x>
- Baumann, C., & Krskova, H. (2016). School discipline, school uniforms and academic performance. *International Journal of Educational Management*, *30*(6), 1003–1029.
<https://doi.org/10.1108/IJEM-09-2015-0118>

- Baines, E., Blatchford, P. (2019) *School break and lunch times and young people's social loves: A follow-up national study*. Report to Nuffield Foundation. Retrieved 01.05.21 from: <https://mk0nuffieldfounpg9ee.kinstacdn.com/wpcontent/uploads/2019/11/Baines204240220BreaktimeSurvey20-20Main20public20report20May19-Final1.pdf>
- Bennett, T. (2017) *Creating a Culture: How school leaders can optimise behaviour*. Independent Review of Behaviour in Schools. [online] London: Crown. Retrieved 14.2.20 from: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/602487/Tom_Bennett_Independent_Review_of_Behaviour_in_Schools.pdf
- Berni, G., White, C., Edwards, A., Potter, S., Street, C., Hinds, D., Department for Education (2019) *Timpson review of school exclusion: consultation outcome: May 2019*. Accessed on 14.02.20 from: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/807862/Timpson_review.pdf
- Bertrand, C. & Bourdeau, L. (2010). Research interviews by Skype: A new data collection method. In J. Esteves (Ed.), *Proceedings from the 9th European Conference on Research Methods*. (pp 70-79). Spain: IE Business School.
- Blatchford, P. & Baines, E. (2006) *A follow up national survey of recesses in primary and secondary schools* (Report to Nuffield Foundation Ref: EDV/00399/G). Retrieved February 7, 2017 from <http://www.breaktime.org.uk>
- Blatchford, P. & Baines, E. (2010) Peer relations in school. In K. Littleton, C. Wood, & K. Staarman (Eds.). *Elsevier Handbook of Educational Psychology: New Perspectives on Learning and Teaching*. New York: Elsevier.

- Blatchford, P., & Russell, A. (2020). *Rethinking class size: The complex story of impact on teaching and learning*. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/j.ctv15d7zqz>
- Bombèr, L. M. (2007). *Inside I'm hurting: Practical strategies for supporting children with attachment difficulties in schools*. Worth.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77–101. <https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa>
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2016). (Mis)conceptualising themes, thematic analysis, and other problems with Fugard and Potts' (2015) sample-size tool for thematic analysis. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 19(6), 739–743. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13645579.2016.1195588>
- Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979). *The ecology of human development: Experiments by nature and design*. Harvard University Press.
- Bronfenbrenner, U., & Morris, P. A. (1998). The ecology of developmental processes. In *Handbook of child psychology: Theoretical models of human development, Volume 1, 5th ed* (pp. 993–1028). John Wiley & Sons Inc.
- Brown, C. (Ed.). (2015). *Leading the use of research and evidence in schools*. Institute of Education Press.
- Brown, C., & Zhang, D. (2016). Is engaging in evidence-informed practice in education rational? What accounts for discrepancies in teachers' attitudes towards evidence use and actual instances of evidence use in schools? *British Educational Research Journal*, 42(5), 780–801. <https://doi.org/10.1002/berj.3239>
- Bryman, A. (2006). Integrating quantitative and qualitative research: How is it done? *Qualitative Research*, 6(1), 97–113. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1468794106058877>

- Buck, D. (2015). Reconstructing educational psychology reports: an historic opportunity to change educational psychologists' advice? *Educational Psychology in Practice*, 31 (3), p. 221 – 234.
- Burnes, B. (2004). Kurt Lewin and the Planned Approach to Change: A Re-appraisal. *Journal of Management Studies*, 41(6), 977–1002. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-6486.2004.00463.x>
- Carroll, C., & Cameron, C. (2017). *Taking action for looked after children in school: A knowledge exchange programme*. UCL IOE Press.
- Castro, F. G., Kellison, J. G., Boyd, S. J., & Kopak, A. (2010). A Methodology for Conducting Integrative Mixed Methods Research and Data Analyses. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, 4(4), 342–360. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1558689810382916>
- Carlile, A. (2011). Docile bodies or contested space? Working under the shadow of permanent exclusion. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 15(3), 303–316. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13603110902829663>
- Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2007). *Research methods in education* (6th ed). Routledge.
- Corcoran, Tim. (2013). Discourses on behaviour: A role for restorative justice? *International Journal on School Disaffection*, 10(2), 45-61.
- Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (4th ed). SAGE Publications.
- Davidson, A. (1990). *Blazer, badges and boaters: A pictorial history of school uniform*. Scope Books.
- Department for Children Schools and Families, (2010). Internal exclusion guidance. <https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/712/1/DCSF-00055-2010.pdf>

Department for Education, (2014). The Equality Act 2010 and schools Departmental advice for school leaders, school staff, governing bodies and local authorities May 2014

Department for Education and Department of Health. (2015). *Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years*.

Department for Education (2016a). Press Release. Just one day off can hamper children's life chances. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/just-one-day-off-can-hamper-childrens-life-chances>

Department for Education (2016b). Behaviour and Discipline in Schools. Advice for headteachers and school staff.
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/488034/Behaviour_and_Discipline_in_Schools_-_A_guide_for_headteachers_and_School_Staff.pdf

Department for Education (2016c). Absence and exclusions. Additional analysis for pupils with special educational needs (SEN).
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sen-absences-and-exclusions-additional-analysis>

Department for Education (2017). Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England. Statutory guidance for those with legal responsibilities in relation to exclusion. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-exclusion>

Department for Education (2018). Special educational needs in England: January 2018.
<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/special-educational-needs-in-england-january-2018>

Department for Education (2018). Mental health and behaviour in schools.
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/755135/Mental_health_and_behaviour_in_schools_.pdf

- Department for Education (2019). National statistics. School workforce in England November 2018. <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/school-workforce-in-england-november-2018>
- Department for Education (2019). Permanent and fixed period exclusions in England: 2017 to 2018. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/820773/Permanent_and_fixed_period_exclusions_2017_to_2018_-_main_text.pdf
- Department for Education (2020). Guidance. Behaviour Hubs. <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/behaviour-hubs>
- Department for Education. (2021a). Checklist for school leaders to support full opening: behaviour and attendance
- Department for Education. (2021b). Press release. Behaviour experts to support schools with poor discipline. Retrieved 20.04.21 from: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/behaviour-experts-to-support-schools-with-poor-discipline>
- Department for Education. (2021c). *Permanent and fixed-period exclusions*. <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/permanent-and-fixed-period-exclusions-in-england>
- Department for Education. (2021d). *Schools, pupils and their characteristics*. <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/announcements/schools-pupils-and-their-characteristics-january-2021>
- Dimitrellou, E., & Hurry, J. (2018). School belonging among young adolescents with SEMH and MLD: The link with their social relations and school inclusivity. *European*

Journal of Special Needs Education, 1–15.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/08856257.2018.1501965>

- Eccles, J. S., & Roeser, R. W. (2011). Schools as Developmental Contexts During Adolescence: SCHOOLS AS DEVELOPMENTAL CONTEXTS. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, 21(1), 225–241. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1532-7795.2010.00725.x>
- Education Committee, Fifth Report of Session 2017–19, *Forgotten Children: alternative provision and the scandal of ever-increasing exclusions*, HC 342, paras 29–31
- Farouk, S. (2004). Group Work in Schools: A process consultation approach. *Educational Psychology in Practice*, 20(3), 207–220.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/0266736042000251790>
- Ferguson, L. (2019). Children at Risk of School Dropout. In J. G. Dwyer (Ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Children and the Law*. Oxford University Press.
<https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780190694395.013.29>
- Fripps, L., E. (2011). Challenging behaviour and inclusion in a secondary school: Perceptions, policies and practices. EdD thesis. The Open University.
- Galton, M. J., & MacBeath, J. E. C. (2008). *Teachers under pressure*. Paul Chapman.
- Garland, L., Linehan, T., Merrett, N., Smith, J., & Payne, C. (2019). *Ten Steps Towards School Staff Wellbeing*. Anna Freud National Centre for Children and Families.
<https://www.annafreud.org/what-we-do/schools-in-mind/resources-for-schools/ten-steps-towards-school-staff-wellbeing/>
- Gazeley, L., Marrable, T., Brown, C., & Boddy, J. (2015). Contextualising Inequalities in Rates of School Exclusion in English Schools: Beneath the ‘Tip of the Ice-Berg’. *British Journal of Educational Studies*, 63(4), 487–504.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/00071005.2015.1070790>

- Gillies, V. (2012). 'Inclusion' Through Exclusion: A Critical Account of New Behaviour Management Practices in Schools. In Taylor, Y (Ed.), *Educational Diversity* (pp 17-35). Palgrave Macmillan UK. <https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137271129>
- Gillies, V. (2016). *Pushed to the edge: Inclusion and behaviour support in schools*. Policy Press.
- Gillies, V., & Robinson, Y. (2012). 'Including' while excluding: Race, class and behaviour support units. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 15(2), 157–174. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13613324.2011.578126>
- Gilmore, G. (2012). What's so inclusive about an inclusion room? Staff perspectives on student participation, diversity and equality in an English secondary school. *British Journal of Special Education*, 39(1), 39–48. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8578.2012.00534.x>
- Gilmore, G. (2013). 'What's a fixed-term exclusion, Miss?' Students' perspectives on a disciplinary inclusion room in England: 'What's a fixed-term exclusion, Miss?' Students' perspectives on a disciplinary inclusion room in England. *British Journal of Special Education*, 40(3), 106–113. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8578.12029>
- Goldstein, S. E., Davis-Kean, P. E., Eccles, J. S. (2005). Parents, Peers and Problem Behaviour: A Longitudinal Investigation of the Impact of Relationship Perceptions and Characteristics on the Development of Adolescent Problem Behaviour. *Developmental Psychology* 41 (2), 401-413.
- Grace, G. (1995). *School Leadership – Beyond Education Management*. London: Falmer
- Graham, B., White, C., & Potter, S. (2019). *School exclusion: A literature review on the continued disproportionate exclusion of certain children*. 117.

- Hall, B., & Howard, K. (2008). A Synergistic Approach: Conducting Mixed Methods Research With Typological and Systemic Design Considerations. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, 2(3), 248–269. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1558689808314622>
- Hallam, S., Castle, F., Rogers, L. (2005). *Research and evaluation of the behaviour improvement programme*. Department for Education and Skills, London, UK.
- Harold, V. L., & Corcoran, T. (2013). Discourses on behaviour: A role for restorative justice? *International Journal on School Disaffection*, 10(2), 45–61.
<https://doi.org/10.18546/IJSD.10.2.03>
- Hammersley, M. (2013). *The Myth of Research-Based Policy & Practice*. SAGE Publications Ltd. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781473957626>
- Hammersley, M. (2013). *What is qualitative research?* Bloomsbury.
<http://www.bloomsburyacademic.com/view/What-Is-Qualitative-Research/book-ba-9781849666084.xml>
- Hammersley-Fletcher, L. (2015). Value(s)-driven decision-making: The ethics work of English headteachers within discourses of constraint. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, 43(2), 198–213.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1741143213494887>
- Harris, A., & Jones, M. (2020). COVID 19 – school leadership in disruptive times. *School Leadership & Management*, 40(4), 243–247.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13632434.2020.1811479>
- Hart, R. (2010). Classroom behaviour management: Educational psychologists' views on effective practice. *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties*, 15(4), 353–371.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13632752.2010.523257>

- Hill, V., & Turner, H. (2016). *Educational psychologists' perspectives on the medicalisation of childhood behaviour: A focus on Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder (ADHD)*. *33*(2), 19.
- House of Commons Education Committee Special educational needs and disabilities First Report of Session 2019 Report, together with formal minutes relating to the report Ordered by the House of Commons to be printed 16 October 2019
- Ivankova, N. V., Creswell, J. W., & Stick, S. L. (2006). Using Mixed-Methods Sequential Explanatory Design: From Theory to Practice. *Field Methods*, *18*(1), 3–20.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1525822X05282260>
- Jang, E. E., McDougall, D. E., Pollon, D., Herbert, M., & Russell, P. (2008). Integrative Mixed Methods Data Analytic Strategies in Research on School Success in Challenging Circumstances. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, *2*(3), 221–247.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1558689808315323>
- Jesson, J., Matheson, L., & Lacey, F. M. (2011). *Doing your literature review: Traditional and systematic techniques*. SAGE.
- Johnson, R. B., & Onwuegbuzie, A. J. (2004). Mixed Methods Research: A Research Paradigm Whose Time Has Come. *Educational Researcher*, *33*(7), 14–26.
<https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X033007014>
- Johnson, R. B., Onwuegbuzie, A. J., & Turner, L. A. (2007). Toward a Definition of Mixed Methods Research. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, *1*(2), 112–133.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1558689806298224>
- Krouwel, M., Jolly, K., & Greenfield, S. (2019). Comparing Skype (video calling) and in-person qualitative interview modes in a study of people with irritable bowel syndrome – an exploratory comparative analysis. *BMC Medical Research Methodology*, *19*(1).
<https://doi.org/10.1186/s12874-019-0867-9>

