

**An Exploratory Case Study of a 'Successful' Pupil
Referral Unit (PRU).**

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Abstract

This thesis is an exploratory case study that investigates a successful pupil referral unit (PRU) for key stage 3 secondary school pupils located in the semi-rural southwest of England. The achievement of the PRU was externally acknowledged by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) with a recently reported overall grade of 1 or 'Outstanding'. This exploratory study took a social constructionist approach and was informed by the methodology of illuminative evaluation. This study explored the stories and experiences of pupils and staff using interviews, a focus group and video diaries for the pupils. The analysis of these data was from a socio-cultural theoretical perspective. The research data suggested that success was in a state of flux for all in the PRU. For pupils there were personal transformations in their attitudes, behaviours and values. Pupils' social and emotional capital was increased by the 'deep relationships' that developed between pupils and staff. The innovative approach to the curriculum allowed pupils to engage positively with education and featured lessons that were routinely based upon experiential learning. This included weekly outdoor learning lessons which provided a rich context for informal learning to take place alongside the formal objectives. Leadership and management appeared to be the keystone of the PRU success. There was a clear well founded educational philosophy that was successfully articulated through the operational systems of the PRU. All of these parts contributed to the holistic success of the PRU. Findings from this case study are not generalisable due to its specificity to one particular setting and small number of participants. However, 'naturalistic generalisations' may be arrived at by the reader. For example, the reader may be able to apply some aspects of good practice, such as developing deep relationships, to their own context when working with those pupils who are, or have the potential to be, disaffected.

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Introduction

This exploratory case study investigates a 'successful' pupil referral unit (PRU) in order to illuminate the processes and practices inherent within its operation and as such attempts to unpick some of the stories of the pupils and staff and their daily educational interactions.

The term 'successful' is an interesting and contestable one and is explored in this case study. There are two reasons for using this terminology. When scoping this research, I had been told that the PRU was doing excellent work by the leadership team of the school and that they had developed an approach to running a PRU that made them very 'successful'. This strong sense of self-belief about their 'success' made me consider investigating the PRU. Their claim was certainly supported by the findings of their subsequent Ofsted inspection. Ofsted (2008a) describe the overall effectiveness of the school (PRU) as outstanding, giving it a Grade 1 following an inspection in September 2008. This was the first PRU in the county to receive this grade, and only 7% of PRUs achieved this grade nationally in 2007/2008 (Ofsted, 2008b) certainly suggesting a comparative level of success with PRUs both regionally and nationally.

I had already agreed to work with Explorer in September 2007 to find out what made them 'successful' by researching the people and practices that made up the Explorer Pupil Referral Unit. This was prior to the Ofsted inspection in 2008. It is reasonable to argue that Ofsted have a major and significant political and educational influence when judging educational provision, including that at the Explorer PRU. However, whilst an Ofsted report is arguably highly influential, I like others may be circumspect with regard to its findings. For example, Gilroy & Wilcox (1997) critique the practice of educational judgements based on the Ofsted criteria and raise severe doubts about the validity of the judgements made and the inspection process in general. From a personal perspective, I had been inspected twice and the final report on my teaching, my department and the institution I worked in represented a different, albeit similar, reality to the one I inhabited on a daily basis. As such these Ofsted judgements create a useful picture but do not necessarily tell the whole story. I believe that my research has managed to explore some aspects of the Explorer experience in much greater depth.

1.1. Case Study: The Specific Context

The Explorer PRU is discussed in Chapter 2 in the Literature Review, using the academic literature to help place it within its contemporary educational context. All the names used throughout this thesis are pseudonyms and the ethical considerations are discussed in Chapter 3, along with the Research Approach adopted and the research methods utilised.

I was formally introduced to the Explorer PRU by the director of outdoor learning, Rich. We are both Accredited Practitioners of the Institute for Outdoor Learning (APIOL) and at a conference we were attending discussed self esteem and outdoor learning. He was keen to have some research done in order 'to prove' that how they (Explorer) educated disaffected young teenagers "really worked" and he was enthusiastic about setting daily targets for pupil's self-esteem, and then measuring the change. Whilst the director and I have outdoor learning and the APIOL in common, it was apparent that we inhabited different paradigms. My constructionist epistemology and interpretivist theoretical position were clearly different to his! His PhD in Civil Engineering perhaps explained this, and perhaps his years in education allowed him to be comfortable and accepting of my approach to research. My own researcher positionality is addressed below in this introduction, which I believe can help the reader to make sense of this thesis.

Despite our philosophical differences, I was able to outline my sense of what it was that needed researching. Specifically an illuminative exploratory look at the whole Explorer PRU, to construct and then interpret the multiple realities of this shared experience for the participants. This was in contrast to the suggested positivistic approach. The limitations of size and time were discussed and understood, namely that as the researcher I was undertaking the research for this doctoral thesis in education (EdD) and as such was a 'researching professional' and therefore time was limited. As such, the research, and the questions asked required a focus rather than it being a fully comprehensive evaluation of the factors involved in the Explorer PRU 'successes'.

1.2. The Research Questions

The questions asked in order to explore the successes of the PRU were addressed to all participants; pupils, staff and leaders. In essence they were:

- What perceptions do pupils, staff and leaders hold about themselves and the educational provision in which they participate?
- What perceptions do pupils, staff and leaders hold about the outcomes of the provision offered in the unit?
- What factors make this a 'successful' PRU?

How these questions were addressed depended on the audience and the context and are thoroughly considered in Chapter 3, Research Approach and Methods.

1.3. Researcher Positionality

As Wellington *et al* (2005: 21) state: 'It is impossible to take the researcher out of any type of research or at any stage of the research process'. It is perhaps useful for the reader to understand my positionality and I suggest that as the researcher, my positionality becomes a lens through which I view the world and construct my concept of reality. Another useful optical physics metaphor could be that my positionality places a filter in front of what I see, and as such it takes on a certain tint, a colour and shade.

The physics metaphor is apt and nicely illustrates my personal ontological and epistemological journey over the years. Physics was the subject I first studied at university. It appealed to me, especially the optics laboratory, but particularly the reductionist way in which a seemingly complex world could be reduced to a set of seemingly simple equations. I was less comfortable about statistical probabilities and the uncertainties of nuclear physics. None the less, I ended up with sufficient knowledge, skills and understanding to become a physics and science teacher in secondary education. Physics and science more generally had always appealed in explaining my world. I often enjoyed the hands on experiential learning that was evident in a classic science lesson, and I particularly enjoyed the science of outdoors, the forces involved in physical geography, studying the stars and the acceleration and collision of cars.

In addition I was also a 'people person' and in the pursuit of growing up, of becoming an adult, I followed my own informal curriculum of personal and social education. This included the scouts, especially camping and socialising, as well as various musical groups and playing on some sports teams. My education and an appreciation of multiple realities really happened as a young man

when I travelled and worked on a summer camp for several consecutive years in the USA with many international members of staff. Where previously I had been convinced of a right and wrong, an 'absoluteness', I became aware of difference and multiple interpretations of historical and contemporary events.

When I worked as a teacher I operated as a critically reflective practitioner. I was asking 'what do I need to do to make that lesson better' along with bigger issues such as 'what is the purpose of education' or 'why am I forcing these 16 year olds to understand electro-magnetic induction'? I also realised how complex the education processes are. There is not one easy path to follow or 'one size fits all' answer to any situation. There appeared to me to be an infinite number of variables with an infinite number of permutations. I had always enjoyed the 'real' education of which I was part. Namely, helping young people to grow up and become decent, responsible adults who respected themselves and others, who knew their rights and who understood their responsibilities. I enjoyed the curriculum time for sex and relationships education and acting as a personal tutor. I also gained a great deal from my professional relationships by being involved with extra-curricular activities. For me these centred on traditional outdoor pursuits; hiking, camping, canoeing, sailing and particularly residential trips to Dartmoor or the mountains.

I was fortunate to be able to formalise my passion for the outdoors as a place for learning by completing an MSc in Outdoor Education. This established for me a number of things. Firstly, there was a confirmation, in the academic literature, of the value and importance of the outdoors as a place to educate in as well as about. Secondly, I still liked learning and developing my cognitive abilities to read, understand and analyse in greater depth than I had before. Thirdly, I was aware of developing levels of criticality and how some in education can be dogmatic about their way being the right and only way, true in outdoor education as well as in other specific subjects.

With my Master's degree I was able to change the location for my teaching, and I currently lecture undergraduates and post-graduates in a University College. The area of work is outdoor and adventurous activities for physical education students and outdoor adventure education, practical and theoretical applications, for BA and MA students. Primarily I still consider myself to be an educator, more focused on personal and social development than any particular subject or skill. Currently I teach (lecture) trainee teachers and students who are following a course they have chosen rather than school pupils who are impelled into schooling and the compulsory subjects.

As a result I suggest that I am an educator in the broadest sense, in that I believe in the value of taking an holistic approach to education. This means that there are the formal and informal aspects to skills and knowledge as well as to personal development and growth. I like to consider the individual, the group, the community and the context or environment as all being necessary and worthy of consideration from an educational perspective, and these are inextricably interwoven.

1.4. Approach to Research

The approach to this research is thoroughly considered in Chapter 3. This exploratory case study was informed by the work of Parlett and Hamilton's (1977) Illuminative Evaluation. Whilst this approach may appear dated I was drawn to it by its non technician approach to small scale projects. Their suggestion that there is no fixed method to gather the data but to use a range of the most appropriate tools was appealing. I explore in Chapter 3 the details of Illuminative Evaluation and how this informed my work. I was particularly interested in hearing the pupil voice, especially since I had been told that this was a successful pupil referral unit by the leadership (adults). As such the video diary was appealing after reading the work of Noyes (2004) as a way of accessing the pupil voice. Interviews, observations and a focus group allowed some rich qualitative data to be collected. Some quantitative measurements were available through the 'Pupil Attitude to Self and School' computer based measurement of individual pupils. However, this was limited data with only nine complete sets for pupils in the PRU available for my consideration. Therefore, this is not considered statistically, but is used as a point of discussion.

1.5. Focus Areas

The areas that my data gathering focussed upon were influenced by my initial visits to the Explorer PRU; for example see my research diary appendix S (28/6/2007), as well as the reading of the literature and my own previous educational experience. I focussed upon the teacher pupil relationships. I explored how these helped the pupils to transform their behaviour and how these relationships allowed the pupils to be part of a community.

The curriculum, in its broadest sense, was a key area for this thesis. Ofsted (2007: 5) *Establishing successful practice in pupil referral units* found that successful PRUs focused strongly on pupils' academic and personal development and on increasing their confidence and that 'these PRUs provided an interesting, relevant and appropriately accredited curriculum'.

Whilst spending time collecting data from interviews and the video diaries, I spent my time slowly and informally becoming integrated into the fabric of the PRU. After a while I was not necessarily a guest, but just a regular visitor. This was notable by my note on how privileged I felt on becoming accepted as part of the Explorer fabric (see research diary 15/5/2008, appendix S). I also noticed this acceptance by the transition into making my own, and others, cups of tea. As a consequence, I was able to gain a sense of what was taking place at the PRU, and extracts from my research diary can be found in appendix S which perhaps gives an indication of the many unplanned encounters, thoughts and observations I had. From my initial conversations with the headteacher and my own observations it was apparent that subject based teaching in a traditional sense had been replaced by experiential activity based sessions. Additionally, these sessions were further developed by specific, dedicated outdoor learning days, where a variety of activities were used as the basis for developing the personal and social skills. I informally observed a variety of sessions, playing board games for numeracy, literacy and co-operation, 'SuccessMaker' on the computers and a class favourite, cooking. It was apparent that these sessions were highly complex and multi-faceted in terms of people, learning and interactions and in the more structured and formal data gathering, I attempted to explore these areas.

The final key focus was on the leadership and vision of the PRU. I have mentioned above the strong sense of self-belief that I encountered on meeting the leadership staff. I interviewed individually the headteacher and the director of outdoor learning. I explored the 'what, why and how questions' concerning their involvement and development of the Explorer PRU including their perceptions of success.