- Lee, K. and Woods, K. (2017). Exploration of the developing role of the educational psychologist within the context of “traded” psychology services. *Educational Psychology in Practice*, 33 (2), p. 111-125.
- Lightfoot, L (2020, Jan 14). When school is an isolation cubicle with three toilet breaks a day. *The Guardian*. Accessed on 18.01.21
<https://www.theguardian.com/education/2020/jan/14/school-isolation-cubicle-three-toilet-breaks-a-day>
- Lyonette, C., Atfield, G., Baldauf, B., and Owen, D. (2019). *Research on the Educational Psychologist Workforce*. Research Report. The Institute for Employment Research, University of Warwick (London).
- Onwuegbuzie, Anthony J, & Collins, Kathleen M.T. (2007). A typology of mixed methods sampling designs in social science research. *Qualitative Report*, 12(2), 281
- MacKay, T. A. W. N., & Boyle, J. M. (1994). Meeting the needs of pupils with learning difficulties. What do primary and secondary schools expect of their educational psychologists? *Educational Research*, 36(2), 187–196.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/0013188940360207>
- Mallett, C. A. (2016). The School-to-Prison Pipeline: A Critical Review of the Punitive Paradigm Shift. *Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal*, 33(1), 15–24.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10560-015-0397-1>
- McBeath, J., & National Union of Teachers. (2006). *The costs of inclusion: A study of inclusion policy and practice in English primary, secondary and special schools*. Univ., Faculty of Education.
http://www.educ.cam.ac.uk/people/staff/galton/Costs_of_Inclusion_Final.pdf

- McKeon, M. (2001). Promoting the inclusion of students at risk of exclusion: An evaluative case study. *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties*, 6(4), 236–250.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13632750100507671>
- Minow, M. (1985). Learning to Live with the Dilemma of Difference: Bilingual and Special Education. *Law and Contemporary Problems*, 48(2), 157.
<https://doi.org/10.2307/1191571>
- Morgan, D. L. (2007). Paradigms Lost and Pragmatism Regained: Methodological Implications of Combining Qualitative and Quantitative Methods. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, 1(1), 48–76. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2345678906292462>
- Munn, P., Cullen, M. A., Lloyd, G., & Recorded Books, I. (2015). *Alternatives to exclusion from school*. SAGE Publications Ltd. <https://rbdigital.rbdigital.com>
- Nash, P., Schlösser, A., & Scarr, T. (2016). Teachers' perceptions of disruptive behaviour in schools: A psychological perspective. *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties*, 21(2), 167–180. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13632752.2015.1054670>
- Nese, R. N. T., & McIntosh, K. (2016). Do School-Wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports, Not Exclusionary Discipline Practices. In B. G. Cook, M. Tankersley, & T. J. Landrum (Eds.), *Advances in Learning and Behavioral Disabilities* (Vol. 29, pp. 175–196). Emerald Group Publishing Limited. <https://doi.org/10.1108/S0735-004X20160000029009>
- Norwich, B. (2008). *Dilemmas of difference, inclusion and disability international perspectives and future directions*. Routledge.
- Norwich, B. (2013). *Addressing tensions and dilemmas in inclusive education: Living with uncertainty*. Routledge.

- OECD (2020). “*The impact of COVID-19 on student equity and inclusion: supporting vulnerable students during school closures and school re-openings*” Tackling Coronavirus (Covid-19): Contributing to a Global Effort, OECD.
- Ofsted. 2006. *Improving behaviour: Lessons learned from HMI monitoring of secondary schools where behaviour had been judged unsatisfactory*. London: Ofsted
- Orsati, F. T., & Causton-Theoharis, J. (2013). Challenging control: Inclusive teachers’ and teaching assistants’ discourse on students with challenging behaviour. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 17(5), 507–525.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13603116.2012.689016>
- Osborne, C., & Burton, S. (2014). Emotional Literacy Support Assistants’ views on supervision provided by educational psychologists: What EPs can learn from group supervision. *Educational Psychology in Practice*, 30(2), 139–155.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/02667363.2014.899202>
- PISA 2018 Results (Volume III) (PISA). (2019). Paris: OECD Publishing.
- Pirrie, A., Macleod, G., Cullen, M. A., & McCluskey, G. (2011). What happens to pupils permanently excluded from special schools and pupil referral units in England? *British Educational Research Journal*, 37(3), 519–538.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/01411926.2010.481724>
- Power, S., & Taylor, C. (2018). Not in the classroom, but still on the register: Hidden forms of school exclusion. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 1–15.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13603116.2018.1492644>
- Punch, K. (2003). *Survey Research*. SAGE Publications Ltd.
<https://doi.org/10.4135/9781849209984>

- Qualitative Online Interviews: Strategies, Design, and Skills. (2015). *Qualitative Research in Organizations and Management: An International Journal*, 10(2), 201–202.
<https://doi.org/10.1108/QROM-10-2014-1252>
- Reader, J. (2015, 16 July). The secrets of Magna Academy's transformation from special measures to outstanding? Students who walk silently between lessons. Retrieved from http://www.eveningtimes.co.uk/news/13422769.The_secrets_of_Magna_Academy_s_transformation__Students_who_walk_silently_between_lessons/
- Reid, H. L., & Westergaard, J. (2013). *Effective supervision for counsellors: An introduction*. Learning Matters.
- Robson, C., & McCartan, K. (2016). *Real world research: A resource for users of social research methods in applied settings* (Fourth Edition). Wiley.
- Rogers, C. R., & Dorfman, E. (1973). *Client-centered therapy: Its current practice, implications, and theory* (Repr). Constable.
- Rhodes, Igraine, & Long, Michelle. (2019). *Improving Behaviour in Schools : Guidance Report*. Accessed on 27.04.2:
https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/public/files/Publications/Behaviour/EEF_Improving_behaviour_in_schools_Report.pdf
https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/public/files/Publications/Behaviour/EEF_Improving_behaviour_in_schools_Report.pdf
- Sale, J. E. M., Lohfeld, L. H., & Brazil, K. (2002). Revisiting the Quantitative-Qualitative Debate: Implications for Mixed-Methods Research. *Quality and Quantity*, 36(1), 43–53. <https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1014301607592>
- Sanders, J., Munford, R., & Thimasarn-Anwar, T. (2016). Staying on-track despite the odds: Factors that assist young people facing adversity to continue with their education.

British Educational Research Journal, 42(1), 56–73.

<https://doi.org/10.1002/berj.3202>

Schon, D. A. (2008). *The Reflective Practitioner: How Professionals Think In Action*. Basic Books.

Sellgren, K (2020, Jan 9). Putting pupils in isolation 'drives poor behaviour'. *BBC News*.

Accessed on 18.01.21. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-51034121>

Skinner, B. F. (1965). *Science and human behavior*.

Skipp, A., & Hopwood, D. V. (2017). *Case studies of behaviour management practices in schools rated Outstanding*. [online]. Department for Education. Accessed on 14.02.20 from:https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/602506/Behaviour_Management_Case_Studies_Report.pdf

Stanforth, A., & Rose, J. (2018). 'You kind of don't want them in the room': Tensions in the discourse of inclusion and exclusion for students displaying challenging behaviour in an English secondary school. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 1–15.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/13603116.2018.1516821>

Staufenberg, J. (2018). Isolation rooms: How swathes of schools are removing pupils from their classrooms. *Schools Week 19.10.18*. Accessed on 17.04.21.

<https://schoolsweek.co.uk/isolation-rooms-how-schools-are-removing-pupils-from-classrooms/#:~:text=Isolation%20rooms%3A%20How%20swathes%20of%20schools%20are%20removing%20pupils%20from%20their%20classrooms&text=Primary%20schools%20are%20using%20isolation,five%20days%20in%20a%20row.>

Staufenberg, J., (2019) DfE faces legal action over 'confusing' guidance on isolation booths.

Schools Week 03.04.19. Accessed on 17.04.21. <https://schoolsweek.co.uk/df-e-faces-legal-action-over-confusing-guidance-on-isolation-booths/>

- Steinberg, M., & Lacoë, J. (2017). What Do We Know About School Discipline Reform?
Education Next, 17 (1), 1-8.
- Sterling Turner, Heather, & Watson, T. Steuart. (1999). Consultant's guide for the use of
time-out in the preschool and elementary classroom. *Psychology in the Schools*, 36(2),
135-148
- Teddle, C., & Yu, F. (2007). Mixed Methods Sampling: A Typology With Examples.
Journal of Mixed Methods Research, 1(1), 77–100.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1558689806292430>
- Thomson, P. P. (2018). *Investigative research into alternative provision*. 191.
- Timpson, E., Great Britain, & Department for Education. (2019). *Timpson review of school
exclusion*.
- Toynbee, P., (2021). While Williamson calls for discipline, our children’s hopes crumble
around them. *The Guardian* 08.04.21. Accessed on 19.04.21.
[https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2021/apr/08/gavin-williamson-
education-secretary-behaviour-hubs-children-schools](https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2021/apr/08/gavin-williamson-education-secretary-behaviour-hubs-children-schools)
- Tudge, J. R. H., Mokrova, I., Hatfield, B. E., & Karnik, R. B. (2009). Uses and Misuses of
Bronfenbrenner’s Bioecological Theory of Human Development. *Journal of Family
Theory & Review*, 1(4), 198–210. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1756-2589.2009.00026.x>
- UN General Assembly, *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, 20 November 1989, United
Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 1577, p. 3
- Valdebenito, S., Eisner, M., Farrington, D. P., Ttofi, M. M., & Sutherland, A. (2019). What
can we do to reduce disciplinary school exclusion? A systematic review and meta-
analysis. *Journal of Experimental Criminology*, 15(3), 253–287.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s11292-018-09351-0>

- Vegas, K. C., Jenson, W. R., & Kircher, J. C. (2007). A Single-Subject Meta-Analysis of the Effectiveness of Time-Out in Reducing Disruptive Classroom Behavior. *Behavioral Disorders, 32*(2), 109–121. <https://doi.org/10.1177/019874290703200204>
- Wagner, P., & Kensington & Chelsea Education Psychology Service. (1995). *School consultation : Frameworks for the practising educational psychologist, a handbook*. London: Kensington & Chelsea Education Psychology Service.
- Wagner, P. (2000). Consultation: Developing a comprehensive approach to service delivery. *Educational Psychology in Practice, 16*(1), 9–18. <https://doi.org/10.1080/026673600115229>
- Webster, R. (Ed.). (2019). *Including children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities in learning and life: How far have we come since the Warnock enquiry-- and where do we go next?* Routledge
- Webster, R., & Blatchford, P. (2019). Making sense of ‘teaching’, ‘support’ and ‘differentiation’: The educational experiences of pupils with Education, Health and Care Plans and Statements in mainstream secondary schools. *European Journal of Special Needs Education, 34*(1), 98–113. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08856257.2018.1458474>
- Wenham, L. (2019). *Misunderstood, Misinterpreted and Mismatched: Voices of Students Marginalised In A Secondary School*. Doctoral dissertation, London, Institute of Education, University of London.
- Wentzel, R. (2009). Peers and academic functioning at school. In K. H Rubin, W. M. Bukowski & B. Laursen (Eds.). *Handbook of Peer Interactions, Relationships and Groups* (pp. 531-547). New York: Guilford Press.