Chapter 4 presents analyses and discusses the data in what is intended to be one coherent narrative. I considered other options but found them to be more awkward to access for the

reader. I adopted the approach of 'Within-Case Displays' discussed by Miles and Huberman (1994: 90). The qualitative nature of my data means that this section is text heavy, and something that my past positionality would have struggled with. I believe that it provides an interpretation of my data that is accessible to the reader, without reducing it to such an extent as to render it meaningless. Additionally, I have included some visual models, what others may term 'Venn diagrams' or Hyerle *et al* (2004) trademarks as 'Thinking Maps' in order to visually represent and help explain the points that are being made. These visual models also appear in other chapters of this thesis.

Chapter 5 draws conclusions from the data analysis and makes recommendations for further research. The interesting part of my research journey was how my conclusions took me into areas of thinking through the literature that I had little or no conception of when I started this thesis. Since this is an exploratory case study, it is apparent that each of the key themes that emerge could be researched with a more narrowly defined focus and detailed consideration of the issues, and this is more fully considered in 5.9 the 'Recommendations' section.

2. Literature Review

In this review of the literature I consider the concepts of disaffection, exclusion and a current educational context for disaffected and excluded school pupils, the Pupil Referral Unit (PRU). Then the specific context for this study, the Explorer PRU is considered. One of the features of its approach to educating pupils is the use of outdoor learning lessons. This review then considers the constructs of outdoor learning, outdoor education and other associated terms. I then consider how the outdoors has been used for developing character, how 'self' is defined and measured and its relation to behaviour. Finally I address how outdoor education has been considered to develop the self, particularly in relation to an individual's social capital.

2.1. Disaffection, Exclusion & Pupil Referral Units

This section considers the definitions, causes and current discourses on disaffection, exclusion and PRUs and starts with the political landscape and policy influences that has given prominence to this issue and the development of pupil referral units.

2.1.1. Political Influence

Disaffection and non-participation in education are an important concern for government. There is also unease about the behaviour of young people and the desire to promote social cohesion. The political imperative behind the current policy drive has its origins in 1997, when the new Labour government inherited what they perceived to be 'a crisis of rising levels of school exclusions' (Vulliamy & Webb, 2000: 119). There had been a rapid rise in school exclusions throughout the 1990s from approximately 3,000 in 1990 to 30,000 in 1998 (Vulliamy & Webb, 2000). Tackling social exclusion became a major policy goal of government and in this context, school exclusions are viewed as a problem, because of their perceived link with a section of society alienated from the mainstream by poverty, unemployment and criminality.

Children can be said to be 'on the margins' in the school system for a variety of complex and inter-related reasons. These are often conceptualised as disaffection and lack of participation. In the

UK most young people 'stay on in some form education beyond compulsory school leaving age and the *high skills society* has become part of the political policy rhetoric' (Hayden & Blaya, 2005: 67). This is a situation in which children 'on the margins' become more visible. Processes of marginalisation within the education system operate in a number of ways so that certain groups are moved into relatively powerless positions in which opportunities for normal social interaction and development are denied, or existing social divisions are reproduced by depressing the opportunities open to certain groups. There are also specific concerns about educational achievement and its connection to the future prospects of young people and the labour force needs of the economy (Hayden & Blaya, 2005).

Government concerns about escalating school exclusion rates are driven partly by the costs involved, both financial and human and partly by the apparent link between school exclusions and subsequent offending. By 1998 local education authorities were attempting to move towards prevention and on-mainstream-school site interventions. '... the need for off-site special units ('Pupil Referral Units') continued to increase and the numbers of pupils in EBD (emotional and behavioural difficulties) special schools remained roughly constant' (Cole *et al* 2003: 187). Despite national pressure to move towards the inclusion of all pupils, according to Cole *et al* (2003), LEAs continued to find it impossible to educate a small percentage of pupils with behavioural difficulties on mainstream sites. Some local education authorities were less convinced of the benefits of PRUs and worried about 'rurality', the word used to describe sparse population dispersal over a wide rural area, seeing this as a difficulty threatening the PRU's viability and desirability. 'Daily transport costs and time spent travelling by pupils could make it less attractive than residential schooling or support in mainstream options' Cole *et al* (2003: 198).

Policy and guidance on school exclusion reveals the tensions in the explanations of disaffection. These include the individualisation of reasons, the challenging behaviour and the consequent need for interventions or treatment, targeted at the individual young people. There have been attempts to categorise more precisely, the diverse nature of social, emotional and behavioural difficulties exhibited by pupils. This has resulted in some suggesting that pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties are authors of their own misfortune, and therefore deserve punishment, while others have intrinsic social, emotional and behavioural difficulties which deserve a therapy or other forms of treatment. The tension between punishment and treatment is evident in exclusions legislation (Munn *et al*, 2000) and as such I suggest reflects the wider

societal views concerning crime and punishment. Additionally, for those in care Sutherland (2007: 26) details government data and shows that for 'looked after children' (LAC), their educational, health and social attainments lag behind those for other children or young people.

The discourse on disaffection and exclusion is clearly part of the political agenda for 'social inclusion'. Tett (2003) describes how policies of government are designed to bring about social justice to ensure that all citizens, whatever their social or economic background, have opportunities to participate fully in society and have a high quality of life and Tett states (2003: 83) that 'these rather bland and meaningless phrases have been used to argue that education and lifelong learning have a central role to play in this process'. It is evident that political policy has influenced the development of the educational system, specifically PRUs. I suggest that there has been a swing of the political pendulum regarding educational philosophy. The location of disaffection in the problems of the individual and their subsequent inability to contribute to the nation's wealth, by work and taxation, strongly suggests that education is to prepare workers for the economic well being of the country. A more recent development has been the acknowledgement of the social and cultural impact that schools and their methods make to disaffection and exclusion. This acknowledgment suggests that perhaps "the system" is part of the disaffection and exclusion problem. This social cultural recognition has started to be acknowledged and influence policy. For example, the construct known as 'social capital' is clearly influential within the policy making consciousness, as evidenced by the Office for National Statistics (2001) review of the literature on social capital. More specifically, Munn (2000) discusses social capital, schools, and exclusions and explores the usefulness of the concept of social capital in relation to understanding school practices, particularly those aimed at tackling social exclusion. Munn (2000: 169) concludes that social capital is a 'helpful analytical tool' for considering the underachievement of disadvantaged children, in promoting social control, and in examining school practices in personal and social development. Social capital is discussed in section 2.2. below.

Hayden & Blaya (2005) highlight a complex and variable picture in which ideas about, and responses to, the problems of school disaffection and non-participation are exchanged and recycled. What is clear is that these issues include a diverse minority within the school system. It is a minority that increasingly demands attention, not least because of media coverage of the issues and political concerns about linkages with issues of social order and crime prevention. These

issues are also illustrative of the patchy response to a broader agenda of social inclusion as well as what it means to be a citizen.

The evidence calls for a stronger debate about the role of schools ... and the extent to which they can reduce rather than reproduce processes of marginalisation that particularly effect young people in the poorest socio-economic circumstances (Hayden & Blaya, 2005: 80).

Conceivably this remains a political debate and one that is starting to be addressed by the new, and perhaps more appropriate, secondary curriculum.

2.1.2. Pupil Referral Units

Local authorities have a duty to provide suitable education for all children and young people and to support their health, safety and welfare. Education outside of mainstream schools is generally called *alternative provision*. Currently, alternative educational provision is for children and young people without a school place. Around 135,000 pupils a year, mostly of secondary age, spend some time in alternative provision (DCSF 2008). As part of this, many local authorities establish and maintain schools for educating children who cannot be educated in mainstream or special schools. These are called *Pupil Referral Units (PRUs)*. In 2006, there were 450 PRUs in England (DfES, 2007). Approximately 45,000 alternative educational placements are in Pupil Referral Units (PRUs). Of this 75 per cent of young people in PRUs have special educational needs (DCSF 2008).

According to DfES (2007) PRUs cater for pupils who have been excluded, who are at risk of exclusion and those who are sick, pregnant or without a school place. The type of educational provision made at a PRU need not be the whole of the National Curriculum but should match the needs of local pupils effectively. PRUs should offer a broad balanced and relevant curriculum. PRU curricula will vary to address the pupils' particular needs with cross-curricula approaches, personalised learning and should focus on: literacy and numeracy skills; improving behaviour; personal care and social skills; motivation for learning; special educational needs; and any additional individual needs (DfES, 2007). As such it appears that PRUs offer a 'remedy' to those pupils who do not fit or comply with the mainstream system of provision. This seems to suggest a medical model of: pupils with a problem, who are then treated in isolation with whatever

curriculum best suits them. It does not seem to acknowledge or address any issues of inclusion or underlying causes of pupils' exclusion from the mainstream provision.

2.1.3. Exclusion, Disaffection and Emotional Behavioural Difficulties (EBD)

Disaffection, disruption and challenging behaviour is often associated with children and young people who have emotional and behavioural difficulties (EBD), and this challenging behaviour is a key feature of excluded pupils. However, defining these terms is itself challenging and according to Ofsted (2003: 10) 'has always been an unsatisfactory enterprise' and is considered to pose 'chronic definition difficulties'.

There has been an historical evolution in attempting to define and describe these types of pupils. The term *maladjusted* was in use by 1930 with schools established for the maladjusted, advocating an educational as much as a medical approach. The category of *maladjusted children* did not become a legal definition until the regulations that followed the Education Act 1944. The Education Act 1981 abolished the categories of the Education Act 1944, preferring to use the generic term *special educational needs* but government and practitioners rapidly adopted a new label of *emotional and behavioural difficulties*, defined as a form of special educational need. In Circular 9/94, the Department for Education gave a detailed and extended definition of EBD (DfE, 1994), reflecting an increasing recognition of the bio-psycho-social and ecosystemic nature of EBD (Ofsted, 2003).

Children with EBD are on a continuum. Their problems are clearer and greater than sporadic naughtiness or moodiness and yet not so great as to be classed as mental illness (DfE, 1994:4).

In 2001, the revised special educational needs code of practice (DfEE, 2001: 69) talks of 'persistent emotional and/or behavioural difficulties, which are not ameliorated by the management techniques usually employed in the school', prompting additional intervention or 'School Action' (DfES, 2001: 68). The rationale for 'School Action Plus' discusses the pupil having

emotional or behavioural difficulties which substantially and regularly interfere with their own learning or that of the class group, despite having an individual management programme (DfES, 2001: 71).

According to the 2001 SEN Code of Practice, Local Education Authorities must identify and make a statutory assessment of those children for whom they are responsible who have special educational needs and who probably need a statement. The LEA should seek evidence of identifiable factors that could impact on learning outcomes, including:

Evidence of significant emotional or behavioural difficulties, as indicated by clear recorded examples of withdrawn or disruptive behaviour; a marked and persistent inability to concentrate; signs that the child experiences considerable frustration or distress in relation to their learning difficulties; difficulties in establishing and maintaining balanced relationships with their fellow pupils or with adults; and any other evidence of a significant delay in the development of life and social skills (DfES, 2001: 83).

Defining emotional and behavioural difficulties (EBD) continues to be complex and problematic. I recommend the report by Dr John Visser (Ofsted, 2003) for a comprehensive review of literature concerning children and young people who present challenging behaviour. However, for the purpose of this thesis, Cooper (1999: 239) concisely summarises an emerging consensus on the causation of EBD: 'Whilst biology may create propensities for certain social and behavioural outcomes, biology is always mediated by environment and culture'. For most pupils, it is the cumulative interactive effects of the different parts of children's lives which give rise to challenging behaviour (Ofsted, 2003). There is an evident tension between biological, medical perspectives of EBD and those which are socially and culturally located. As such this is evident in the causes of EBD and the subsequent manner in which these children and young people are *treated or educated*.

2.1.4. Causes of Disaffection

It is suggested by Munn *et al* (2000) that explanations of the causes of disaffected behaviour can be found in the underpinning policy and practice on school exclusion and that generally these explanations fall into two categories. I suggest these can be considered as: *medical/individual* and *social/shared* causes of disaffected and challenging behaviour.

Firstly, there are those which place causes within the individual child and family. In the past, most explanations were fixed in the individual child who was seen as either *mad* or *bad*. This would then require either sustained medical or psychiatrically based interventions or punishments.

Often the best that could be done was to provide some form of containment. Current medical individualistic explanations also include the neurobiological. These are often used to explain the behaviour of children who show an apparently abnormal incapacity for sustained attention (e.g. attention deficit disorder, Aspergers syndrome etc.). Therefore, one of the standard responses to disaffected behaviour is to do something about the individual child (Munn *et al*, 2000).

Secondly, there are those which put the causes in society in general and in schools as organisations (Munn *et al* 2000). Didaskalou & Millward (2007) propose that the current phase of educational reforms, with its emphasis on the 'raising of standards' and 'target setting' and the role of increased assessment, does in fact generate problems of pupil disaffection and this may have been overlooked. The political drivers behind PRUs and disaffection are considered below. Didaskalou & Millward (2007) investigate the experiences of schools in exploring a different approach to pupil assessment emphasising the development of a number of generic 'life skills'. By making assessment transparent and using language that is understood within and beyond the school, this helps 'to neutralise some of the key areas for conflict in transactions between pupils, parents and teachers' (Didaskalou & Millward, 2007: 201). Additionally they propose that 'by individualising the assessment process and allowing pupils considerable autonomy in monitoring their own progress and setting their own goals, it encourages increased individual autonomy, making the learning process more personalised'.

The ways in which children think, feel and behave towards adults and teachers as well as each other reflect the values and attitudes of the adult world in which children develop, according to Cooper & Cefai (2009) and they argue that there is a need for greater awareness of these contemporary values and the shared social context. The work by Cooper & Cefai (2009) suggests that schools need to pay even more attention to promoting the positive emotional and social wellbeing of children than they do to trying to control their behaviour. 'The more that adults open up the channels of communication with children and young people, and listen to their perspectives and opinions, the more opportunity there will be for dialogue' (Cooper & Cefai, 2009: 99).

The notion of disaffection as a social construct is well articulated by Vulliamy & Webb (2000). It appears that much of the contemporary writing on EBD and disaffection acknowledges the social and systemic contribution towards the problem. At the heart of this is the relationship between pupil and teacher. This is the interface of interaction between disaffected pupil and challenged

school. Research on pupil motivation found that for the pupils the curriculum needed 'more interest, more practical activities and more choice' whilst teachers needed 'to show justice, patience, understanding, respect, humour and informality' (Solomon & Rogers, 2001: 333). Although pupils ranked teacher–pupil relationships above curriculum as a *cause* of disaffection, they placed curriculum changes at the top of the list of *solutions* (Solomon & Rogers, 2001). Both of these points are now considered.

2.1.5. Effective approaches to engaging pupils

Macleod (2007) explores the 'alternative curriculum' approach to disaffected pupils, as a response to concerns about their behaviour. Pupils attribute their behaviours to dissatisfaction with the curriculum. However, Macleod argues that aside from the skills and attitude of the teacher, the pupil-teacher relationship also plays an important role in preventing disaffection. Macleod suggests that changes to the curriculum alone are not likely to be sufficient to provide long-term solutions to pupil disaffection. Macleod states (2007: 35) 'The importance placed on relationships by pupils in this and other studies suggests that as much attention should be focused on teachers being able and supported to form mutually respectful and trusting relationships with their pupils'. Additionally, Solomon & Rogers (2001) suggest the need for caution in implementing curriculum focused strategies for reducing disaffection. Solomon & Rogers (2001: 344) found that a number of practitioners commented on the need to raise *general* self-esteem and increase *general* motivation, and they perceived this as a major task of PRUs. However, they also suggested that this 'should be aimed at raising self-efficacy in specific curriculum areas rather than at a general raising of self-esteem'. My concerns with 'self-esteem' and its almost ubiquitous presence in the disaffection discourse is explored in section 2.6 below. The study by Didaskalou & Millward (2007) supports this view about curriculum content and considers managing behaviour and reducing disaffection by emphasising the development of a number of generic 'life skills'. Didaskalou & Millward (2007: 202) argue that this approach can be successful because it permits 'more time to be spent on developing relationships, building consensual values and the other attributes... important in building successful schools and communities'.

One of the difficulties of mainstream re-integration after time in a PRU is the attitudes and practices of the teachers. Despite the commitment of Behaviour Support Service teachers to the

reintegration of excluded pupils into mainstream schools, Meo & Parker (2004: 103) found that 'the pedagogic practices adopted by these teachers served to contribute to an amplification, rather than a moderation, of pupil disaffection and misbehaviour'. The fundamental importance of relationships is described by Cooper (2003: 172) as 'inter-generational' and he highlights that the quality of communication between participants in human institutions is vital. Cooper (2003:172) argues that 'the development of intra- and inter-personal communication skills feature strongly in approaches to intervention for children and with emotional and behavioural difficulties'. The successes of this approach are in contrast to the pedagogic practices discovered by Meo & Parker (2004: 109) who found that 'the individualistic approach to behaviour that underpinned teachers' practices also hampered staff strategies'. Additionally, Meo & Parker (2004:112) found that the 'majority of pupils... failed to access any kind of trusting or meaningful relationships with teachers...'.

It may be that the traditional power dynamic between teacher and pupil requires modification. For example, in the study by Riley *et al* (2004) the importance of listening to disaffected young people and hearing the pupil voice is discussed. They conclude that if schools are to improve student motivation for learning and to reduce behaviour problems and exclusions, there needs to be an effective *dialogue* between staff and students about how to achieve a culture of *mutual respect*, not just one that adheres to rules of conduct (2004: 178). I argue that the traditional mainstream structures and pupil teacher interactions do not have *dialogue* and *mutual respect* as inherent default settings. One way of changing the teacher-pupil power dynamic may be by combining educational and therapeutic approaches as described by Cooper (1999) to develop social competence for those with challenging behaviours. One specific example is the concept of 'Nurture Groups' (Cooper & Tiknaz, 2005; Cooper & Whitebread, 2007). According to Cooper & Whitebread (2007: 172) the underlying principle of the nurturing approach is to enable close, supportive and caring relationships between staff and pupils which is mainly achieved by enabling children to value themselves through their experience of being valued and cared for by others and 'central to a psychological understanding of and justification for nurture groups is a socio-cultural theory of learning'. I can hear colleague's voices from mainstream secondary schools challenge their ability to *enable close, supportive and caring relationships* when, from my experience, they teach in excess of 300 children per week. Close relationships may be more manageable in a primary school context, but the factory production line of subject based teaching appears to put barriers in the way of knowing let alone nurturing pupils. From my experience, a more therapeutic

approach to developing relationships may be found in the outdoor education curriculum approach. The findings of Fox & Avramidis (2003) suggest that an outdoor education programme was successful in promoting positive behaviour and academic gains for most pupils. Fox & Avramidis (2003: 267) conclude that 'it represents a powerful, albeit underused, tool for reducing disaffection'. Outdoor education is discussed below in section 2.4 onwards.

2.2. Social capital

According to Field (2008) the term social capital is a way of defining the intangible resources of community, shared values and trust upon which we all draw in daily life. The appeal of it as a theoretical basis for this thesis is its simplicity and I suggest its appropriateness as argued by Munn (2000). As Field (2008: 1) states: 'the theory of social capital is, at heart, most straightforward. Its central thesis can be summed up in two words: relationships matter'. My observations at the Explorer PRU saw that relationships appeared to be at the heart of the social interactions between teachers and pupils.

This thesis is not the place for a full critical consideration of the theories of Bourdieu (1986, 1990, 1993), Coleman (1990) and Putnam (1993, 2000) or the question of why social capital is important. In Table 1 below there is a brief summary of definitions by these authors.

Table 1: A summary of key authors on Social Capital (Smith, 2007)

Bourdieu	'the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance or recognition' (Bourdieu 1986: 248). 'made up of social obligations ('connections'), which is convertible, in certain conditions, into economic capital and may be institutionalized in the form of a title of nobility' (Bourdieu 1986: 243).
Coleman	'Social capital is defined by its function. It is not a single entity, but a variety of different entities having two characteristics in common: They all consist of some aspect of social structure, and they facilitate certain actions of individuals who are within the structure' (Coleman 1990: 302).

Putnam	'features of social organization such as networks, norms, and social trust that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit' (Putnam 1995: 67).
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For further exploration of social capital, I have found the work of Baron *et al* (2000), Field (2003, 2008) and Halpern (2005) to provide thorough overviews and explanations of, what these authors claim to be, one of the most important and exciting areas to emerge out of the social sciences in many years.

There is evidence for the notion of the importance of social capital in contemporary educational discourse. The Office for National Statistics (2001) and Babb's (2005) analysis provide evidence of how social capital has been widely taken up within politics and by policy makers as an explanation for the decline in social cohesion and community values. Halpern (2005) suggests that this interest in social capital is driven by the growing evidence of how social capital impacts upon economic growth, health, crime, education and even government effectiveness.

In terms of social capital theory and its applicability to educational contexts, Field (2008: 55) states that 'we can conclude, with some confidence, that there is a close relationship between people's social networks and their educational performance'. Munn (2000: 172) argues that social capital as a concept is a 'useful analytical tool in understanding school practices'. Halpern (2005: 166) concludes that social capital 'at the micro-, meso- and macro-levels has a significant impact on educational outcomes'. It is apparent that my research with the pupils and the PRU only considers a slice or portion of the influences on the individual pupil's social capital; the networks, communities and values of Explorer. Additionally, there are authors Stoddart (2004) and Beames & Atencio (2008) who consider the building and development of social capital through outdoor education programmes. Although specific consideration of outdoor programmes and the building of social capital is limited, it is useful to consider as both outdoor learning and the increase in capital were evident features of the Explorer curriculum.

2.3. The Explorer Pupil Referral Unit

The Ofsted report (2008a) for Explorer provides concise information about its structure that is précised in this section. A fuller description features the Ofsted report summary found in appendix A. The Explorer PRU provides education for students in Years 7 to 9 for a two-term intervention programme because they are at risk of exclusion from mainstream schools or they have been permanently excluded and a new school is being sought for them. A 'hard-to-place panel' admits the majority of students. They have a clearly 'timelined' exit plan and an identified school to return to at the point of entry to the PRU. The unit provides for a very small number of students with a statement of special educational needs for challenging and complex behaviours whilst the local authority finds a suitable special school for them. The PRU operates out of three separate buildings situated across the county. The main site houses the administration centre and can provide for up to 15 students. The other two sites, a considerable distance from the main site, have the capacity to provide for 10 students each. Cole *et al* (2003) described some local authorities concerns over 'rurality' and clearly, for Explorer, the issue of 'rurality' could have been a main concern. None the less, being located in the SW of England has advantages, particularly in curriculum design that outweigh the disadvantages of a rural location. Whilst the cost of teaching pupils in low ratios, and transporting them in a rural setting, raise the cost per head of education, Explorer is significantly different to other PRUs in the area in one major respect. Explorer has one headteacher in a PRU that is 'a school with classrooms 80 miles long' (Headteacher comment noted in Leather, 2008). The standard model for a PRU is to have one headteacher in every location. The cost savings are apparent. However, there could be a downside to this structure. I suggest that the presence of the headteacher, as leader and authority figure for staff and pupils, has an influence on the daily social and educational interactions. Therefore, their lack of presence would also have an influence. Whilst this absence may be mitigated by email and telephone conversation, the financial cost saving may have overridden any aspect or consideration of 'educational cost' that may arise.

The Explorer PRU is maintained and run by the local authority. The authority maintains eight PRUs in a semi-rural county that has seventeen special schools, thirty seven secondary schools and three hundred and eighteen primary schools (schoolsnet.com, online). The number of permanent

exclusions in 2006/07 was 107 and in 2007/08 was 86. The information in table 2 below summarises the numbers on roll for PRUs within the local authority. This indicates the relative provision within the county, as well as the numbers of pupils on roll with some form of special educational need (SEN).