- Wilding, L., & Griffey, S. (2015). The strength-based approach to educational psychology practice: a critique from social constructionist and systemic perspectives. *Educational Psychology in Practice, 31*(1), 43–55. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02667363.2014.981631>
- Williamson, G. (2021) There is nothing Dickensian about a well ordered, disciplined classroom. *The Telegraph* 06.04.21. Accessed on 10.04.21 at <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/education/2021/04/06/nothing-dickensian-classroom-well-ordered-disciplined-environment/>
- Willow, C., (2021). After a year of Covid, a behaviour crackdown is an insult to England’s children. *The Guardian* 09.04.21. Accessed on 19.04.21 at: <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2021/apr/09/covid-behaviour-england-children-schools>
- Wilton, J. (2020). Briefing 54: Trauma, challenging behaviour and restrictive interventions in schools. Centre for Mental Health [Online]. Available at https://www.centreformentalhealth.org.uk/sites/default/files/2020-01/Briefing_54_traumainformed%20schools_0.pdf [accessed 12.04.21]
- Xia, M., Li, X., & Tudge, J. R. H. (2020). Operationalizing Urie Bronfenbrenner’s Process-Person-Context-Time Model. *Human Development, 64*(1), 10–20. <https://doi.org/10.1159/000507958>
- Xiao, Yu, & Watson, Maria. (2019). Guidance on Conducting a Systematic Literature Review. *Journal of Planning Education and Research, 39*(1), 93-112.
- Yin, R. K. (2018). *Case study research and applications: Design and methods* (Sixth edition). SAGE.
- Zimmer-Gembeck, M. J., Chipuer, H. M., Hanisch, M., Creed, P. A., & McGregor, L. (2006). Relationships at school and stage-environment fit as resources for adolescent

engagement and achievement. *Journal of Adolescence*, 29(6), 911–933.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.adolescence.2006.04.008>

Appendix A: Systematic literature search

A1. Systematic search results: search question 1

A2. Systematic search results: search question 2

A3. Relevance questions developed to review abstracts of papers identified in the systematic literature search

A4. Table 20 : Overview of final policy documents included in the systematic search

Appendix A1: Systematic search results: search question 1

Table 18. *Systematic Search Results: Search Question 1*

Search Question 1: What current literature exists on the prevalence, practice and perspectives on the use of disciplinary internal exclusion rooms?					
Database	Search Terms	Exclusions	Refined Terms to include only	Review of titles and abstracts	Final Number for screening
	Search 1: 14.4.20				
	OR				
Web of Science	“internal exclusion” “internal exclusion room” “sin bin” “seclusion room” “inclusion room” “isolation booth” “exclusion room” “time out” “consequence booth” “behaviour support unit” “inclusion unit” (2820)	Papers published before 2000	Developmental Psychology (60) Educational. Education Research (51) Psychology (48) Psych. Educational (20) Educational special (36) (200)	Excluded papers that scored <1 in relevance criteria	11
Web of Science	Search 2: 14.4.20 “exclusion unit” OR “exclusion units” (27)	Papers published before 2000	Developmental Psychology (1) Educational. Education Research (2) Ecology (1) Social work (2) Development studies (1) Sociology (1)	Excluded papers that scored <1 in relevance criteria	4
Web of Science	Search 3: 14.4.20 “inclusion rooms” “behaviour support” “calm room” “calm rooms” “reflection room” “Reflection rooms” (246)	Papers published before 2000	Educational special (98) Psychology. Education (13) Developmental Psychology (5) Psychology. Multidisciplinary (6) Psychology (2) Educational. Education Research (31) Social work (1) Sociology (1) (152)	Excluded papers that scored <1 in relevance criteria	31
British Education Index	Search 4: 16.4.20 “internal exclusion” “Internal exclusion room” “sin bin” “seclusion room” “Inclusion room” “isolation room” “isolation booth” “exclusion room” “time out” “Consequence booth” “behaviour support unit” “inclusion unit” “exclusion unit” “calm room” “reflection room” (173)	Papers published before 2000	Education (18) Schools (2) Secondary Education (41)	Excluded papers that scored <1 in relevance criteria Excluded duplications	16
Google Scholar	Search 5: 16.4.20 “Internal exclusion” AND “Secondary schools” (308)	Papers published before 2000	308 papers searched	Excluded papers that scored <1 in relevance criteria Excluded duplications	67

Appendix A.2: Table 18 systematic search results for search question 2

Table 19. Systematic Search Results: Search question 2

Search Question 2: What current grey policy literature exists relating the prevalence, practice and perspectives in the use of disciplinary internal exclusion rooms?

Database	Search Terms	Exclusions	Refined Terms to include only	Review of titles	Final Number
DERA Digital Education Resource Archive.	Search 6: 17.4.20 ‘Exclusion’ in DfE (1209)	Papers published before 2016	463 papers searched	Excluded papers that scored <1 in relevance criteria* Excluded duplications from previous search	19

*Note. *Relevance criteria can be found in Appendix A.3*

Appendix A.3: Relevance Questions

Figure 10. *Relevance questions developed to review abstracts of papers identified in the systematic literature search*

Relevance questions	
1	Is there relevant information relating to the prevalence of the use of IE?
2	Is there relevant information relating to population groups attending IE?
3	Is there relevant information relating to frequency of pupils attending IE?
4	Is there relevant information relating to pupils and staff perspectives about the use and efficacy of IE?
5	Is there relevant information relating to the practice of IE?
6	Is there relevant information relating to the IE environment ?
7	Does the paper include relevant information regarding alternative behaviour management strategies in secondary schools?
8	Does the paper include relevant information regarding the role of EPs in relation to IE?

Appendix A4: Overview of the final policy documents included in the systematic search

Table 20. Overview of the final policy documents included in the systematic search

<u>Title</u>	<u>Text Type</u>	<u>Method</u>	<u>Context</u>	<u>Data collection methods</u>	<u>R * Score</u>	<u>Strengths/ Limitations</u>
Bennett, T. (2017) <i>Creating a Culture: How school leaders can optimise behaviour</i> . Independent Review of Behaviour in Schools. [online] London: Crown.	Review	Review	Unclear. Possible Primary and secondary	Interviews Focus groups Case studies (n=20)	3.	Unclear methodology. No clarity about number of schools involved or interview numbers.
Skipp, A., & Hopwood, D. V. (2017). <i>Case studies of behaviour management practices in schools rated Outstanding</i>	Research Report	Qualitative	Primary and secondary	Telephone interviews (n=20)	5.	Small scale Lack of triangulation – only outstanding schools included in the sample.
Berni, G., White, C., Edwards, A., Potter, S., Street, C., Hinds, D., Department for Education (2019) <i>Timpson review of school exclusion: consultation outcome: May 2019</i> .	Command Paper	Literature Review	Primary secondary AP	A call for evidence =1000 responses, school visits (n=100), consultations, round table discussions, independent research to gather views	2.	Extensive evidence base. Detailed methodology section
Mills, M., Thomson, P., Department for Education (2018). <i>Investigative research into alternative provision</i> .	Research Report	Qualitative	Primary secondary AP	Rapid evidence assessment Telephone interviews (n=476) 25 case studies – interviews staff/ parents and pupils	5.	Extensive evidence base. Detailed methodology section

Appendix B: Staff survey questions

School Staff: The prevalence, perspectives, and practice of internal exclusion in Secondary schools

What is an Internal Exclusion (IE) strategy?

Internal Exclusion (IE) refers to a disciplinary strategy where a pupil is removed from their typical place of instruction for a period of time in response to unwanted behaviour. Pupils are placed in a different area/ room away from other pupils. This strategy can be referred to using a range of terms such as: seclusion, isolation, internal exclusion. This questionnaire does not use the term IE in relation to units, bases or rooms with a broader remit to support pupils with SEN, where staff may be fulltime and have a reparative role to address pupil vulnerabilities and needs (e.g. nurture bases) and where pupils attend as part of their normal timetabled provision.

Q1 What is/are your role/s in school?

Q2 In which Local Authority is your school?

Q3 Please provide the name of your school (optional).

Q4 Is internal exclusion (IE) *currently* used as a strategy in the school you work in?

- Yes (4)
- No (5)

Skip To: If Is internal exclusion (IE) currently used as a strategy in the school you work in? = No

Q5 Please estimate approximately how many pupils attend IE per day.

- 0-5 (1)
- 6-10 (2)
- 11-15 (3)
- 16-20 (4)
- 20-30 (5)
- 30+ (6)
- Don't know (7)

Q6 In your opinion, is the number of pupils referred each day... :

- Increasing (1)
- Remaining consistent (2)
- Decreasing (3)
- Don't know (4)

Q7 In your experience, has there been any changes to pupil behaviour since the introduction of IE?

- Improved (1)
- Not changed (2)
- Declined (3)
- Don't know (4)

Q8 Typically, how long do pupils spend in IE?

- less than 1/2 day (1)
- 1/2 day (2)
- 1 day (3)
- 2 days (4)
- 3 days (5)
- 4 or more days (6)
- Don't know (8)

Q9 In your experience, what are the main reasons that pupils are referred to IE?

- Incorrect uniform (1)
- Lateness (7)
- Inappropriate language (2)
- Refusal to follow instructions (3)
- Disruption of learning (4)
- Failure to complete detention or other sanction (12)
- Vandalism (5)
- Truancy (6)
- Verbal abuse (8)
- Physical aggression (9)
- Other. Please state. (10) _____

Q10 What is the predominant form of supervision in IE?

- Pupils self-supervise (1)
- A qualified teacher (2)
- A Teaching Assistant (3)
- Support Staff (4)
- Senior leader (5)
- Other. Please state (9) _____

Q11 To what extent are pupils permitted to talk with their peers while working in the IE?

- They are not permitted to talk - there must be silence (1)
- They are allowed to talk - though this must be quietly (2)
- They are permitted to talk as and when they like (3)
- Other. Please state. (4) _____

Q12 What do you see as the **main** benefits of using an IE strategy?

Q13 Do you feel there are any challenges in using an IE strategy?

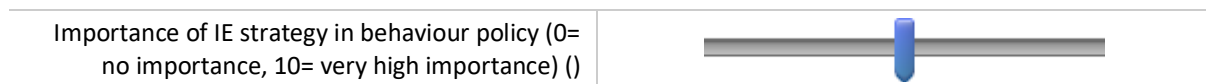
- Yes (4)
- No (5)

Skip To: If Do you feel there are any challenges in using an IE strategy? = No

Q14 If yes, please briefly describe the challenges to using IE in the secondary school you work in.

Q15 As you perceive it, please rate the overall importance of the IE strategy in your school's behaviour policy.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10



Q16 In a typical week, how frequently would you make use of the IE strategy?

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30



Q17 What *other* strategies does your school use to support pupil behaviour?

- Behaviour mentors / key workers (3)
- Educational Psychology services (4)
- School Counsellor (6)
- School police officer (7)
- Emotional Literacy Support Assistants ELSA's (1)
- Inclusion/ pupil support panels (12)
- Targeted interventions to support emotion regulation (8)
- Alternative curriculum pathways (9)
- Behaviour/learning support unit (2)
- Parental support programs (11)
- Restorative Justice Approaches (5)
- Extra curricula activities (10)
- Other (please state) (14) _____

Q18 Was internal exclusion (IE) used as a strategy in the school you work in pre Covid-19?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

Skip To: If Was internal exclusion (IE) used as a strategy in the school you work in pre Covid-19? = No

Q19 Have there been any changes in the use of the IE strategy pre/post Covid 19?

Q20 Thank you for completing this survey, your response is much appreciated.

Please indicate here if you are happy to be contacted for a short interview and/or you would like to receive a copy of the research briefing associated with this research.

- Yes, I would like to participate in an interview. My email address is: (1) _____
- Yes, I would like to receive a copy of the final research report. My email address is: (please enter contact details, if not provided above). (3) _____
- No thank you (2)

Appendix C: EP survey questions

EPs: The prevalence, perspectives, and practice of internal exclusion in Secondary schools.

What is an Internal Exclusion (IE) strategy?

Internal Exclusion (IE) refers to a disciplinary strategy where a pupil is removed from their typical place of instruction for a period of time in response to unwanted behaviour. Pupils are placed in a different area/room away from other pupils. This strategy can be referred to using a range of terms such as: seclusion, isolation, internal exclusion. This questionnaire does not use the term IE in relation to units, bases or rooms with a broader remit to support pupils with SEN, where staff may be fulltime and have a reparative role to address pupil vulnerabilities and needs (e.g. nurture bases) and where pupils attend as part of their normal timetabled provision.

Q1 What is your current EP role?

Main Grade EP (4)

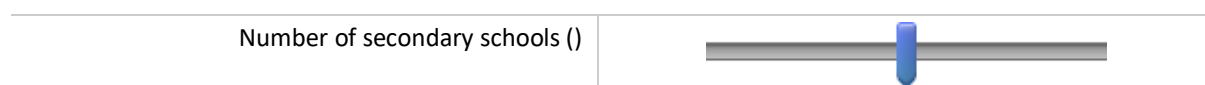
- Trainee EP (5)
- Senior EP (6)
- Deputy Principal EP (7)
- Principal EP (8)
- Specialist EP (9)
- Other (10) _____

Q2 Which of the following geographical locations do you **mainly** work in (please only tick one)?

- North East England (8)
- North West England (9)
- Yorkshire and the Humber (10)
- East Midlands (11)
- West Midlands (12)
- East of England (13)
- London (14)
- South East (15)
- South West (16)
- Northern Ireland (6)
- Scotland (4)
- Wales (5)
- Ireland (7)
- Other (17) _____

Q3 How many **secondary schools** are you working with currently?

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30



Q4 How many of these schools use an IE strategy?

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30



Q5 In your experience, where schools have introduced IE, has there been any changes to pupil behaviour?

- Improved (1)
- Not changed (2)
- Declined (3)
- Not sure (4)
- N/A (5)

Q6 In your experience, what are the **main** reasons that pupils are referred to IE?

Q7 What do you perceive as the **main** value of using an IE strategy?

Q8 Do you feel there are challenges to using an IE strategy in the schools you work with?

- Yes (4)
- No (5)

Skip To: If Do you feel there are challenges to using an IE strategy in the schools you work with? = No

Q9 If yes, please briefly describe the main challenges

Q10 What *other* strategies do schools use to support pupil behaviour? (Please tick as appropriate)

- Behaviour mentors / key workers (3)
- School Counsellor (5)
- School police officer (6)
- Behaviour/learning support unit (2)
- Targeted interventions to support emotion regulation (7)
- Emotional Literacy Support Assistants ELSA's (1)
- Support from outside agencies and behaviour specialists (13)
- Inclusion panels (11)
- Alternative curriculum pathways (8)
- Restorative Justice Approaches (4)
- Parental support programs (10)
- Extra-curricular activities (9)
- Other (please state) (14) _____

Q11 Typically, what **level** of support do you provide in relation to the use of IE in the schools you work in?

- Supporting individual pupils that have been internally excluded (1)
- Supporting groups of pupils that have been internally excluded (2)
- Systemic work to support school with IE strategy/ policy (3)
- Other. Please state below. (4)

Q12 Briefly outline what **types** of support you provide Secondary schools in relation to supporting pupil behaviour.

For example, what work do you do to support the individual/group/pupil with behaviour?

Q13 Thank you for completing this survey, your response is much appreciated.

Please indicate here if you are happy to be contacted for a follow-up for a 30-minute interview and/or if you would like to receive a copy of the final research briefing associated with this research.

Yes, I would like to be contacted for a 20 minute follow up interview. My email address is: (1)

Yes, I would like to receive a copy of the final research briefing associated with this research. My email address is: (please enter contact email, if not entered above) (3)

No thank you (2)

Appendix D: semi structured interview questions

Semi-structured Interview Schedule: School leaders

Thank you for meeting with me today and for your time. It is much appreciated. The purpose of this interview is to gather your perspectives on internal exclusion in mainstream secondary schools. Before we start, I'd like to review the consent form with you, give you an opportunity to ask me any questions and also define the term 'internal exclusion' so that we have a shared understanding of the concept.

- Reiterate key points on consent form

<i>(tick as appropriate)</i>	Yes	No
I have read and understood the attached information sheet about the research		
I have had the opportunity to ask Kelly any questions that I have about the project and can do at anytime		
I understand my role in the project		
I understand that my name will not be used in any report, publication presentation, and that every effort will be made to protect my confidentiality.		
My decision to give consent to participate is entirely voluntary		
I understand that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason, and that if I choose to do so the data I have contributed will not be used		
I understand that my participation is confidential and that Kelly won't be able to share the information that is shared outside what has been agreed.		
I understand that if I disclose any information which suggests that I or others are at risk of significant harm, Kelly will need to pass this information on to an appropriate adult/professional.		
I understand that the information gathered in this project will be used to form the basis of a research report and that the findings may be used in future reports and presentations.		

- Read definition of IE

Internal Exclusion (IE) refers to a disciplinary strategy where a pupil is removed from their typical place of instruction for a period of time in response to unwanted behaviour. Pupils are placed in a different area/ room away from other pupils. This strategy can be referred to using

a range of terms such as: seclusion, isolation, internal exclusion.

This interview does not use the term IE in relation to units, bases or rooms with a broader remit to support pupils with SEN, where staff may be fulltime and have a reparative role to address pupil vulnerabilities and needs (e.g. nurture bases) and where pupils attend as part of their normal timetabled provision.

- **Opportunity to ask any questions**

Interview questions

- 1) Tell me about the use of IE in your school
(prompt: **before IE**. i.e. referral processes / **after IE** monitoring and support post IE)
- 2) What is the IE environment?
(prompt: description of the space / timetable/ rules/ supervision)
- 3) What do you perceive as the main value of schools using an IE strategy?
- 4) Do you perceive any challenges in relation to schools using an IE strategy, if so, what are these?
- 5) In your view, how important is IE strategy in relation to a school ethos and culture?
- 6) Have there been any changes in the use of IE pre/post Covid-19?
- 7) Before we finish the interview, is there anything else you wanted to tell me about IE that you haven't had a chance to share?

Appendix E: Doctoral student Ethical Approval Form

Institute of Education



Doctoral Student Ethics Application Form

Anyone conducting research under the auspices of the Institute of Education (staff, students or visitors) where the research involves human participants or the use of data collected from human participants, is required to gain ethical approval before starting. This includes preliminary and pilot studies. Please answer all relevant questions in simple terms that can be understood by a lay person and note that your form may be returned if incomplete.

Registering your study with the UCL Data Protection Officer as part of the UCL Research Ethics Review Process

If you are proposing to collect personal data i.e. data from which a living individual can be identified **you must be registered with the UCL Data Protection Office before you submit your ethics application for review.** To do this, email the complete ethics form to the [UCL Data Protection Office](#). Once your registration number is received, add it to the form* and submit it to your supervisor for approval. If the Data Protection Office advises you to make changes to the way in which you propose to collect and store the data this should be reflected in your ethics application form.

Please note that the completion of the [UCL GDPR online training](#) is mandatory for all PhD students.

Section 1 – Project details

- a. Project title: *The Inclusive Exclusion Room: Paradox or Truism? A study investigating prevalence, perspectives, and practice of the use of internal exclusion rooms in mainstream secondary schools.*
- b. Student name and ID number (e.g. ABC12345678) *Kelly Golding /SN:16126139*
- c. ***UCL Data Protection Registration Number** *Z6364106/2020/04/142*
 - a. Date Issued: *29.04.20*
- d. Supervisor/Personal Tutor *Ed Baines / Karen Majors*
- e. Department *Psychology and Human Development*
- f. Course category (Tick one)

PhD	<input type="checkbox"/>
EdD	<input type="checkbox"/>
DEdPsv	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
- g. **If applicable**, state who the funder is and if funding has been confirmed.
- h. Intended research start date: *April / May 2020 Phase 1 (can be done remotely)*
- i. Intended research end date: *September 2021*

- j. Country fieldwork will be conducted in [United Kingdom](#)
- k. If research to be conducted abroad please check the [Foreign and Commonwealth Office \(FCO\)](#) and submit a completed travel risk assessment form (see guidelines). If the FCO advice is against travel this will be required before ethical approval can be granted: [UCL travel advice webpage](#)
- l. Has this project been considered by another (external) Research Ethics Committee?
- Yes External Committee Name:
 Date of Approval:
- No **go to Section 2**

If yes:

- Submit a copy of the approval letter with this application.
- Proceed to Section 10 Attachments.

Note: Ensure that you check the guidelines carefully as research with some participants will require ethical approval from a different ethics committee such as the [National Research Ethics Service \(NRES\)](#) or [Social Care Research Ethics Committee \(SCREC\)](#). In addition, if your research is based in another institution then you may be required to apply to their research ethics committee.

Section 2 - Research methods summary (tick all that apply)

- Interviews
- Focus Groups
- Questionnaires
- Action Research
- Observation
- Literature Review
- Controlled trial/other intervention study
- Use of personal records
- Systematic review – **if only method used go to Section 5**
- Secondary data analysis – **if secondary analysis used go to Section 6**
- Advisory/consultation/collaborative groups
- Other, give details: [collection of anonymised in-school data investigating the characteristics of those pupils attending internal exclusion rooms \(SEN status / Age / Gender\); no sensitive personal, identifying data will be included \(e.g. race or religion\).](#)

Please provide an overview of the project, focusing on your methodology. This should include some or all of the following: purpose of the research, aims, main research questions, research design, participants, sampling, data collection (including justifications for methods chosen and description of topics/questions to be asked), reporting and dissemination. Please focus on your methodology; the theory, policy, or literary background of your work can be provided in an attached document (i.e. a full research proposal or case for support document). *Minimum 150 words required.*

Research Aims

This project aims to:

- To develop an indication of the prevalence of internal exclusion rooms in mainstream secondary schools
- To develop an understanding of the in-school practice that operationalise internal exclusion rooms including referral processes and the environment itself
- To develop an understanding of staff and pupil perspectives about the use and efficacy of internal exclusion units
- To develop an understanding of pupil characteristics and internal exclusion rooms and investigate if there is an over-representation of SEND pupils.

Rationale

The use of 'Internal exclusion rooms' in schools comprises a contentious issue. Recent articles in the media have headlined a negative standpoint: "when school is an isolation booth with three toilet breaks a day" (The Guardian, 2020) and "putting pupils in isolation booths drives poor behaviour" (BBC News, November 2020). However, DfE guidance suggests that schools can adopt a strategy "which allows disruptive pupils to be placed in an area away from other pupils for a limited period, in what are often referred to as seclusion or isolation rooms" (DfE, 2016, p. 12.), as long as the disciplinary measure is made clear in the school behaviour policy. To summarise (and simplify) the debate, supporters of the internal exclusion room frame the strategy as a preventative one, a progressive alternative to external exclusion, which represents a commitment to inclusion in education where pupils needs can be met within the school environment. Whereas, opponents to the policy argue that exclusion rooms are a kind of holding pen, which segregate pupils and ultimately undermine the principles of inclusion and a universal entitlement to education (Gillies, 2016).

Whilst there are no central figures about the prevalence of internal exclusion rooms, a recent research investigation into alternative provision (DfE, 2018) found that over half of secondary schools (in the sample of 276 schools) used internal inclusion units to support pupils at risk of exclusion. Arguably, there is tacit understanding that inclusion units exist in most British Secondary schools (MacBeath et al. 2006). Yet, despite the prevalence of the strategy, and the recent flurry of articles present within grey literature, there is a dearth of research investigating the use and workings of internal exclusion rooms. For example, The DfE (2018) found a lack of 'hard evidence' of schools evaluating the impact of Internal

exclusion rooms, reporting that schools cite the avoidance of an exclusion as evidence of success, but that this conclusion was not supported by formal evaluations, so they were unable to determine if this potential preventative strategy that led to the positive outcome.

Currently, there are no statistics collected confirming the number of schools employing the use of internal exclusion rooms, or research investigating the process of referrals. To my knowledge, there has been no independent analysis of how many pupils are placed in internal exclusion, how long they stay there for, and no analysis of characteristics of pupils that are placed in the internal exclusion room. Furthermore, currently there is limited research investigating pupil and staff perspectives on the use of internal exclusion rooms. Further research is needed to bridge this gap in knowledge and understanding, which is why this study seeks to investigate the perspectives and mechanisms that surround the strategy of internal exclusion rooms in Secondary schools.

Research Questions

The present study intends to explore the following key themes: prevalence, practice, pupil characteristics and perspectives on the use of internal exclusion rooms in mainstream secondary schools. The main research questions are grouped according to these themes as follows:

Prevalence:

- 1) What is the prevalence of internal exclusion rooms?

Pupil Characteristics:

- 2a) Who attends the internal exclusion unit and are any population groups over-represented?
- 2b) How frequently do pupils attend the internal exclusion room?

Perspectives:

- 3) What are the pupils and staff perspectives about the use and efficacy of the internal exclusion room?

Practice:

- 5a) What is the referral process and how does this link with the school's behavior policy?
- 5b) What are the reasons that pupils are referred to the internal exclusion room?
- 5c) How long are internal exclusion referrals and what do pupils do when they are in the internal exclusion room?
- 5d) What is the internal exclusion room environment (including a description of the space, rules, timetable and supervision)

Research design

The research will adopt a multiple case study design and use a multi-strategy approach, utilising both quantitative and qualitative methods. Taking a sequential exploratory

approach, the quantitative data will be collected in phase 1 of the project. This will involve a) the distribution of an electronic survey to staff in the case study schools via the Qualtrics survey programme; b) collection of anonymised in-school data investigating the characteristics of those pupils attending internal exclusion rooms (SEN status / Age / Gender); no sensitive personal, identifying data will be included (e.g. race or religion). The research question focusing on the prevalence of internal exclusion rooms necessitates a wider distribution than the case study schools. Therefore, the survey will also be distributed via two SENCO networks: a) SENCO network at the Local Authority where I am currently on placement and b) SENCO network through the university where SENCOs are currently participating on the NASENCO Award course and to Educational Psychologists via a) trainee network groups and b) EPNET. The surveys will be distributed electronically.

Phase two of the study will comprise the qualitative component and will function to explain and support the interpretation of the quantitative data. This will involve a) selecting two groups of pupils (those that have attended internal referral, and those that have not), and a group of staff members to take part in a semi-structured interview exploring their experiences and perceptions of internal exclusion rooms and b) undertaking a qualitative observation in the internal exclusion unit for a full school day. Interviews with staff members may be conducted via telephone. The observer will seek to describe the following dimensions of the internal exclusion room: space (layout of the physical space); the activities of people in the internal exclusion room; objects (furniture etc.); events and their timings. If access to the internal exclusion room is not possible, written descriptions may be completed by staff members and pupils as part of the interview process.