Table 2: Numbers on Roll Spring 2008: Comparative data for Explorer and the Local Authority (LA)

	Total	Statemented	SEN – no statement
No. on roll in LA	155	27	121
Explorer PRU	36	8	28
Dual Registered Pupils	49	10	33
Explorer PRU	16	1	15

Ofsted (2005) reports; most PRUs base their curriculum on a ‘mainstream’ model. However, this is normally with adaptations to meet the individual needs of pupils. In some PRUs pupils with more difficult behaviour have opportunities to follow additional courses in music, physical education and art. Outdoor pursuits are often included either weekly or as residential experiences. Apparently, ‘these adaptations, when carefully planned, increase pupils’ motivation, improve their attitudes and behaviour and help build self-esteem’ (Ofsted, 2005: 14) although there is no evidence provided to support these statements. It is evident that this approach is widely used and regarded as appropriate for PRUs. As such it is worth exploring the notion that participation in outdoor pursuits helps increase pupils’ motivation, improve their attitudes and behaviour and help build self-esteem, by considering the cultural heritage of English outdoor education.

2.4. Outdoor Pursuits, Outdoor Education and Outdoor Learning

Outdoor pursuits, outdoor education and outdoor learning are just some of the terms found when undertaking activities in the outdoors. They are often used synonymously. There appears to be

no real consensus within the literature as to their definition or their distinctive character. I have argued elsewhere (see Leather & Porter, 2006) that the change in titles has been a chronological development to account for the broadening contexts and approaches in which outdoor activities are used.

There follows three 'models' of the outdoors. I have included these not as absolute arguments, but to illustrate some of the contemporary thinking and as an aid to understanding what it is that educating or learning outdoors can provide. Higgins (2005) uses the 3 ring model of Outdoor Education, as developed at Moray House, University of Edinburgh. He states (2005: 111)

... the role of the outdoor educator is seen as someone who facilitates learning in each, or all three, of the circles according to the needs of the individuals they teach and the requirements of the curriculum. A fully competent outdoor educator will feel confident to work in all three circles whilst always adhering to safe and professional practice.



Figure I - Outdoor Education Model (Higgins, 2005)

Martin (2001) considers the diversity of outcomes and programme options described in the academic outdoor journals of Australia and the USA that all fall under the broad heading of outdoor education. He maps them in order to show the connections and disconnections within the broader outdoor education field.

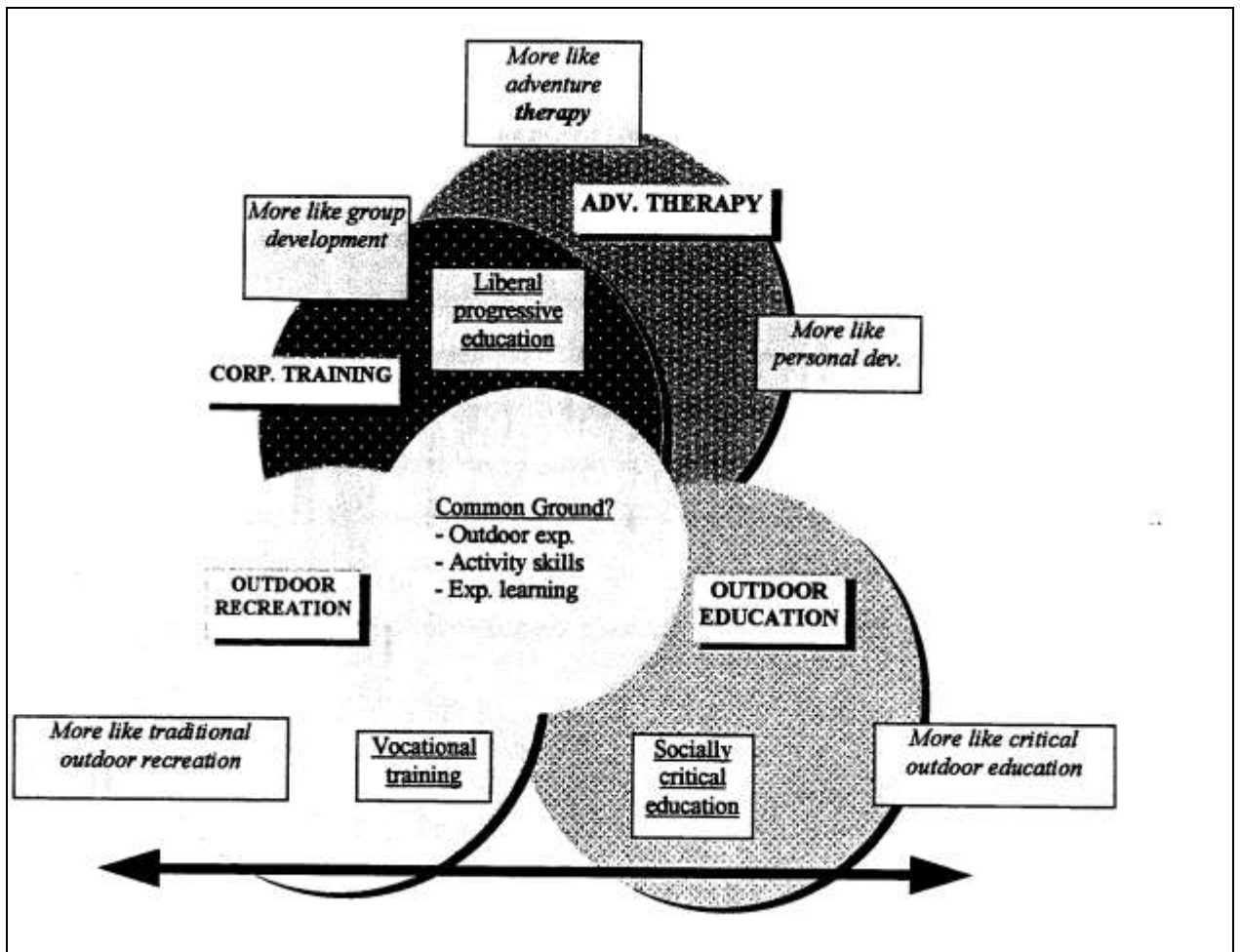


Figure II - 'Mapping the Field' Model (Martin, 2001)

In 2000 the Institute for Outdoor Learning emerged in the UK after the National Association for Outdoor Education converged with similar organisations. This reflected a broadening understanding of uses of the outdoors for educational purposes. The shift from education to learning, also reflected, I suggest, is a cultural shift within education and a national change of emphasis towards individualised considerations of learning and teaching, rather than processes of education. As such, I developed my own model to suggest the breadth of what outdoor learning encompasses. As with the others, it serves as a useful tool for discussion, rather than an absolute claim of a definition.

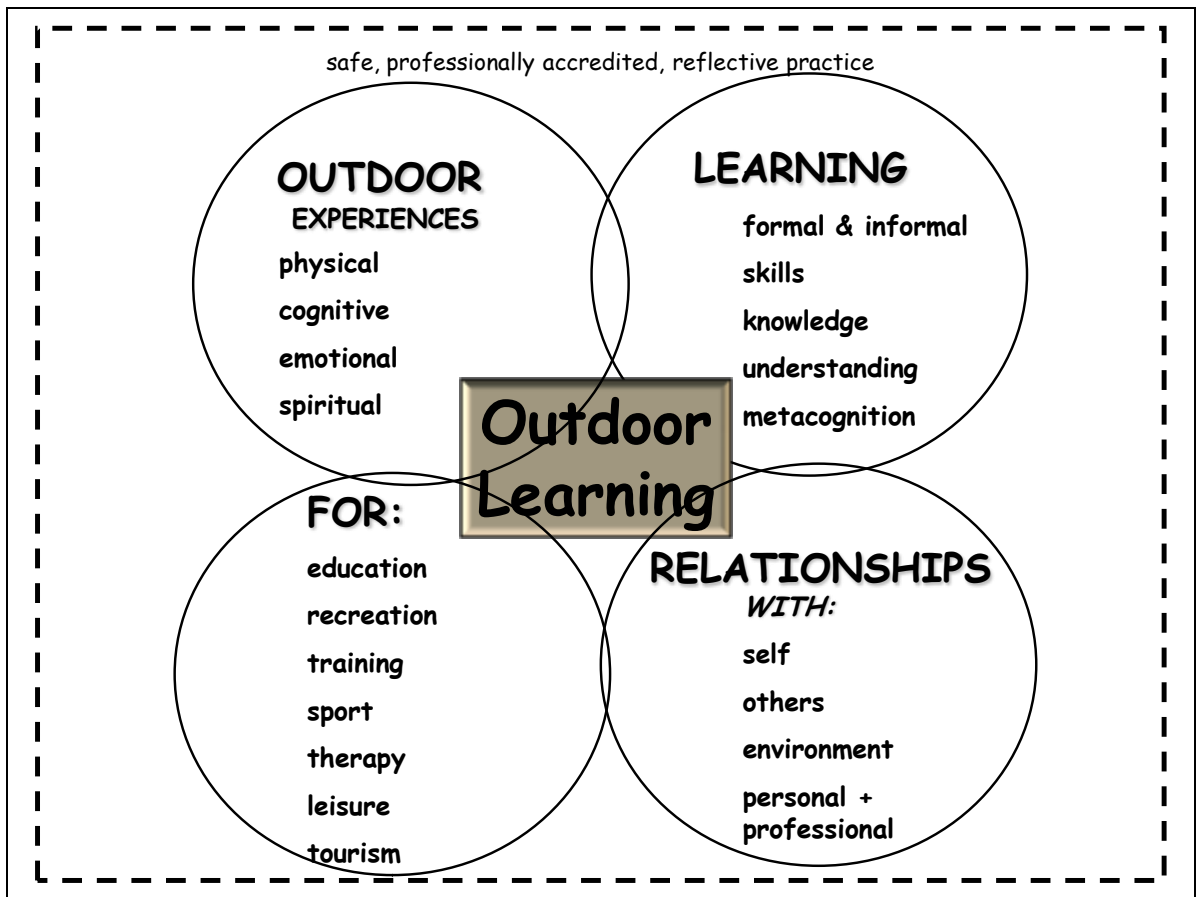


Figure III - Model of Outdoor Learning (adapted from Leather & Porter, 2006)

I suggest it is important to consider this terminology, although some may consider it to be mere semantics. One of the key figures at the PRU is the Director of Outdoor Learning, who also happens to be an Accredited Practitioner of the Institute for Outdoor Learning (APIOL). The traditional outdoor pursuit approach discussed earlier would not recognise some of the activities undertaken by the PRU engaged in outdoor learning. This model is perhaps of use to help understand the reasons for engaging in some of the less traditional activities. In this thesis I will use the terms outdoor education and outdoor learning. They have a historical development and at times it is more appropriate to use one term over the other.

2.5. Outdoor Education for developing Character

The evolution of outdoor education in the UK and its use in 'personal development' is well documented (Hopkins & Putnam, 1993; Barrett & Greenaway, 1995; Cook, 1999; Nicol 2002; Leather & Porter, 2006). To some extent outdoor education as a construct was born out of circumstances associated with war and the need to make children and young men 'fit for war'. The relationships between outdoor activities, character building and the needs of the country, in particular fitness for war, had long been recognised by supporters of public schools. Character-building activities for leadership in public schools were dominated by the cult of athleticism and frequently linked to jingoism and war (Cook, 1999). The qualities expected to be engendered included courage, loyalty, endurance, a sense of honour, self-denial, fair play, public spirit and obedience.

During the late 1850s, the doctrine of Muscular Christianity became an integral part of the public school educational system. The primary reason was to encourage Christian morality and help develop the character of the future captains of industry and political leaders, and in turn strengthen the British Empire (Watson *et al*, 2005). The founding of the Boys' Brigade by Sir William Smith further strengthened the synthesis of sport and Christianity during the Victorian era. Smith identified the use of outdoor adventure in building character and manliness, and was intrigued by the scouting methods used by soldiers in the Boer war. Baden-Powell, a hero of the war, rewrote his *Aids to Scouting* for the Boys Brigade. Baden-Powell saw his duty in terms of leading by example and rescuing 'working class boys who loafed on street corners and drifted towards bad citizenship' (Cook, 1999: 160). Eventually, this resulted in the publication of *Scouting for Boys* (1907) and the formation of the Boy Scouts in Britain in 1897 (Watson *et al*, 2005).