Due to Covid-19 and the current school closures, phase 1 of the research will be completed remotely. For phase 2, staff interviews will be conducted by telephone. Access to pupils will be problematic until schools re-open, so this phase of the project will be delayed until pupils/ schools are in a position to support with face-to-face research.

Section 3 – research Participants (tick all that apply)

- Early years/pre-school
- Ages 5-11
- Ages 12-16
- Young people aged 17-18
- Adults please specify below
- Unknown – specify below
- No participants

School staff involved in the case study school will be asked to complete a survey asking questions about the practice and procedures surrounding internal exclusion rooms and asked to share their views on the use of exclusion rooms. The survey will also be distributed via SENCO and Educational Psychologist networks in the Local Authority and University

context and, if recruitment numbers do not meet expected levels, may be distributed via social media networks such as Twitter or forums such as EPNET.

Note: Ensure that you check the guidelines carefully as research with some participants will require ethical approval from a different ethics committee such as the [National Research Ethics Service](#) (NRES) or [Social Care Research Ethics Committee](#) (SCREC).

of uniquely identifying a natural person, data concerning health or data concerning a natural person's sex life or sexual orientation)?

Yes* No

e. Will you be conducting analysis within the remit it was originally collected for?

Yes No*

f. If no, was consent gained from participants for subsequent/future analysis?

Yes No*

g. If no, was data collected prior to ethics approval process?

Yes No*

** Give further details in Section 8 Ethical Issues*

If secondary analysis is only method used and no answers with asterisks are ticked, go to Section 9 Attachments.

Section 7 – Data Storage and Security

Please ensure that you include all hard and electronic data when completing this section.

a. Data subjects - Who will the data be collected from?

School staff members and pupils working /attending the schools involved in the multiple case study / educational psychologists and SENCOs that choose to complete the survey.

b. What data will be collected? Please provide details of the type of personal data to be collected

- Staff and pupil perspectives regarding the use and efficacy of internal exclusion rooms
- Staff and pupil's knowledge and understating of the in-school practice of using internal referral processes
- An anonymised list of pupils that have attended the internal exclusion room which includes SEN status, age and gender (special category personal data will not be included on the anonymised list).
- Qualitative observation data that describes the following features of the internal exclusion room: space, the activities of people in the internal exclusion room; objects, events and their timings. The identity of staff and pupils in the inclusion room will be protected and anonymised in the observation notes and subsequent analysis.

Is the data anonymised?

Yes No*

Do you plan to anonymise the data?

Yes* No

Do you plan to use individual level data?

Yes* No

Do you plan to pseudonymise the data?

Yes* No

* Give further details in **Section 8 Ethical Issues**

- c. **Disclosure** – Who will the results of your project be disclosed to?

To the school, university, local authority, group members, school, parents and young people (in an accessible format) and general public as the thesis will be publicly available

Disclosure – Will personal data be disclosed as part of your project?

No

- d. **Data storage** – Please provide details on how and where the data will be stored i.e. UCL network, encrypted USB stick**, encrypted laptop** etc.

Encrypted USB stick and password protected files on a computer

** *Advanced Encryption Standard 256 bit encryption which has been made a security standard within the NHS*

- e. **Data Safe Haven (Identifiable Data Handling Solution)** – Will the personal identifiable data collected and processed as part of this research be stored in the UCL Data Safe Haven (mainly used by SLMS divisions, institutes and departments)?

Yes No

- f. How long will the data and records be kept for and in what format?

10 years on an encrypted USB stick and password protected files on a computer

Will personal data be processed or be sent outside the European Economic Area? (If yes, please confirm that there are adequate levels of protections in compliance with GDPR and state what these arrangements are)

n/a

Will data be archived for use by other researchers? (If yes, please provide details.)

n/a

- g. If personal data is used as part of your project, describe what measures you have in place to ensure that the data is only used for the research purpose e.g.

~~pseudonymisation~~ and short retention period of data'.

- In-school data investigating the characteristics of those pupils attending internal exclusion rooms (SEN status / Age / Gender) will be anonymised before it is shared by the school. No sensitive personal, identifying data will be included (e.g. race or religion).
- Primary data collected via school survey will not include any personal data

- Primary data collected via interviews and observations will ensure protection of personal data by using pseudonyms.

*** Give further details in *Section 8 Ethical Issues***

Section 8 – Ethical Issues

Please state clearly the ethical issues which may arise in the course of this research and how will they be addressed.

All issues that may apply should be addressed. Some examples are given below, further information can be found in the guidelines. *Minimum 150 words required.*

Methods

Due to Covid-19 and the resulting current school closures, the capacity of schools, their staff and pupils to participate in research is likely to be significantly impaired. In consideration of this, I will ensure that chosen methods are applied following up to date UCL and UK Government policy and guidance. The research will be conducted in a sensitive manner that acknowledges our current uncertain times, and the challenges facing schools, their staff and pupils.

Survey responses will be anonymous and not contain any personal details. The survey will ask staff members to provide their role in the school, as this information will be important in analysis of responses. As such, where identification via role is evident in the data (e.g. Headteacher as there is usually only one per school), the data will be excluded from the research write-up. As the topic of internal exclusion rooms is a contentious issue, great care will be taken over the development of the questions coupled with a piloting process to promote validity. The survey will be distributed electronically so that it can be completed electronically.

For the observation and interview components, parents will be written to and will be asked to opt in, by giving their written consent for their child to participate. The pupils will also be asked to give informed consent to participate (see further details under the subheading participants below). During the observation, if there is a risk of serious harm to a child (or anyone) comes to light during (e.g. serious bullying or physical harm) relevant information will be passed to an appropriate member of school staff. This limit to confidentiality will be made clear to gatekeepers and children when information about the research is delivered.

Interviews will take place at the participating schools or over the telephone. The interviewer will be sensitive to the participants, explaining the nature of the study at the beginning and that they do not have to talk about anything that they would not be comfortable to share. The participants will be reminded that they can withdraw at any time. They will be reminded that their responses will be anonymized. The questions will be open ended, so

that the participant can guide the information that is given with no coercion from the researcher. By talking about their experiences this may cause participants to reflect on their experiences, behaviour and future behaviour. Therefore, there will be an opportunity for a debrief and also signposting to supportive services (such as contact Educational Psychologist) or staff members in school (such as the school nurse or young person's key worker to follow up with the young person).

Participants

The school SENCO and head teacher will give prior permission to take part in the study (see attached letters).

The informed consent of the pupils and their parents will be sought for both phases of the research. Parents will be provided with background information and asked to give written permission for their child to take part in the study (see attached letter).

The participants themselves will also be asked to give their written consent to take part in the questionnaires, interviews and observations at the start of the study. The information will be shared in methods appropriate to their age and stage of development.

Pupils involved in the interview and observations may be from potentially vulnerable groups, as such great care will be taken in the design of the questions, which will be piloted. The safe guarding procedures of the school will be built into conversations and participants will be given opportunities for sign posting and debrief. All participants names will be anonymized in any transcriptions or observations.

Participants and their parents will be informed that they can withdraw their data from the study up until the research report has been written.

The researcher will explain to all participants how findings from the research will be disseminated and will give participants an opportunity to review any of their contributions before the dissemination process. There will be an accessible report made available for all participants.

The researcher will make this study accessible to those families who have English as a second language by making the consent forms and information sheet available in their first language.

Sampling

Participants will be recruited from 3 mainstream secondary schools in a London Borough with whom the researcher has made prior links.

So that the research questions can be attended to, a purposive sampling technique will be used to select pupils for interviews. Group A will comprise a selection of pupils that have attended the internal exclusion room. Group B will comprise pupils that have not. For both groups the aim will be to select pupils from low, middle and high attainment groups and to target selection of Year 9 pupils. The rationale being that DfE statistics show that Year 9 is most at risk of exclusion (DfE 2019). Other important characteristics to consider are gender

(boys are more likely to be excluded girls 2.53 to 2.83 per cent compared with boys 6.91 to 7.23 per cent); pupils with free school meals and pupils with SEN.

However, opportunistic sampling will be used to select six staff members for interview. Pupils involved in the observation of the internal exclusion room will be selected on the basis of the school referral process and depends on the pupils scheduled to attend on the day that the researcher is planned to complete the observation day. Informed consent from all pupils scheduled to attend the inclusion room on the day of observations will be sought prior to the observations. Parents will be provided with background information and asked to give written permission for their child to take part in the study (see attached).

For the survey, all staff in the participating schools will be emailed an electronic link to the questions and invited to participate. In addition, to attend to the research question regarding prevalence, the survey will also be distributed via SENCo networks and Educational Psychology networks in the local authority and university.

Collection of in-school data

All in-school data will be anonymised by the researcher. The data will be sent to the researcher using Egress, a secure file sharing platform that provides data security for sharing confidential information electronically. Once received, the data will be anonymised. The anonymisation process will involve substituting pupil names with random numbers. No data will be stored in a personalised form. Pupil SEN status, age, gender and amount of time in the internal exclusion room will comprise the secondary data categories. Special category personal data will not be included in the anonymized data set. All data for the academic year September 2019 – July 2020 will be collected.

Confidentiality (disclosures)

As the children will be disclosing confidential information, there is a potential risk that sensitive information may be disseminated to people that the young person has not consented to sharing with. To minimise this risk, all information will remain completely confidential and will not be shared with any other person without prior consent from the pupil sharing the information and the pupil referred to in the information shared. The exception to this rule will be if the pupil reveals a safe-guarding concern, in which case this would have to be reported to the school's safeguarding officer, even if the consent has not been given by the pupil. To avoid this seeming misleading to the young person, it will be explained to the young person before taking part that if they disclose anything that may suggest that they, or another person are at risk of harm, then this information could no longer be kept confidential.

Data storage

As there will be a vast amount of sensitive information stored on audio recording devices as well as in written form, there is a risk that this information could be seen by other people that the child has not consented to sharing with. To overcome this concern, storage devices and written data will never be left unattended and will be stored in a locked cupboard to which only the lead researcher will have access. Although the interviews will be recorded

on an audio recording device, participants will be assigned a code, and therefore no names or personal information will be stored on the recording device and the participant will be unidentifiable from the recorded information. Recording devices used for the interviews will store data electronically and will also remain password protected. In addition, no school, class or personal information will be recorded during data collection processes as these details will be anonymised by the researcher at source of data collection.

Please confirm that the processing of the data is not likely to cause substantial damage or distress to an individual

Yes

Section 9 – Attachments. *Please attach the following items to this form, or explain if not attached*

- a. Information sheets, consent forms and other materials to be used to inform potential participants about the research (List attachments below)

Yes No

1. Covering letter for schools / headteacher
2. Information sheet for schools
3. Combined parent letter. Information sheet. Consent form.
4. Combined staff letter. Information sheet.
5. Staff consent form
6. Combined SENCo/EP letter and information sheet
7. EP/ SENCo consent form
8. Combined Pupil information sheet and consent form

- b. Approval letter from external Research Ethics Committee Yes
- c. The proposal ('case for support') for the project Yes
- d. Full risk assessment Yes

Section 10 – Declaration

I confirm that to the best of my knowledge the information in this form is correct and that this is a full description of the ethical issues that may arise in the course of this project.

I have discussed the ethical issues relating to my research with my supervisor.

Yes No

I have attended the appropriate ethics training provided by my course.

Yes No

I confirm that to the best of my knowledge:

The above information is correct and that this is a full description of the ethics issues that may arise in the course of this project.

Name Kelly Golding

Date 14.02.2020

Please submit your completed ethics forms to your supervisor for review.

Notes and references

Professional code of ethics

You should read and understand relevant ethics guidelines, for example:

[British Psychological Society](#) (2018) *Code of Ethics and Conduct*

Or

[British Educational Research Association](#) (2018) *Ethical Guidelines*

Or

[British Sociological Association](#) (2017) *Statement of Ethical Practice*

Please see the respective websites for these or later versions; direct links to the latest versions are available on the [Institute of Education Research Ethics website](#).

Disclosure and Barring Service checks

If you are planning to carry out research in regulated Education environments such as Schools, or if your research will bring you into contact with children and young people (under the age of 18), you will need to have a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) CHECK, before you start. The DBS was previously known as the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB). If you do not already hold a current DBS check, and have not registered with the DBS update service, you will need to obtain one through at IOE.

Ensure that you apply for the DBS check in plenty of time as will take around 4 weeks, though can take longer depending on the circumstances.

Further references

The www.ethicsguidebook.ac.uk website is very useful for assisting you to think through the ethical issues arising from your project.

Robson, Colin (2011). *Real world research: a resource for social scientists and practitioner researchers* (3rd edition). Oxford: Blackwell.