Underlying all was the public school message of *mens sana in corpore sano* (a sound mind in a healthy body). The aim of the activities was the production of 'disciplined, socially responsible and self-reliant young men' (Barrett & Greenaway, 1995: 23). Fundamental to this belief in character building is that the behaviour of young people can be shaped by the intervention of adults in order that their characters and energies are re-directed into new and potentially more positive activities and behaviours. It is argued that there are two reasons that underpin the use of outdoor education as a means of influencing the characters of young people. Cook (1999: 158) identifies

these as 'preparing adolescents to serve the needs of the nation and ensuring their leisure-time was spent in ways that would not disrupt society.'

Both Baden-Powell and Kurt Hahn (founder of Gordonstoun School and 'grandfather' of the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme) shared the widely held assumption that the social and political elite could set an example for the working classes to follow. In the period between the two world wars, 'leisure' was seen as an underlying cause of juvenile delinquency and 'recreation, particularly in the "healthy outdoors" a useful way of reducing the juvenile crime rate' (Cook, 1999: 160). Prior to the 1944 Education Act and the post war development of outdoor education, it is evident that the outdoors was rarely used for only one educational objective. Children were taken into the outdoors to improve their health as well as stimulating their learning through direct experience of nature. However, because it also drew attention to the way in which behaviour could be modified, a consequence was that outdoor education came to be seen as a means of resolving a number of social issues (Cook, 1999; Nicol et al, 1999).

References to outdoor activities in the 1943 Norwood Report and the 1944 Education Act suggest that there was little competition among ideologies about the purpose of outdoor education. The type of character training related with physical challenges and associated with public schools 'eclipsed those associated with the less competitive approaches and those inspired by romantic notions of a return to nature and the simple life' (Cook, 1999: 169). In the post war years, outdoor education became the means of improving health, stimulating learning and reducing the incidence of juvenile delinquency. Post-war society provided a 'rich seedbed for sowing new ideas about education' (Nicol, 2002: 40). Although character building was less obviously promoted after the Second World War, both the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme and boys' physical education, adopted characteristics of character building in the tradition recommended in the 1943 Norwood Report (Hopkins & Putnam, 1993). Hopkins & Putnam (1993: 29) suggest that part of the rationale behind this 'Outward Bound' approach was 'to enhance among young merchant seamen the physical and moral requirements for survival at sea after ships went down to enemy submarines'.

The White Hall Centre for Open Country Pursuits provided the model most commonly adopted by Local Education Authorities as they established residential outdoor education centres in the late 1950s and 1960s. In the programme at this Centre the various tensions and strands within outdoor education were resolved in favour of character building. Cook (1999: 172) suggests how to this extent, 'the 1944 Education Act succeeded in embodying within the maintained sector, a

strand of public school education that belonged to an era of imperial power that was rapidly fading.'

Currently, personal and social development is still a significant part of outdoor education. The nature of how young people are challenged has evolved over time. Outdoor practitioners are now more likely to use the 'Challenge by Choice' model of personal growth as advocated by Rohnke (1989). This is in contrast to the Hahnian notion of 'Impelling into Experience' as articulated by Mortlock (1984). The manner in which the individual has their character built has changed. However, Brookes (2003) argues that character building in outdoor adventure education is actually a flawed concept. He examines the persistence of the idea of character building in the face of what he suggests is strong evidence that outdoor experiences cannot change personal traits. None the less, my own research (Leather, 2001) found the themes of self-development were widespread in the majority of school outdoor education programmes and this was perceived as a positive outcome by teachers. Additionally, Rickinson *et al*, (2004) undertook a comprehensive review of research on outdoor learning from a UK perspective. They found that the key positive impacts of outdoor learning were amongst other things increased social development and enhanced self esteem and confidence. I will now consider some aspects of the measurement of 'self'.

2.6. Measuring the 'Self': Esteem, Concept or Worth?

The terms self-esteem, self-concept and self-worth are increasingly important ideas and their discussion and measurement continues to occupy the academic field (for example Marsh, 1986; Harter, 1990; Dweck, 1999 and Mruk, 2006) and specifically in education such as Lawrence (2006) who focuses on enhancing self-esteem in the classroom and Branden (1994: 218) who argues that 'we know a lot about the skills that make for competence in human interactions, and this knowledge needs to be part of a young person's education'. Dweck (1999, 2006) explores misconceptions about self-esteem, particularly related to education, and challenges the notion of fixed social traits and their role in motivation, personality and development.

These notions of self also remain ideas of some importance to the general public as evidenced by the large range of literature that has developed offering advice on enhancing self-esteem, including that of children (for example Sher, 1998; Kaufman, 1999; Plummer & Harper, 2007;). It appears that the term 'self-esteem' has passed into everyday general use. As such I suggest that its meaning has become a generalised, homogenised term that is widely used, sometimes in a simplified manner. As Mruk (2006: 8) points out 'that we all know what self esteem "really is" because it is a human phenomenon, and we are all human beings.'

There has been much debate over the relative merits of the terms self-esteem, self-concept and self-worth as well as other associated terms. According to Mruk (2006) the many terms used leads to confusion and the problem in this field of study is there is much variation in the defining process. There is so much variation, that defining self esteem 'involves entering a "definitional maze" that causes considerable confusion (Mruk, 2006: 10). However, this is not a recent dilemma. Over thirty years ago Shavelson *et al* (1976) criticised research associated with self-concept studies because of the lack of consistency in definitions stating that 'definitions of self-concept are imprecise and vary from one study to the next' (1976: 408).

The literature on 'self' is also inundated with difficult language. There is a sense that common language notions of self-esteem are sometimes substituted for more precise, explicit, scientific definitions, creating the illusion of a universally accepted, well defined phenomenological body (Butler & Gasson, 2005). The mysterious description and inter-changeability of terms has led to concepts such as self image and self-esteem being used synonymously and the expansion of a glut of ill defined and confusing labels such as self worth, self belief, self-concept, self awareness and self regard being employed (Butler & Gasson, 2005). Harter (1990) suggests the terms used to describe the self are simplistic prefixes rather than legitimate constructs, and as such much of the literature on self appears un-interpretable.

From an historical reading of the literature, Shavelson *et al*, (1976: 411) defined self-concept as 'self-perceptions that are formed through one's experience with interpretations of one's environment'. They suggest that self-concept is influenced especially by evaluations by significant others, and reinforcements of one's own behaviour. The authors are influenced by the work of Mead (1934) who popularised the notion of self as an object of awareness. Mead (1934) suggested that a person's response to himself is in some way influenced by how others respond to him. He saw the individual as an object of awareness composed of a variety of different selves.

He acknowledged the importance of significant others in the construct of self-worth. He defined significant others as those who administer punishment and rewards in a person's life. The formation of self is therefore dependent on how a person perceives he is judged by significant others and comparing these perceptions to the ideals and standards he has developed for himself. Essentially, Mead suggests that the concept of self is a social product and construct arising out of an individual's experiences with other people (Harter, 1999; Mruk, 2006).

Having a positive sense of self has been suggested by Harter (1990) to be central to the adaptive functioning of the individual, a characteristic that is perhaps useful in order to conform to social norms, behave appropriately and remain within mainstream education. Harter (1985, 1988, 1990, 1999) uses the term 'global self-worth' which she defines as 'the overall value one places on the self as a person, in contrast to the domain specific evaluations of one's competence or adequacy' (Harter, 1990: 67).

According to Mruk (2006) the gap between the psychological and social views of the self is closing. He suggests that Harter brought the two together by using modern developmental psychology to show how both behavioural competence works with social approval to create self-esteem or self-worth. Harter (1999: 5) 'employ[s] the terms "self-esteem" and "self-worth" interchangeably' and she considers these as global evaluations of the self. However, Harter (1999: 5) reserves the term *self-concept* for 'evaluative judgements of attributes within discrete domains'. For example, Harter's (1985) Self Perception Profile for Children, SPPC, has five discrete self-concept domains (scholastic, social, athletic, physical, behavioural) as well as a generic global measurement of self-worth. In this thesis I use the term *self-esteem* as the culturally normalised term of global evaluation. I return to the discrete domains of self-concept and the work of Susan Harter later.

2.7. Self esteem and Behaviour

According to Lawrence (2006) the raising of self esteem can lead to *fewer behavioural problems*. Emler (2001) suggests that self-esteem is potentially linked to behaviours in complex ways. The simplest option is that self-esteem has its own direct effect on behaviour, but this is only one of many. It also includes the likelihood that self-esteem is either the consequence rather than cause, or that self-esteem and behaviour are both influenced by something else. According to Emler

(2001: 58) this is unfortunate since, 'much research has not been up to the task of analysing these links adequately and is therefore virtually useless in answering the critical question: does self-esteem affect behaviour or not?' However, Haney & Durlak's (1998: 423) meta-analytic review of changing self-esteem suggests otherwise when they state that the meta-analysis 'indicated significant improvement in children's and adolescents' self-esteem... and significant concomitant changes in behaviour, personality and academic functioning'.

Emler (2001) has highlighted an association between low self-esteem and an assortment of problems in young people, arguing that such individuals tend to treat themselves badly and may invite undesirable treatment from others, but they tend not to treat others harmfully. Although definitions of self-concept and self-esteem still remain debatable, there is gathering acceptance (e.g. Emler, 2001; Butler & Gasson, 2005) that self-concept refers to a multi-dimensional global idea of the self, whilst self-esteem reflects a person's uni-dimensional evaluative assessment of themselves.

Educational philosophy has been influenced by the notion that children with good self-esteem are immunised from a wide range of problems. It has been widely considered that those with high self-esteem act independently, assume responsibility, tolerate frustration, attempt new tasks with confidence and readily offer assistance to others (Emler, 2001). Conversely those with low self-esteem are likely to show depression, become pregnant during teenage years, and have suicidal thoughts, experience unemployment (male), have eating disorders (female) and have difficulty in forming and sustaining social relationships, according to Emler (2001). In contrast, the weight of evidence suggests those with low self-esteem are not more likely to commit crime, use or abuse illegal drugs, drink alcohol, smoke to excess, abuse children or fail academically. Emler summarises that those with low self-esteem treat themselves badly and may invite bad treatment by others, but they tend not to treat others badly.

According to Butler & Gasson (2005) early attempts to estimate self-esteem in childhood and adolescence used the Rosenberg SES (Self-esteem Scale, 1965) and Coopersmith SEI (Self-esteem Inventory, 1967) and a review over the last 20 years suggests the Piers-Harris SCS (Self-concept Scale) is the most frequently employed measure. There now appears, both theoretically and psychometrically, to be an acceptance of multi-dimensionality with respect to the self, with the latest scales designed around such a notion.

Many definitions of self-esteem and self-concept have been proposed, yet there remains little agreement in classification. Given self-esteem and self-concept are hypothetical constructs devised to summarise certain features of human behaviour, it is perhaps unsurprising to find a lack of a universal definition. However, Butler & Gasson (2005: 191) in their review of scales of measurement, propose that there are some evident themes:

- the global over-arching view of self may be regarded as 'self-concept'
- the evaluative aspect relates to worth and 'self-esteem'
- the descriptive facets referring to characteristics available to an individual in defining self may be understood as 'self image'
- a notion of competency in terms of how effective a person considers they will be in undertaking a task, has been referred to as 'self efficacy'

This review appears to overlook Harter's argument (1999) that self concept is also evaluative, but based on judgements made of attributes within discrete domains. Harter (1982, 1985, 1988) has developed a theoretical model of the causes and consequences of self-esteem. Her findings reveal that self-esteem is a direct function of competence in domains of importance as well as the approval of significant others. As a result Harter developed the psychometrical self-report instruments to access the constructs in the model. These measures include an array of Self-Perception Profiles; for Children, Adolescents, and also Learning Disabled Students, College Students, Adults in the world of work and family, and the Elderly. As such, this multi-dimensional construct of self appears better suited to the complexities of human behaviour than the earlier uni-dimensional scales developed by Rosenberg and Coopersmith.