This text has a helpful section on ethical considerations.

Alderson, P. and Morrow, V. (2011) *The Ethics of Research with Children and Young People: A Practical Handbook*. London: Sage.

This text has useful suggestions if you are conducting research with children and young people.

Wiles, R. (2013) *What are Qualitative Research Ethics?* Bloomsbury.

A useful and short text covering areas including informed consent, approaches to research ethics including examples of ethical dilemmas.

Departmental use

If a project raises particularly challenging ethics issues, or a more detailed review would be appropriate, the supervisor must refer the application to the Research Development Administrator via email so that it can be submitted to the IOE Research Ethics Committee for consideration. A departmental research ethics coordinator or representative can advise you, either to support your review process, or help decide whether an application should be referred to the REC. If unsure please refer to the guidelines explaining when to refer the ethics application to the IOE Research Ethics Committee, posted on the committee's website.

Student name	<input type="text"/>
Student department	<input type="text"/>
Course	<input type="text"/>
Project title	<input type="text"/>
Reviewer 1	
Supervisor/first reviewer name	Dr Ed Baines
Do you foresee any ethical difficulties with this research?	<input type="text"/> The ethical issues have been carefully considered and key issues addressed
Supervisor/first reviewer signature	<input type="text"/>
Date	17.3.2020

Appendix F: Covering letter for schools

The prevalence, practice and perspectives on the use of internal exclusion rooms in secondary schools.



Institute of Education
UCL Institute of Education
20 Bedford Way
London WC1H 0BR
E-mail: K.golding@ucl.ac.uk

Dear Headteacher,

I am contacting you to invite your school to take part in an exciting new research project about the prevalence, perspectives and practice of the use of internal exclusion rooms in mainstream secondary schools. The use of internal exclusion rooms in secondary schools is a contentious issue and has been widely reported as a behaviour management strategy in the media (e.g. The Guardian, 2020, BBC News 2020). I feel that rigorous educational research is needed to add balance and clarity to the debate. Having worked in mainstream secondary schools myself for many years, I am passionate about working in partnership with schools, staff, young people and parents to better understand practice in the use of internal exclusion rooms in mainstream secondary schools. I feel that your school could offer great insight into the practice surrounding the use of internal exclusion rooms and support the development of an evidence base to highlight best practice in the use of the strategy. All data from schools and individuals participating in the research will be confidential and anonymous and in the resulting research report, only the most salient points and an overall description of the research findings would be shared. This research study does not intend to make any judgements about your school and the practice of using internal exclusion rooms.

Currently, there is limited research about the use of internal exclusion rooms, how they work and what staff and pupils think about them. By participating in this study your school would support bridging this gap in knowledge so that we can better understand the mechanisms and perspectives that surround the use of internal exclusion rooms as a strategy.

In contributing to this study your school would be supporting the development of an evidence base around the use of internal exclusion rooms and therefore add clarity and balance to current educational understanding. At the end of the research, I would be happy to share with participating schools the most relevant research currently available on the use and practice of internal exclusion rooms. I could also offer some bespoke training linked to the research topic for all school staff.

I am aware that Covid-19 and the resulting current school closures will significantly impact your school's capacity to participate in this research. As such, I would like to reassure you that this research process will follow up to date UK Government policy and UCL research guidance. The research will be conducted in a sensitive manner that acknowledges our current uncertain times and the challenges facing schools, their staff and pupils. If you have any questions or queries regarding the research, please feel free to contact me via email at 

Yours sincerely,



Kelly Golding

Appendix G: Information sheet for schools

Institute of Education



Prevalence, practices and perspectives on the use of internal exclusion rooms in secondary schools

I am contacting you to invite your school to take part in an exciting new research project about the prevalence, perspectives and practice of the use of internal exclusion rooms in mainstream secondary schools.

The use of internal exclusion rooms in secondary school is a contentious issue and more research is needed to add balance and clarity to this debate. As an experienced educational professional working in schools for over 15 years I am passionate about working in partnership with school staff, young people and parents to better understand best practice in the use of internal exclusion rooms in mainstream secondary schools.

My career spans a range of roles including: English teacher, Assistant Headteacher, Educational researcher and Lecturer and I am now training to become an Educational Psychologist on the Doctorate in Educational, Child and Adolescent Psychology at the UCL Institute of Education. I am collaborating with colleagues Dr Ed Baines, a Senior Lecturer in Psychology and Education, and Dr Karen Majors, a Professional Educational Psychology tutor, on this research study.

What is this research and why is it important?

- In line with guidance from the Department of Education (2016), Internal Exclusion Rooms can be part of a school's behaviour policy and allow the school to place disruptive pupils in an area away from other pupils for a limited period of time.
- There is not a lot of information or research about how common it is for schools to use internal exclusion rooms, how they work, and what staff and pupils think about them.
- Therefore it is really important that we bridge this gap in knowledge so that we can better understand the practices and perspectives that surround the use of this strategy.
- This research hopes to do this by engaging with school staff, students and other educational professionals to understand their perspectives and *the in-school practices around the use of internal exclusion rooms*.

Why am I being invited to take part?

Your school could offer great insight into perspectives and practice surrounding the use of internal exclusion rooms and support the development of an evidence base to highlight best practice.

What will happen if I choose to take part?

Phase 1: A staff survey will be sent out via email. The Questions will cover the following themes; staff perspectives, prevalence, and best practice in the use of internal exclusion rooms.

- The researcher will undertake an independent analysis of anonymised in-school records of pupils attending internal exclusion and will look at the pupils' SEN status, age and gender; no sensitive personal, identifying data will be included in the analysis.

Phase 2: I will conduct interviews with a total of 12 students, 6 who have attended the internal exclusion room and 6 who have not.

- I will also interview 6 staff members. The questions will ask pupils and staff for their opinions and understanding of the school's use of the internal exclusion room.
- The interviews will be audio-recorded and then transcribed. I will then analyse the transcripts to identify themes which help to answer the research questions about the use of internal exclusion rooms.
- The researcher will conduct an observation of the internal exclusion room for one full school day and will aim to describe the following: environment, rules, timetable, supervision and pupil activity.
- The data collected in this project will be anonymised, so your school and staff members will not be identifiable from the completed research paper.

What will happen to the results of the research?

The results of this research will be outlined in a research report. The school, staff and pupils' will be completely anonymous in this research. I will share the general results of this study which will involve other schools with your school once completed. This could be in the form of a presentation at a staff meeting or newsletter sent electronically, depending on which best suits your school. The anonymous data collected in this study will be held in an encrypted file on a secure server at UCL for ten years, after which time it will be destroyed.

Do I have to take part?

Taking part is entirely optional. I hope that, if you and your school do choose to be involved, you find it to be a valuable experience and an opportunity to reflect on the practice already present in your school. There will be no negative repercussions for your school or staff members if you choose not to be involved.

Contact for further information

If you have any further questions before you decide whether to take part, you can reach me at



Data Protection Privacy Notice

There is some important information we have to tell you about the way we will use the information you provide to us during this research project. This information is explained fully in the UCL Research Participant Privacy Notice, which you can access here: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/legal-services/privacy/ucl-general-research-participant-privacy-notice>. This explains, for example, how our UCL Data Protection Office oversee UCL activities in which personal data are processed (as in this research). If you want to contact them, or if you have any concerns about the way your personal data is being used, you can email data-protection@ucl.ac.uk.

Appendix H: Combined letter and information sheet

The prevalence, practices and perspectives on the use of internal exclusion rooms in secondary schools



Dear staff member,

I am inviting your school to take part in an exciting new research project about the prevalence, perspectives and practice of the use of internal exclusion rooms in mainstream secondary schools. The use of internal exclusion rooms in secondary schools comprises a contentious issue and has been widely reported as a behaviour management strategy in the media (e.g. The Guardian, 2020, BBC News 2020). I feel that rigorous educational research is needed to add balance and clarity to the debate.

Having worked in mainstream secondary schools myself for many years, I am passionate about working in partnership with schools, staff, young people and parents to better understand the best practice in the use of internal exclusion rooms in mainstream secondary schools. I feel that you could offer great insight and perspective into the good practice surrounding the use of internal exclusion rooms. There would be a high level of confidentiality and anonymity at the school and Local Authority levels and this research study does not intend to make any judgements about your school and the practice of using internal exclusion rooms.

Information for staff

The researcher

My name is Kelly Golding, I have worked in education for over 15 years. I am collaborating with colleagues Dr Ed Baines, a senior lecturer in Psychology and Education, and Dr Karen Majors, a Professional Educational Psychology tutor, on this research study.

What is this research and why is it important?

- In line with guidance from the Department of Education (2016), Internal Exclusion Rooms can be part of a school's behaviour policy and allow the school to place disruptive pupils in an area away from other pupils for a limited period of time.
- There is not a lot of information or research about how common it is for schools to use internal exclusion rooms, how they work, and what staff and pupils think about them.
- Therefore it is really important that we bridge this gap in knowledge about the use of internal exclusion rooms in secondary schools so that we can better understand the mechanisms and perspectives that surround the use of this strategy.

Why am I being invited to take part?

You could offer great insight into perspectives and practice surrounding the use of internal exclusion rooms in secondary schools and support the development of an evidence base to highlight best practice.

What will happen if I choose to take part?

- I will send you a short electronic survey to complete asking for perspectives about the use and practice of internal exclusion rooms.
- You will have the option to be interviewed for the researcher to gain a more detailed understanding of perspectives and practice. The interviews will be audio recorded to enable us to fully review and analyse the data. I can assure you that, all information collected will be stored securely and will only be accessed by the researchers. Furthermore, the names of students, teachers as well as the school will remain

confidential and the anonymity of pupils is assured (e.g. when we report on the findings from the research). The researcher involved also has a current enhanced DBS clearance check.

What will happen to the results of the research?

The results of this research will be outlined in a research report. The school, staff and pupils' will be completely anonymous in this research. I will share the general results of this study which will involve other schools with your school once completed. This could be in the form of a presentation at a staff meeting or newsletter sent electronically, depending on which best suits your school. The anonymous data collected in this study will held in an encrypted file on a secure server at UCL for ten years, after which time it will be destroyed.

Do I have to take part?

Taking part is entirely optional. I hope that, if you do choose to be involved, you will find it to be a valuable experience and an opportunity to reflect on the practice already present in your school.

Contact for further information

If you have any further questions before you decide whether to take part, you can reach me at k.golding@ucl.ac.uk .

Yours sincerely,



Kelly Golding
UCL Institute of Education
20 Bedford Way London
WC1H 0AL



Data Protection Privacy Notice

There is some important information we have to tell you about the way we will use the information you provide to us during this research project. This information is explained fully in the UCL Research Participant Privacy Notice, which you can access here: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/legal-services/privacy/ucl-general-research-participant-privacy-notice>. This explains, for example, how our UCL Data Protection Office oversee UCL activities in which personal data are processed (as in this research). If you want to contact them, or if you have any concerns about the way your personal data is being used, you can email data-protection@ucl.ac.uk.

Appendix I: Consent Form for interview

Research title: The prevalence, practices and perspectives on the use of internal exclusion rooms in secondary schools

Name of researcher: Kelly Golding

<i>(tick as appropriate)</i>	Yes	No
I have read and understood the attached information sheet about the research		
I have had the opportunity to ask Kelly any questions that I have about the project and can do at anytime		
I understand my role in the project		
I understand that my name will not be used in any report, publication presentation, and that every effort will be made to protect my confidentiality.		
My decision to give consent to participate is entirely voluntary		
I understand that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason, and that if I choose to do so the data I have contributed will not be used		
I understand that my participation is confidential and that Kelly won't be able to share the information that is shared outside what has been agreed.		
I understand that if I disclose any information which suggests that I or others are at risk of significant harm, Kelly will need to pass this information on to an appropriate adult/professional.		
I understand that the information gathered in this project will be used to form the basis of a research report and that the findings may be used in future reports and presentations.		

Name _____

Signature _____ Date _____



Appendix J: Consent form for survey on Qualtrics

Dear participant,

I am inviting you to take part in an exciting new research project about the prevalence, perspectives and practice of the use of internal exclusion in mainstream secondary schools. The use of internal exclusion in secondary schools is a contentious issue and has been widely reported as a behaviour management strategy in the media. I feel that rigorous educational research is needed to add balance and clarity to the debate.

Currently, there is limited research about the use of internal exclusion, how it works and what staff, pupils and Educational Psychologists think about it. By participating in this study you would support bridging this gap in knowledge so that we can better understand the mechanisms and perspectives that surround the use of internal exclusion as a strategy.

This survey will take approximately 6 minutes to complete. Please answer openly to provide a representative overview of your views and experience of practices and perspectives on the use of internal exclusion. Your answers will be kept confidential unless they contravene safeguarding guidelines. You may exit the questionnaire at any point should you wish to by closing the window.