More recently, Harter *et al* (1998) has turned their attention to the multiple selves that are created as individuals move into adolescence. This greater differentiation brings with it the potential liability that the attributes that define one's multiple selves may lead to opposing characteristics (e.g., cheerful with peers but depressed with parents; outgoing with friends but inhibited in romantic relationships). Seemingly contradictory attributes can and do cause perceived conflicts within the adolescent's self-portrait, particularly for females. The presence of opposing attributes also raises concerns over which such attributes reflect the true self versus false self behaviour. From my perspective, this highlights the key issue about the measurement of self. Namely that the instruments used are self reporting. Pupils in an educational setting such as a PRU may have literacy skills and comprehension of advanced vocabulary that is often limited.

Their ability to understand the questions and also relate it to their behaviour and feelings could make this problematic.

The other option for measuring self-esteem is through observations. Harter (1999: 39) discusses 'behaviourally presented self-esteem'. She developed an instrument to measure this in young children, who are generally unable to cognitively or verbally formulate a general concept of their worth. Essentially, adults familiar with young children are able to evaluate a range of behaviours (confidence, initiative, curiosity and independence) and evaluate their self-esteem. However, Emler (2001) highlights that research has shown that self reports are largely unrelated to the observer ratings in studies comparing observed values to self-reported values. As such it is an unreliable method of assessing an individual pupil's self-esteem. A small scale study by Miller & Parker (2006) supports this, and they advise caution when teachers make judgements about pupils' self-esteem. They suggest that many primary teachers wish to help children who suffer from low self-esteem. In order to do this, it is necessary to identify such children. It is almost taken for granted that teachers can make quite accurate judgements based on the knowledge built up through day-to-day interactions with the children. Miller & Parker (2006) looked at the match between teacher judgements of their pupils' self-esteem and the children's own self reports. Their findings suggested that teachers are not as good at this as they would like to think.

I propose that there is still a widely held belief that teachers can judge pupils self-esteem and this is a common misconception. Observed behaviours can be indicators of a pupil's 'self' but there is a danger of jumping to conclusions and believing that we are good at this judgement (Miller & Parker, 2006). Additionally, there are other misconceptions about self-esteem and how to foster it. There is a simplistic connection between poor behaviour and low self-esteem, despite evidence to the contrary (such as in Emler, 2001). These misconceptions appear about outdoor education; for example, the idea that challenging teenagers on adventurous activities, with controlled risk-taking, in a positive way will somehow guide them to transfer these lessons to their regular environment. There is no evidence to support this.

Dweck (1999) addresses these common misconceptions about self-esteem and suggests a different approach. She argues that self-esteem is not something we give to people by telling them about their high intelligence or how good they are. It is something we equip them to get for themselves by teaching them to value learning over the appearance of cleverness, to enjoy challenge and effort, and to use mistakes as routes to mastery. Dweck's (2006) key contribution

about self-esteem relates to implicit theories of intelligence. According to Dweck, individuals can be placed on a continuum according to their implicit views of where ability comes from. Some believe their success is based on innate ability; these are said to have a ‘fixed’ theory of intelligence. Others, who believe their success is based on hard work and learning, are said to have a ‘growth’ or an ‘incremental’ theory of intelligence. Individuals may not necessarily be aware of their own mindset, but their mindset can still be determined based on their behaviour. It is especially evident in their reaction to failure. Fixed-mindset individuals dread failure because it is a negative statement on their basic abilities, while growth mindset individuals do not mind failure as much because they realise their performance can be improved. These two mindsets play an important role in all aspects of a person's life. Dweck (2006) argues that the growth mindset will allow a person to live a less stressful and more successful life.

Clearly, the measurement of self is a complex and potentially contentious undertaking and there are a range of issues in relation to self-esteem and self-concept measures identified by amongst others Emler (2001), Butler & Gasson (2005) and Dweck (1999, 2006). These needed consideration when using measurements of ‘self’ in this thesis.

2.8. Outdoor Education and the development of ‘Self’

The improvement of self-constructs continues to be a widely found objective of outdoor education programmes (Nichols, 2004; Hattie *et al*, 1997; Barrett & Greenaway, 1995; Ewert, 1989; Royce, 1987). Previously, during the period of the 1940s to the late 1970s, the development of ‘character’, values, motivation and attitude were more common aims (Cook, 1999). There is a clear historical, societal shift in the perceived needs of those young people engaged in such programmes, and how they are thus structured.

Royce (1987) proposed a useful classification of objectives in relation to ‘self’ associated with outdoor education found in programme design, which is useful given the breadth of meanings.

'Finding Out' about Self	Evaluation of Self	Development of Self
Self Awareness	Self Confidence	Self Development

Self Discovery	Self Assurance	Personal Development
Self Knowledge	Self Esteem	Character Training
Self Confrontation	Self Respect	Character Building
	Self Worth	Character Development
		Self Realisation
		Self Actualization
		Self Discipline
		Self Help
		Self Expression

Figure IV - Classification of Self, Royce (1987)

The most commonly measured constructs in outdoor education are those that evaluate the self, particularly self-esteem and self-concept. Research has found that outdoor education programmes with a clear focus on personal development have, on average, small to moderate positive impacts on self-constructs. However, programmes without a self-development philosophy are inclined to have negligible impacts (Hattie *et al*, 1997). There have been extensive studies and reviews of the research literature on the effects of outdoor education on self-constructs. These have been by Gillis & Speelman (2008), Neill (2002), Hattie *et al*, (1997), Cason & Gillis (1994), Ewert (1991, 1990) and Marsh, *et al* (1986a, 1986b).

Clifford & Clifford (1967) are acknowledged by many (Ewert, 1989; Hopkins & Putnam, 1993; Cason & Gillis, 1994) as the first to provide empirical evidence of a link between self-concept and an outdoor experience. The research focused on a group of adolescent boys enrolled in an Outward Bound summer camp. The purpose of the camp was to build physical stamina and push each individual to his physical limit. Their hypothesis was that 'changes in feelings about self-worth and competence would take place as a result of a rather vigorous experience' (Clifford & Clifford, 1967: 242). For the most part they found that this hypothesis held true. They claim that a dramatic and significant change took place in self-concept itself and overall the self was viewed more positively. They concluded that 'overall changes in self-concept did take place in the

appropriate direction and discrepancies between the self and the ideal self were reduced. Changes were general rather than specific and were related to the initial level of self-evaluation'. (Clifford & Clifford, 1967: 248)

The fact that their findings were general rather than specific could be attributed to the type of measure that was used. Another limitation of Clifford & Clifford's (1967) study is the lack of consideration of the passage of time, which they acknowledged. Clifford & Clifford (1967) suggest it is important for initial self-concept rating to be examined as a point of reference and basis for future comparison. They found that a relatively positive self-concept was typical. An analysis of subgroups within their data revealed that most of the change could be attributed to individuals who had an initial lower score on the self-rating scales. The scores of those with lower initial self-concept became more positive. However, their relative position within the group remained constant. Clifford & Clifford's (1967) data supported the notion that challenging one's limits through programmes of 'survival training' increases an individual's feelings of self-worth and competence.

The effect of an outdoor experience on self-esteem, over a period of time, was first examined by Heaps & Thorstenson (1974). They reported on self-concept changes in outdoor survival participants immediately and one year after their experience. Heaps & Thorstenson found significant changes and the maintenance or increase of these changes from pre-test scores. Ewert (1982: 12) proposes that this study 'lent some credence to the idea that many of the positive self-concept changes observed during an outdoor survival training expedition would carry over for the participant into his/her later life.'

A study by Lambert *et al* (1978) examined changes in self-perception and 'actualizing values' as a function of participation in college classes that included an outdoor wilderness experience. The authors included two control groups who pursued their academic courses with no wilderness component. The outdoor wilderness programme was a thirty day experience designed to provide intense and sustained physical and mental challenges. Immediate pre- and post-tests were conducted as well both groups being re-tested after sixty days. (Lambert *et al*, 1978: 1035) concluded that 'positive changes in self-concept ... were apparent in participants who had the wilderness program. Control subjects did not show significant gains.'

Lambert *et al*, (1978) recognise that the students who participated in the wilderness programme had high expectations, enthusiasm and anticipated personal growth and change. Therefore it was not surprising they felt some change. Additionally they acknowledge that the participants had paid money to 'suffer and starve and would undoubtedly experience dissonance if they were to show anything short of strongly positive attitudes towards the outcome of the trip' (Lambert *et al*, 1978: 1039).

The potential inflation of immediate post-test results has been termed 'Post Group Euphoria' (PGE) by Marsh *et al* (1986b). The authors suggest that PGE is an important threat to the validity of any conclusions based on self-reporting data. At the end of intense experiences, participants typically have feelings of elation. The important concern is not whether a PGE exists or whether it is good or bad. The critical question, it would seem, is whether the measures are biased by a PGE so that the study does not validly reflect the impact of the experience. PGE could represent a source of invalidity in the self-report data and they suggest that the time-series design provides little control for such effect.

Kishton & Dixon (1995) used the Harter Self Perception Profile for Children (SPPC) for research specifically in the context of 'outdoor activities'. The activities were competitive sports (softball, swimming and tennis) and co-operative team building activities (a ropes course). The participants were economically disadvantaged children on a five week American summer camp. The study worked on the assumption that a programme containing a prominent physical activity component would contribute to a positive change in self-esteem and a strengthening of overall self-concept among participants. A benefit of using the Harter SPPC is that the construction of the SPPC avoids a socially desirable response from participants, and thus an inflation of sub-domains giving initial over positive self-perceptions is unlikely (Harter, 1982).

Neill & Richards (1998), Hattie *et al* (1997) and Cason & Gillis (1994) have shown, with their comprehensive meta-analyses of adventure programmes, that an outdoor experience can result in notable outcomes and that they have particularly strong lasting effects. Meta-analysis is a procedure designed to synthesise the findings across many studies in order to 'make sense of the large volume of seemingly incongruent research findings and ascertain the major sources of variability in the programme effects' (Cason & Gillis, 1994: 41).

Cason & Gillis (1994) were the first to statistically integrate previous research findings for similar age groups. Their analysis concentrated on adolescents as they formed a significant part of the participant population. Harter *et al* (1998) suggest that adolescence is a time when fluctuation in self as a result of changing environment and situation are particularly noteworthy. Cason & Gillis (1994) found slightly stronger outcomes for younger rather than older adolescents. This is consistent with other research suggesting that older adolescence is a period during which self-concept is somewhat resilient to change (Hattie, 1992). Cason & Gillis (1994) found a 12.2% improvement for the average adolescent participating in an adventure programme. Their study also suggests that adolescents that participate in adventure programming are 'better off' than those who do not. However, they do not define 'better off'. A significant positive correlation was found between the length of the programme and the effect size. The results of this meta-analysis would suggest that adventure programs are more effective if they are longer; however, this analysis was unable to determine an optimal length of adventure programming (Cason & Gillis, 1994: 44).

Hattie *et al* (1997) came to similar conclusions to Cason & Gillis (1994). Their analysis was broader in terms of age range although school based outdoor education programmes were not included. They suggest that such programmes were typically shorter in duration and tended to involve non-challenging experiences out of the classroom and the results were most deviant from the more challenging adventure programmes. However, they did find similar results. The effect of adventure programmes on self-esteem exceeded that of other educational programmes. Hattie *et al* (1997:70) conclude that 'adventure programs have a major impact on the lives of participants, and that this impact is lasting'.

Hattie *et al* (1997) agreed with Cason & Gillis (1994) regarding the length of experience. Both suggest the effects are greater for participants in longer programmes. Hattie *et al* (1997) concluded that there were greater effects with programmes longer than 20 days. However, their sample of data for short-term courses (less than 9 days) was only 10% of the total sample for meta-analysis. Hattie *et al* (1997) acknowledge that it is rare to find comparisons in outcome related to length of the course. However, Ewert (1982) made a direct comparison of a 9 day programme with a 23 day programme and found no significant differences between the groups, although he still claimed the longer programme yielded greater and more positive change in self-concept.