At the end of the questionnaire you will be invited to show your interest in participating in an individual video-conference interview with the researcher to discuss your perspectives on the use of internal exclusion rooms. This will provide an opportunity to explore your perspectives regarding the use and efficacy of internal exclusion in more detail.

Thank you for your time and insights.

Best wishes,

Kelly Golding, Trainee Educational Psychologist

Doctorate in Child, Adolescent and Educational Psychology, UCL Institute of Education

Information for Participants

Please read the information below and tick the box to participate in the survey:

- I have read and understood the information sheet about the research
- I understand that my name will not be used in any report, publication presentation, and that every effort will be made to protect my confidentiality
- I understand that once my answers have been collected and anonymised it is not possible to remove the data from the research project
- I understand that if I disclose any information which suggests that I or others are at risk of significant harm, Kelly will need to pass this information on to an appropriate adult/professional
- I understand that the information gathered in this project will be used to form the basis of a research report and that the findings may be used in future reports and presentations

I have read and understood the information above and agree to take part in the survey

present in your school.

Contact for further information

If you have any further questions before you decide whether to take part, you can reach me at: k.golding@ucl.ac.uk

Data Protection Privacy Notice

There is some important information we have to tell you about the way we will use the information you provide to us during this research project. This information is explained fully in the UCL Research Participant Privacy Notice, which you can access here: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/legal-services/privacy/ucl-general-research-participant-privacy-notice>. This explains, for example, how our UCL Data Protection Office oversee UCL activities in which personal data are processed (as in this research). If you want to contact them, or if you have any concerns about the way your personal data is being used, you can email data-protection@ucl.ac.uk.

Appendix K: Summary of Ethical processes

The researcher acknowledged that the Covid-19 pandemic by ensuring that chosen methods were applied following relevant UCL and UK Government policy and guidance. The research was conducted in a manner that acknowledges the current uncertain times, and the challenges facing schools, their staff and pupils.

Informed consent: Participant information sheets detailing research aims, methods and ethical considerations were provided to all participants. Informed consent was gained via a tick box with a ‘forced option’ on the online survey. For interview participants, additional consent was gained prior to interview. Additionally, prior to the interview participants were reminded of the key information included in the consent form and given the opportunity to ask further questions before the interview commenced.

Protection of participants: Survey responses were anonymous unless the participant shared their email address to opt in to the interview phase of the research or receive a final research report detailing the results of the project. Where contact details of participants were given, data protection protocols were followed. Participant and school names were anonymised in all write-ups.

Confidentiality and data protection: All data was anonymised by the researcher. No data was stored in a personalised form unless participants had shared their email address confirming that they would either like a copy of the research report and/or be contacted for a follow-up interview. Storage devices and written data were stored in a locked cupboard to which only the lead researcher had access. Recording devices were password protected.

Appendix L: Worked example of thematic analysis process

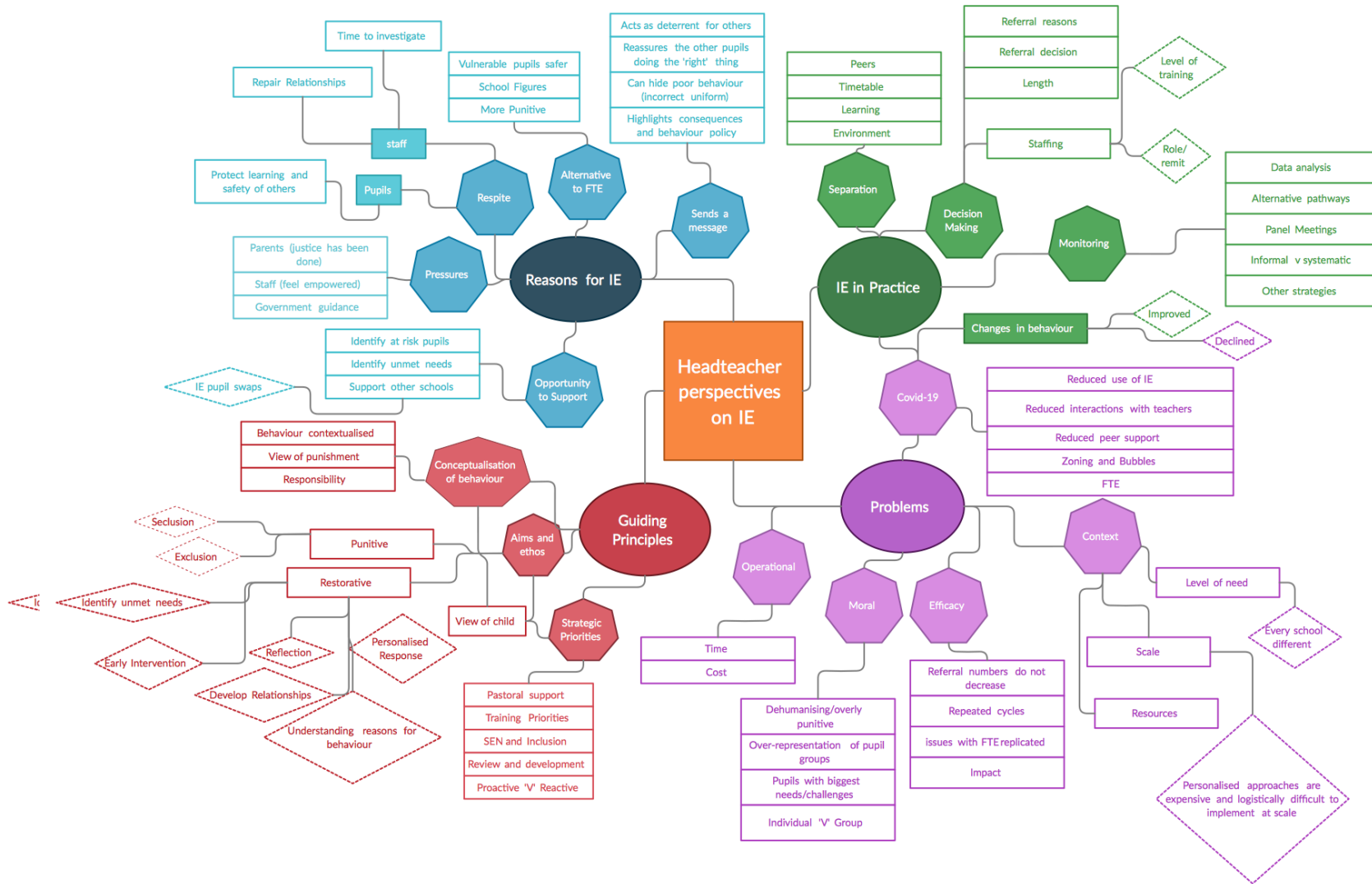
Phase 1 of thematic analysis: Example of transcript demonstrating initial familiarisation with the data, adapting the transcript and checking against the recording. This was the researcher's early immersion in the data where initial thoughts and ideas were indicated.

1	HT (0:30) we use it differently, because I think we used it traditionally for a couple of years.	Kelly Golding Impact
2	And it doesn't work. And it didn't really work for us. So the children that we were putting	
3	repeatedly in internal exclusion, it had absolutely no effect whatsoever, the only effect it	Kelly Golding Reduce FT exclusions
4	had, was to reduce I suppose, fixed term exclusion figures, which was not really the point of	
5	it. So, for the children it worked for, it was like, first time offenders with one off kind of	Kelly Golding Works for one off offenders
6	incidents, what it doesn't work for, is the children that have patterns of behaviour. And it	
7	doesn't have any impact on that at all. And we saw that very quickly. And we set it up, not	
8	this year, three years ago. And within two years, it was really clear that if anything, it was,	
9	umm.. not making them their patterns of behaviour worse, but it was kind of just	Kelly Golding Impact. Patterns of behaviour
10	embedding that, not changing it at all. So we've changed it this year, and changed it into a	
11	reflection kind of facility, which is very different. And, so while the XXXXXXX, we are an all	Kelly Golding Reflection facility
12	XXXXXXX school, so while the XXXXXXX are in what we call reflection, now, they work with	
13	their team and a learning leader, which is the same as like a head of year and deputy head	
14	of year, except for ours are non teaching. So the very much more pastorally based than	Kelly Golding Staffing
15	teaching heads of Year are. So they'll go through several sessions of why did it happen?	
16	What you know, why did you do that? What was the purpose of it? How did you feel about	
17	it? What do you think would help to make it right? So they go through like a reconciliation, if	
18	you like, sort of restorative process. And we also use it when, if anyone is fixed term	Kelly Golding Reflection/restorative
19	excluded, the first day	

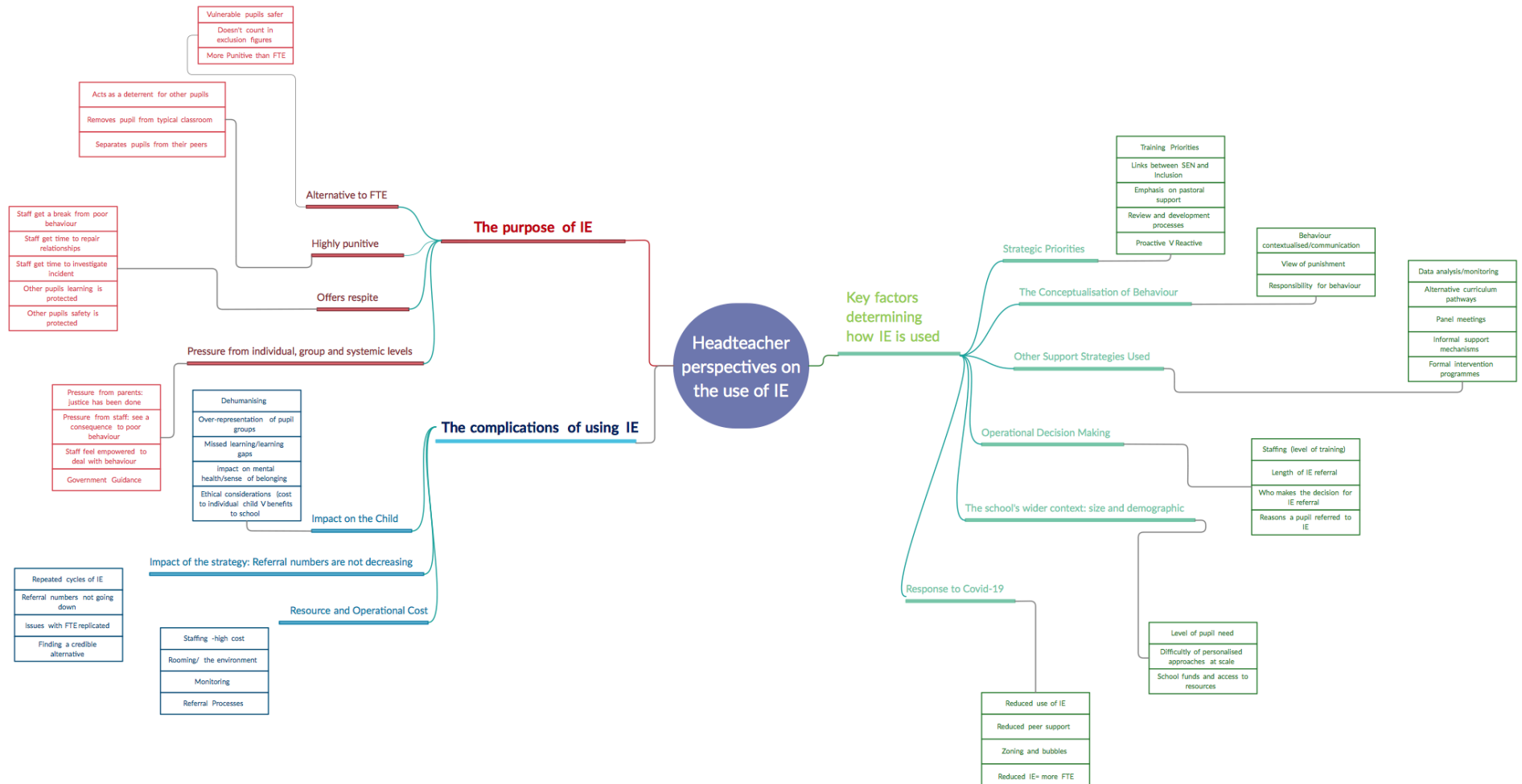
Phase 2 of thematic analysis: Example of transcript where potential codes and emerging patterns were generated to reflect the interview data. The researcher also checked and merged codes. Peer supervision was used to review a selection of the analysed transcripts and re-code to compare coding and interpretation. Alterations to the code descriptions were made to enhance clarity and consistency in the analysis.