These reviews and analyses of research (Neill, 2002, Neill & Richards, 1998, Hattie *et al*, 1997, Cason & Gillis, 1994 and Ewert, 1983) consider the outcomes of the learning process directly associated with self-constructs. They strongly support the notion that individuals participating in programmes may increase their self-esteem in parallel with other outcomes such as cognitive competencies, locus of control and potentially physical fitness. For Hattie *et al* (1997: 66-7) 'Outward Bound [courses] stimulates the development of interpersonal competence and in the self-concept domain has greatest effect on independence, confidence, self efficacy and self understanding'. Barrett & Greenaway (1995: 50) conclude that improvements caused by some applications of outdoor adventure in dimensions of self concept, locus of control and in socialisation with peers and adults are likely to contribute to the process of healthy adolescent development.'

Wilderness challenge programs have received considerable attention as rehabilitative and preventive interventions for youth with behaviour problems, especially juvenile delinquents. Wilson & Lipsey (2000) conducted a meta-analysis of outcome evaluations for wilderness challenge programs specifically for 'delinquent youths'. The most influential programme characteristics were the intensity of the physical activities and whether the programme included a distinct therapeutic component. Programmes involving relatively intense activities or with 'therapeutic enhancements' produced the greatest reductions in delinquent behaviour.

Gillis & Speelman (2008) offer the latest meta-analysis of outdoor adventure challenge programmes. Their research has a much more precise focus than earlier studies. Specifically they included 44 studies of ropes challenge course-type programmes published between 1986 and 2006 outcomes, with an average length of programme of 15 hours. Particularly, Gillis and Speelman only included studies with control groups, thus the estimated effects were relative to controls. They found that despite self-esteem, being a common outcome measure in challenge course research (Hattie *et al*, 1997), the effect size for self-esteem as an outcome, is half that of self-efficacy. They state that 'Organizations and researchers should learn from this data to promote challenge courses for their more significant outcome qualities rather than continue to attempt to prove the elusive impact on self-esteem.' (Gillis & Speelman, 2008: 129).

The limitations with the meta-analyses appear to be the lack of reliable published data as well as the enormous variety of programmes on offer to participants. These ranged from college based courses in outdoor education to three week Outward Bound experiences. The reliability of the

instruments used to make the initial pre- and post-programme assessments can also be questioned as can the large number of unknown variables. Additionally, while these large scale reviews of the effectiveness of outdoor adventure programmes are of interest and relevance I suggest they need to be treated with some caution, as they tend to be contextually bound in a North American approach to both the outdoors and to educational research.

One area of significant growth in outdoor education in the UK has been in overseas expeditions (Allison, 2008). The literature in this area (such as Allison, 2000, 2002; Beames, 2003, 2004, 2005; Stott & Hall, 2003) has been based upon research of extended expeditions with organisations such as Raleigh International. These are with older teenagers and young adults. Expeditions last between four and ten weeks and 'inspire 17-24 year olds often taking gap years to join' (Raleigh, 2008). When considering these expeditions and the social construction of the self, Beames (2005: 14) found that participants developed 'a certain mental resilience, became more willing to undertake challenges, and gained a greater understanding of themselves'. These extended adventurous experiences provide an intense outdoor education experience and a useful indicator to the potential that outdoor education can provide. However, the Explorer PRU does not use overnight or extended expeditions as part of their curriculum. As such the length and intensity of their outdoor experience will be different.

Within the UK, whilst Outward Bound® continues to be a successful organisation with 'a challenging agenda for the future' (Outward Bound, 2007) and Outward Bound® style adventure programmes are still widely marketed, there has, more recently, been an outdoor education re-emergence of less adventure focused programmes particularly for younger teenagers and children, such as Forest schools and the opportunities encouraged by the Learning Outside The Classroom Manifesto (DfES, 2006; Ofsted, 2008c).

As well as adventurous challenge type programmes, outdoor education centres have always been a place for the traditional scientific fieldwork found in the syllabi for biology, geography, geology and environmental science. Outdoor learning in this respect has developed in a more environmental and humanistic direction with an experiential pedagogy. The more experiential approach to learning about the environment or specifically 'Earth Education' sees its roots in fun activity exploration and is grounded in the work of Steve van Matre (van Matre, 1979, 1972) and the 'Sharing Nature Foundation' and work of Joseph Cornell (Cornell; 1989, 1979).

More recently in the UK in recent years there has been a growth and development of 'Forest Schools'. Forest School has been defined by the Forest School England network as an 'inspirational process that offers children, young people and adults regular opportunities to achieve, and develop confidence and self-esteem through hands-on learning experiences in a woodland environment' (Forest Education Initiative, 2008a). Forest Schools originated in Europe in the early 20th century as a way of teaching about the natural world. By the 1980s it became part of the Danish early years programme. In 1995 a group of Nursery Nursing students visiting Denmark witnessed the benefits of Forest School for themselves and brought the idea back to Bridgwater College in Somerset. There, lecturers that accompanied the students considered how they could apply what they had seen to the childcare provision in their own Early Years Excellence Centre. Since then the idea has grown and Forest Schools are spreading throughout Britain (Forest Education Initiative, 2008b).

The research on the Forest School educational approach is beginning to develop (e.g. O'Brien & Murray, 2007, 2006; Swarbrick *et al*, 2004; Massey, 2004) following the growth and popularity of the Forest School movement. Swarbrick *et al* (2004) highlight the importance of the outdoor environment as an educational resource, and explore the relationship between self-esteem and successful learning through the Forest School approach to outdoor education. However, the apparent raising of self esteem amongst participants is only supported by anecdotal evidence.

O'Brien & Murray (2006: 38) noted that it was clear from their study that adapting to the weather conditions was a physical challenge for the participating pupils. They repeatedly observed that 'children with less confidence in their physical ability and lower self-esteem became colder more quickly than the others who would rush around and keep busy.' I suggest that the evidence base regarding self esteem from the research on Forest Schools is not currently that robust and needs to be treated with caution. For example, following his review of research on self esteem, Emler (2001) states that observer ratings are an unreliable method of assessing an individual pupil's self-esteem. Miller & Parker (2006) looked at the match between teacher judgements of their pupils' self-esteem and the children's own self reports and suggest that teachers are not as good at this as they would like to think.

Despite this caution, there are some interesting findings stated by O'Brien & Murray (2007). In their evaluative case study, they found six key themes how Forest Schools directly impacted on pupils, including their confidence and social skills. Confidence was characterised by self-

confidence and self-belief that came from the children having the freedom, time and space, to learn, grow and demonstrate independence. The improvement of their social skills was shown by the children demonstrating an increased awareness of the consequences of their actions on other people, peers and adults, and acquiring a better ability to work co-operatively with others as a result of their Forest School experience. O'Brien & Murray (2007) also considered impacts that were wider than the Forest School experience. The theme they termed 'New perspectives' suggests that the teachers and outdoor practitioners gained a new perspective and understanding of the children as they observed them in a very different setting (to regular school) and were able to more readily identify their individual learning styles. The Forest School approach is part of the Outdoor Learning programme at Explorer.

Currently there is no research specifically related to the Forest School approach and key stage 3 pupils or those disaffected or placed in PRUs. There is research into outdoor education more broadly founded. In an evaluation of an outdoor education programme for students with emotional and behavioural difficulties, Fox & Avramidis (2003) found that the programme was successful in promoting positive behaviour and academic gains for most pupils, and that by the end both pupils and staff held a positive perception of outdoor education. They conclude that although 'outdoor education may not form a solution to dealing with 'problematic' behaviour, it represents a powerful, albeit underused, tool for reducing disaffection, promoting inclusive practice and decreasing the risk of permanent exclusion' for what they describe as 'this vulnerable group of pupils' (Fox & Avramidis, 2003: 281).

Additionally, there is a supply of academic literature relating to the traditional adventure education approach to personal and social development. In recent years, there has been a challenge to the traditional thinking that has informed and underpinned many of the personal and social development approaches found within the UK, such as Outward Bound®. Davis-Berman & Berman (2002) discuss 'Risk and Anxiety in Adventure Programming'. They suggest an alternative paradigm where participants do not move out of their 'comfort zones' (Tuson, 1994). They argue that reinforcing safety, feelings of security and personal challenge all need to be balanced. Clients basic needs have to be met and then they suggest that challenge is provided working within comfort zones. They suggest that leaders and facilitators learn to assess and intervene when anxiety develops and that it is essential to build a 'therapeutic' relationship.

Brookes (2003) provides a critique of 'Neo-Hahnian Outdoor Education Theory'. Kurt Hahn is influential in the development of outdoor adventure education (see Cook, 1999) and as such approaches similar to his associations are termed Hahnian. Brookes argues that Neo-Hahnian beliefs assume that adventure experiences 'build character', 'develop persons', 'actualise selves', or have therapeutic effects associated with changes in personal traits and that in social psychological terms Neo-Hahnian thought is 'dispositional' in that it favours explanations of behaviour in terms of consistent personal traits. Brookes asserts that outdoor adventure education programs do not build character, but they may provide situations that elicit particular behaviours. Brookes concludes that this belief in the possibility of 'character building' is a source of bias, not a foundation of outdoor education.

Berman & Davis-Berman (2005) suggest that a 'Positive Psychology' approach to outdoor education can offer an alternative perspective to the 'dynamic tension' encouraged by the 'comfort zone' approach. They make the assertion that people change for positive reasons, within the context of supportive communities, and stress the importance of creating a healthy, supportive community in which people can act on their positive strivings. Specifically Berman & Davis-Berman (2005) suggest that communities are created when there is an emergence of conditions such as working with nature and experiencing the outdoors because of an appreciation of the environment in an environment where sharing and safety (physical and emotional) are important focussing on group members' strengths.

A further critique of the 'comfort zone' approach is offered by Brown (2008). He suggests that the 'comfort zone' model uses risk to promote situations of disequilibrium and dissonance and argues that this model does not find strong support in the educational literature, particularly Piaget's 'cognitive development' or Festinger's 'cognitive dissonance'. As such it would, he suggests, be beneficial to reframe the model as a metaphor for post activity discussion, and not to use it to underpin programming and pedagogy in adventure education settings.

None the less, adventurous approaches are still widely used. The familiar adventure approach to outdoor education within its UK guise, with team building challenges and overnight expeditions, was used in a recent study by Kathryn Riley at the Institute of Education in London. Riley *et al* (2006) report on this UK based outdoor education programme that focused on re-engaging disaffected pupils in learning. As such it is of specific interest to this case study. They suggest that the benefits of the project are considerable including the gains associated with school staff having

had the opportunity to see their pupils in a different way. The teamwork challenges provided many surprising examples of pupils adopting responsible, active and creative roles that are rarely seen in school. Riley *et al* (2006: 17) are clear about the efficacy of outdoor education when they state that 'there seems little doubt that a structured outdoor education experience with clear learning goals is a powerful tool for re-engaging students'.

In summary, there is research evidence that outdoor education can affect a participants sense of self-esteem and self-concept, and that this can have transferable benefits to other contexts and as such it can be regarded as a powerful tool. Outdoor programmes have a major positive impact on the lives of participants, and that impact is long lasting. The effect of adventure programmes on self-esteem exceeds that of other educational programmes. In general, there are stronger outcomes for younger rather than older adolescents and the longer the programme the greater the benefits.

2.9. Measuring 'Self' in this research

My introduction to the Explorer PRU was through a discussion with the director for outdoor learning about his desire to measure self-esteem and then set targets associated with this. Explorer PRU wanted to measure changes in pupil self-esteem as a way of assessing and assisting pupil progress.

I was cautious about this. I suggested that measuring then setting self-esteem targets was only appropriate as *part* of the programme to help return these pupils to mainstream education. In order to gain a true insight into what experiential learning experiences mean to individuals, Martin & Leberman (2005: 57) articulate that there is a need to

... move away from trying to justify prescribed educational outcomes only in terms of numbers. Instead, research must move toward trying to encapsulate the meaning of these experiences to individuals by valuing the words they attribute to their learning.