1	HT (0:30) we use it differently, because I think we used it traditionally for a couple of years.	Kelly Golding Efficacy. It doesn't work
2	And it doesn't work. And it didn't really work for us. So the children that we were putting	Kelly Golding Repeated cycles of IE
3	repeatedly in internal exclusion, it had absolutely no effect whatsoever, the only effect it	
4	had, was to reduce I suppose, fixed term exclusion figures, which was not really the point	Kelly Golding Reduce FT exclusions
5	of it. So, for the children it worked for, it was like, first time offenders with one off kind of	
6	incidents, what it doesn't work for, is the children that have patterns of behaviour. And it	Kelly Golding Works for one off offenders
7	doesn't have any impact on that at all. And we saw that very quickly. And we set it up, not	
8	this year, three years ago. And within two years, it was really clear that if anything, it was,	
9	umm.. not making them their patterns of behaviour worse, but it was kind of just	Kelly Golding Repeated Patterns of behaviour
10	embedding that, not changing it at all. So we've changed it this year, and changed it into a	
11	reflection kind of facility, which is very different. And, so while the XXXXXXX, we are an all	Kelly Golding Alternative strategy to IE
12	XXXXXXX school, so while the XXXXXXX are in what we call reflection, now, they work with	
13	their team and a learning leader, which is the same as like a head of year and deputy head	Kelly Golding Reflection facility – alternative strategy
14	of year, except for ours are non teaching. So the very much more pastorally based than	
15	teaching heads of Year are. So they'll go through several sessions of why did it happen?	Kelly Golding Staffing choices. Pastoral emphasis
16	What you know, why did you do that? What was the purpose of it? How did you feel	
17	about it? What do you think would help to make it right? So they go through like a	Kelly Golding Alternative strategy to IE
18	reconciliation, if you like, sort of restorative process. And we also use it when, if anyone is	
19	fixed term excluded, the first day	Kelly Golding Ethos. Reflection/restorative

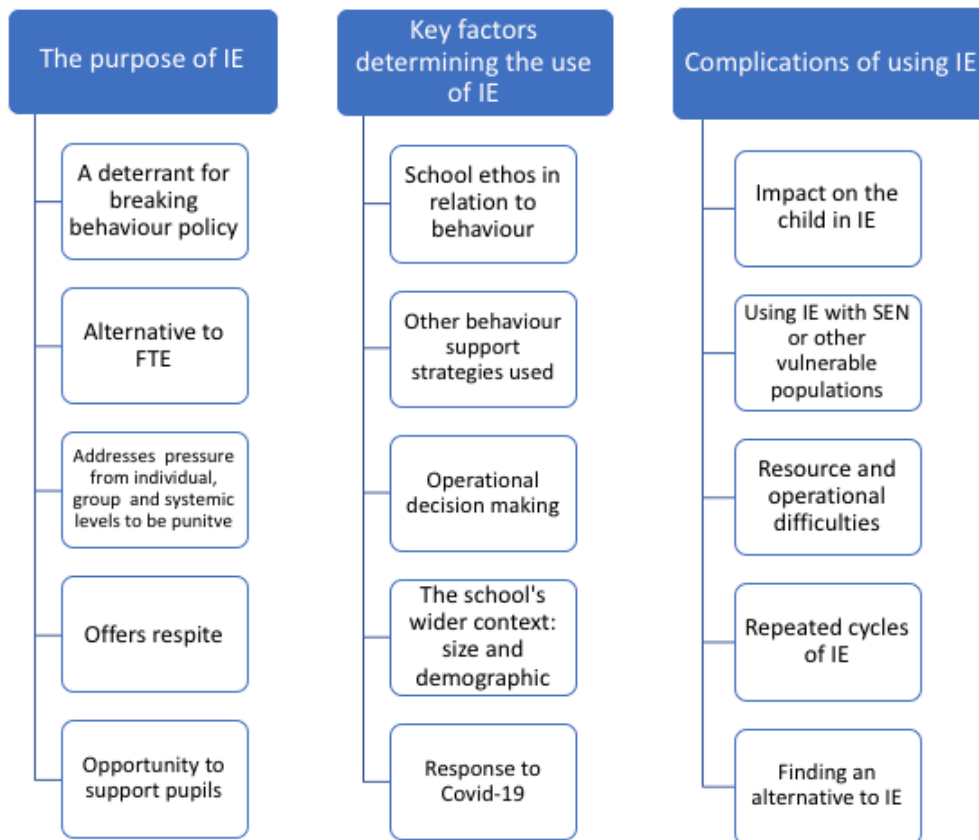
Phase 3 of thematic analysis: Searching for themes. Larger patterns of meaning relating to the data and RQ were identified. Interactions between codes, sub themes and main themes were explored and an initial thematic map was created .



Phase 4 of thematic analysis: Themes were reviewed and revised to ensure that they captured meaning from the data in a coherent way. In research supervision with academic tutor the researcher reflected on whether the themes demonstrated a psychological, inductive interpretation of the data, rather than describing themes to mirror the research questions. The codes, sub-themes and themes were reviewed again in peer supervision and then subsequently refined.



Phase 5 of thematic analysis: Defining and naming themes and sub themes. This process included identifying the distinct features of each theme and reviewing theme names. A final list of themes and subthemes was produced. The original transcripts were reviewed using the developed coding system to ensure that the analysis process and resulting themes accurately reflected the original data.



Final list of themes, sub-themes and codes

Overarching Theme	Sub theme	Code
The purpose of IE	A deterrent	Deters others
		Removes pupils
		Separates pupils from peers
	Alternative to FTE	Keeps pupils safer
		Figures
		More punitive than FTE
	Addresses pressure from outside	Parental pressure
		Staff pressure
		Empowers staff
		Government guidance
	Offers respite	Staff respite
		Repair relationships
		Other pupils' respite
Safety		
Key factors determining the use of IE	School ethos	Conceptualisation of behaviour
		View of punishment
	Other support strategies	Alternative curriculum pathways
		Panel meetings
		Restorative approaches
		Intervention programmes
	Operational decision making	Room
		Length of referral
		Referral reason
	School demographic	Level of pupil need
		Personalised approaches at scale
		Funds and access to resources
	Response to Covid-19	Reduced IE (More FTE)
		Zoning and bubbles
		Behaviour general
Complications of using IE	Impact on the child	Dehumanising
		Over representation of pupil groups
		Missed learning
		Mental health and school belonging
		Ethical. Individual v school
Complications of using IE	Using IE with SEN or other vulnerable populations	Using IE with SEN or other vulnerable populations
	Resource and other operational difficulties	Staffing
		Finding space
	Repeated cycles of IE	Repeated cycles
	Not a deterrent	Referral numbers not going down
Finding an alternative to IE	Finding an alternative to IE	

Phase 6 of thematic analysis: Producing the report. The researcher consolidated the analysis by defining and naming a final version of the main themes and sub-themes. Pertinent quotations were selected to illustrate themes and subthemes and organised into a table (see extract below). Final quotations were selected to represent themes. The researcher completed a tally system to ensure that the attribution of quotations were balanced across the data set (see table X below).

Examples of codes and data extracts within the theme ‘The purpose of IE’, subtheme ‘IE is a deterrent’.

Theme: The purpose of IE

Subtheme	Code	Example
IE is a deterrent	Deters others (sends a message)	<p>“it makes a point to the other 160/ 70 people. So say for example, if it was a premeditated attack at the start school on the playgrounds, that person comes out of circulation, so everyone else sees that, actually, okay, it's serious, it's a point.” (I2, Line 11- 14)</p> <p>“it's there to make almost like a statement or suppose you want a better word, whether that's right or wrong. That's, that's the choice at the moment.” (I2, Line 63-65)</p> <p>“visible consequence to certain behaviours that disrupt their lesson”(I5, line 207-208)</p> <p>“there is a belief that if you use a punitive, which is a punitive measure, where you sit a child and we are talking about children, I know they don't look like it when they're 15, or 16. But they are children. So if you say to a child facing a brick wall, or a blank wall in a booth, for a day, he will be so upset about it or she in a different context, or hate it so much that they won't come back. And that's not the case. Yes, they hate it without a doubt.” (I6, Line 163-167).</p>
	Removes pupils	<p>“when children are deliberately challenging these that we don't give them the oxygen of publicity”(I4, line 143- 144)</p> <p>“So yeah, so they are separate, they are just kept separate from the main body of the school.” (I2, line 149- 150)</p>

Appendix M: Attribution of quotations used in the text

Table 21. *Attribution of interview quotations*

Interview Number	No of short in-text quotations	No of long quotations	Total
1	3	0	3
2	7	1	8
3	8	1	9
4	6	5	11
5	5	1	6
6	10	1	11
7	7	0	7
8	4	2	6
9	5	0	5
Total	55	11	66

Appendix N: Worked example of coding system for content analysis (EP Survey)

Q23	Undelying needs	It doesn't work	Learning	Punitive approach to behaviour								
If yes, please briefly describe the main challenges	behaviour not	underlying SEN	not effec	Worsen t	Repeated	missed learning	Reduced access to teacher	low quality of work	fear /shar	ridgid	not resto	
Often it can be negatively reinforcing. It is not an effective deterrent. It is not used in a restorative way.	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Often based on a punitive approach to behaviour which does not consider the pupil needs holistically or support these.	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1

Appendix O: Worked example of coding system for contents analysis (Staff survey)

	Time				Environment			Punitive Sanction			Emphasises behaviour policy and standards	
Q23	Pupils reflect/calm down	develop relationships with staff	Can investigat	Restorative interventio	pupils focus in silenc	separates p	used when other sanctions fail	Taken ser	Altemativ	consistency in consequences for poor behaviour	Pupils want to avoid	
What do you see as the main benefits of using an IE strategy? To reflect on their behavior and to see this as a sanction as the students are unable to see/interact with friends. They also leave school later than their peers.	1		0	0		0	1	0	0	0		1
Allows teachers to reinstate behaviours in return to the classroom. Also educates students on improper behaviour and conduct.	0		0	0		0	0	0	0	0		1
Alternative to a formal fixed term exclusion	0		0	0		0	0	0	0	1		0

Appendix P: Representation of LAs in the staff survey data

Table 22. *Representation of LAs in the staff survey data*

LA	Value	County	Value
Luton	1	Bedfordshire	1
West Berkshire	1	Berkshire	1
Bristol	1	Bristol	1
Buckinghamshire	1	Buckinghamshire	2
Milton Keynes	1		
Cambridgeshire	1	Cambridgeshire	1
		Cheshire	0
		Cleveland	0
Cornwall	1	Cornwall	1
Cumbria	1	Cumbria	1
Derbyshire	1	Derbyshire	2
South Derbyshire	1		
Plymouth	1	Devon	1
		Dorset	0
Stockton-on-Tees	1	Durham	1
Kingston upon Hull	1	East Riding of Yorkshire	1
Brighton	1	East Sussex	1
Essex	6	Essex	8
Southend-on-sea	1		
Thurrock	1		
Gloucestershire	1	Gloucestershire	2
South Gloucestershire	1		
Brent	2	Greater London	30
Bromley	2		
Hackney	2		
Harrow	4		
RBKC	3		
Lambeth	4		
Lewisham	1		
Newham	6		
Waltham Forest	3		
Wandsworth	1		
Westminster	2		
		Greater Manchester	0
Hampshire	1	Hampshire	1
Herefordshire	1	Herefordshire	1

Hertfordshire	1	Hertfordshire	1
		Isle of Wight	0
Kent	3	Kent	6
Medway	1		
Sittingbourne	1		
Swale	1		
Blackpool	1	Lancashire	1
		Leicestershire	0
North Lincolnshire	1	Lincolnshire	1
St Helens	1	Merseyside	1
		Norfolk	0
Middlesbrough	1	North Yorkshire	1
Northants	1	Northamptonshire	1
		Northumberland	0
		Nottinghamshire	0
Oxfordshire	2	Oxfordshire	2
		Rutland	0
Shropshire	1	Shropshire	2
Telford & Wrekin	1		
Bath and North East Somerset	4	Somerset	4
Doncaster	1	South Yorkshire	2
Sheffield	1		
Stoke-on-Trent	1	Staffordshire	1
		Suffolk	0
Surrey	1	Surrey	1
Gateshead	1	Tyne and Wear	2
Sunderland	1		
		Warwickshire	0
Birmingham	1	West Midlands	4
Dudley	1		
Sandwell	1		
Solihull	1		
West Sussex	2	West Sussex	2
Bradford	2	West Yorkshire	3
Calderdale	1		
		Wiltshire	0
Worcestershire	1	Worcestershire	1
Other countries	2		
Total	94		92

Appendix Q: Table X Geographical locations of EP survey participants

Table 23. *Geographical locations of EP survey participants*

		Frequency
Valid	Wales	4
	North West England	4
	Yorkshire and the Humber	2
	East Midlands	2
	West Midlands	5
	East of England	2
	London	38
	South East	14
	South West	12
Total		83