If the measurement of self was *part of* understanding the effectiveness of the Explorer PRU and was used to set and monitor individual targets, then I suggested that it may be of benefit. If it became *the only* measure by which children and the unit were evaluated, then this would be a

narrow and inappropriate use of these measures. Additionally, given the small number of pupils as a sample size (approximately 15 in one location); it would have been an inappropriate methodological approach for a doctoral study. However, I decided that it would be a useful tool in illuminating the processes at work in the PRU.

The original intention for this thesis was to use the instruments developed by Professor Susan Harter. Harter's research (1982, 1985, 1988, 1990, and 1998) concerns socio-emotional development and focuses on the idea of a self-system, in its broadest sense. Harter's (1985) Self Perception Profile for Children (SPPC), and for Adolescents (1988), that measure global self-worth, have been used by those associated with outdoor related research (Kishton & Dixon, 1995; Roff, 2001). The multi-dimensional construct of self appears better suited to the complexities of human behaviour and contexts. It offers a range of domains (or aspects of self) and is appropriate for different age levels, a key consideration raised by Butler & Gasson in their 2005 review of measures.

However, during the time of negotiating access and organising this case study, the PRU purchased a commercial instrument. The *Pupil Attitude to Self and School* rating scale or PASS. Williams, et.al (2003) consider it to be a robust measure of young people's attitudes, with the original survey evaluation data indicating both high reliability and validity. From the research, their extensive factor analysis revealed nine distinct factors underpinning students' responses to the scale. The emergent factors related to attendance, confidence, self-esteem, general and specific work ethic and perceptions of self-efficacy and metacognitive skill. See appendix B for a summary description of the PASS factors.

When considering self-esteem and pupils in educational contexts there is, if they are not careful, a circular argument; pupils underperform and are disaffected because they have 'low' self-esteem. They 'have' low self-esteem because they underperform and are disaffected. The development of the PASS software came from what Williams et.al (2003) claim is the need for a better defined more focussed measure of pupils. Hayes (1993) points out the lack of coherence linking attitudes, behaviour and motivation, and as a result many self-concept measures have been too general and wide ranging in their focus. As a result the PASS measurement was developed.

Critical academic evaluation of the PASS measurement appears non-existent. That is despite extensive searches on educational databases, such as the British Education Index and Education

Research Complete accessed through the University library. In an article in the Times Educational Supplement Pinkus (2008) regards PASS as a helpful tool for schools in assisting in the creation of a parent friendly school. Pinkus (2007) considers that the PASS survey is a good way to assess a school's effect on a student's self-esteem. This is done by strategically sampling work at three different points to evaluate a student's progress. W3 Insights Ltd are a commercial organisation, and tend to involve themselves 'more in the validation with partners rather than the very time consuming aspects of publication' (Williams, 2007). It was clear after my initial meetings with the Explorer PRU that the PASS survey software was being used. In discussion with the director of outdoor learning and headteacher, it seemed to make sense not to use Harter's SPPC, as there was a real possibility of overloading pupils and staff with measurement regimes.

The lack of critical review was an initial concern. However, there were some reassurances. This was going to be only one of the research methods employed, and as such this thesis was not solely dependent on the data collected in this manner. Additionally, the quality of PASS could be considered to be supported by a variety of other factors. The number of Local Education Authorities who had purchased this product was considerable, and there were many schools who gave recommendations on the 'AWARDS, RECOGNITION & ENDORSEMENT' on the company website (W3 Insights, online). Additionally, the involvement of the University of Exeter was also significant. They were involved in the original preliminary survey construction and predictive validation, as well as the extensive item and factor analysis (Williams, 2007). Additionally, the PASS measurement had been developed from underpinning theoretical perspective based on the work of Burden (1996). Professor Burden has an international academic reputation particularly in the field of self-concept and child development. All of these factors gave me the confidence to use the data generated by the PASS measurement system.

The PASS measurement has been designed to be used every 12 weeks and as such would not allow for a daily assessment of self-esteem as originally desired by the PRU. As a measure of attitudes, PASS is sensitive to individual differences, and collated data can reveal important organisational and systemic school issues. The applicability of PASS in educational settings is wide, especially in computer software form, where its reliability, validity, power, sensitivity and ease of administration are all most readily apparent. At a casework level, PASS is sensitive to individual student attitude profiles and can transparently inform intervention strategies (Williams, et.al, 2003).

3. Research Approach and Methods

3.1. Epistemological Position

My epistemological position is that of social constructionism which underpins my theoretical perspective, interpretivism, and my methodology, an exploratory case study.

Social constructionist inquiry is mainly concerned with explaining the processes, by which people come to describe, explain or otherwise account for the world, including themselves, in which they live (Gergen & Gergen, 2003). Social constructionism is closely related to social constructivism in the sense that people are working together to construct an object, and I briefly consider both terms in this chapter. However, there is an important difference. Social constructionism focuses on the objects that are created through the social interactions of a group while social constructivism focuses on an individual's learning that takes place because of their interactions in a group; constructivism is primarily an individualistic understanding of the constructionist position (Crotty, 1998). This research focuses on the object called the Explorer Pupil Referral Unit rather than the individual's learning within the PRU. And as such I suggest this thesis is best understood in terms of social constructionism. According to Burr (1995) there is no single definition of social constructionism and for a thorough exploration of social constructionism I recommend Burr (1995), Gergen (1999) and Gergen & Gergen (2003).

Constructivism argues that reality is socially constructed. It is also referred to as naturalistic inquiry (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). My task as the researcher is to understand the multiple social constructions of meaning and knowledge. The preferred research methods are interviews, focus groups, reflective diaries and observations, which are discussed in more detail below. This approach has allowed me to acquire multiple perspectives. The research participants are viewed as helping to construct the reality with the researchers and, because there are multiple realities, the research questions cannot be fully established in advance of this process (Robson, 2002). In the constructionist view meaning is not discovered but constructed. Meaning does not exist permanently and inseparably in the object, merely waiting for someone to come upon it. Constructivism suggests that we do not create meaning, but we construct it from the world and the objects within it (Crotty, 1998).

Guba and Lincoln (1989: 84) describe the constructivist paradigm as a 'monistic, subjectivist epistemology' and that due to the interlocking of the inquirer and the inquired, that the findings of an investigation are the literal creation of the inquiry process. This position effectively destroys the classical ontology-epistemology distinction (Guba and Lincoln, 1989; Crotty, 1998).

Schwandt (1994: 128) suggests that the Guba and Lincoln's constructivist paradigm is a wide ranging eclectic framework, and that the constructivist philosophy is 'idealist, pluralist and relativist'. That is, we assume that what is real is a construction in the minds of individuals; there are multiple often conflicting constructions and all, at least potentially, are meaningful. Guba and Lincoln (1989) assume that the observer cannot, and should not, be uniquely disentangled from the observed in the activity of inquiry into constructions. This means that the findings or outcomes of an inquiry themselves are a literal creation or construction of the inquiry process. Constructions, in turn, dwell in the minds of individuals. They do not exist outside of the persons who create and hold them; they are not part of some objective world that exists apart from their constructors (Schwandt, 1994).

However, while social constructionism places our sense of the true and the good in shared relationships, this is not the end. What is obviously true and good for one community is often false or morally repugnant for another. In this sense constructionism 'invites a continuous posture of self-reflection, even regarding itself. Constructionism does not seek to be a final word but a form of discourse that will help us to avoid building a world in which there is no end to dialogue' (Gergen, 1999: 228). For this thesis, the result is a social construction which upon completion I believe could be a useful vehicle for the processes of self reflection for all who participated in the research and who may read this.

3.2. Philosophical Developments in Social Research

I have taken an *interpretivist* perspective for this research. This philosophical stance can also be described as my world view or paradigm, and influences my approach to this exploratory case study. Different ways of viewing the world shape different ways of researching the world. I now discuss interpretivism as well as positivism which I have not chosen to adopt. Here I will consider positivism as it is what Maykut and Morehouse (1994) describe as the 'dominant paradigm' and

argue for why it would be an inappropriate paradigm to adopt. Then I discuss why I have adopted interpretivism.

This research is definitely not positivism. The positivist idea that knowledge has a purely instrumental value in solving educational problems and the consequent tendency to see all educational issues as technical in character needs to be, according to Carr & Kemmis (1986: 129) 'firmly resisted'. Having first read physics at university, my background is clearly grounded in the scientific method and positivism, namely something that is posited or given in direct experience. Crotty (1998) clearly describes how there is positive science and positive philosophy and how positivism can be the paradigm for working scientists, theoretical scientists and philosophers. However, having worked in education for twenty years, I find that for many questions or problems, the positivist and post-positivist paradigms are overly simplistic and reductionist in their ability to help me answer questions that contain complexities. From my experience, I find that human interactions in an educational context are multi-faceted, infinitely variable and highly complex.

The *objectivist* epistemological position that underpins the positivist paradigm is nicely illustrated by Galileo. Crotty (1998) describes how for Galileo the primary properties of 'real' things are those that can be measured and counted and thereby quantified such as size, shape, position and number. Attributes that are subjective such as smell, colour and taste, Galileo refused to accept as real properties. As such, this would make an investigation into pupil-teacher rapport, for example, too constrained.

Logical positivism based on the 'verification principle' (with a unity of method, observation, experiment, comparison and replication) appears to be the default setting for British consciousness in its approach to understanding the world, certainly in a populist sense. Maykut & Morehouse (1994) describe this as the dominant paradigm as it appears culturally so pervasive. The central belief of no statement being meaningful unless it can be verified is one that poses challenges to the alternate paradigm of Maykut & Morehouse. To be non-scientific in this context is to be of lesser intellect or substance of argument. In the positivist paradigm there is but one reality. Clearly since the early 1980s and the seminal work of Guba and Lincoln (see Morse *et al* 2002 for a fuller consideration) there are authors (e.g. Golby, 1994; Cohen & Manion, 1994, Bassey, 1999; Opie, 2004; Gray, 2009) who would probably dispute the notion of positivism as dominant within educational research. I believe it is a useful term in contemporary British

settings, even educational ones, since it appears to be, from my experience, pervasive in the collective consciousness of some professional educators.

Having worked with people educationally it is clear to me that there are multiple realities for each and every situation. As Crotty (1998: 28) points out 'the scientific world is an abstraction from the lived world'. And whilst the natural sciences require an objectivist perspective, I argue that it is an inappropriate paradigm to adopt when dealing with the inter-related weave of complexities of human interaction that can be found in educational settings.

Even post-positivism, with the physics of Heisenberg and Bohr, discusses probability rather than certainty and claims a certain level of objectivity rather than an absolute objectivity. This physics seeks to approximate the truth rather than aspiring to grasp it in its totality (Crotty, 1998). Nonetheless, the word science confers some sort of accolade or elevated status on research that calls itself 'scientific'. This is ironic when we consider those discussions which disclose that physics is not capable of absolute certainty, that the observer is equally as important as the observed, and that total predictability in a physical system is an impossible goal. Wellington (2000: 13) states, with apparent frustration,

that it remains a mystery to me why those who work in education should attempt to aspire towards science when scientific methods, processes and codes of conduct at best are unclear and at worst lack the objectivity, certainty, logicity and predictability which are falsely ascribed to them. Surely educational research would do better to aspire to being systematic, credible, verifiable, justifiable, useful and trustworthy.

If the scientific world is highly systematic and one of regularities, uniformities, absolute principles and cast-iron laws, then it stands in stark contrast with the ambiguous, vague, eccentric, shifting world we experience firsthand. I therefore suggest it is an inappropriate paradigm from which to approach my research question.

Therefore, more appropriately, this research takes an interpretivist perspective. According to Schwandt (1994: 118) 'the interpretivist believes that to understand the world of meaning one must interpret it'. Interpretivism looks for 'culturally derived and historically situated interpretations of the social life-world' (Crotty, 1998: 67) and stands in opposition to positivism which is (allegedly) value free, utilises detached examination, identifying universal characteristics of society, history and human nature that offers clarification, control and certainty.

Interpretivism manifests itself in a number of methodological approaches to research. There are three historical streams of interpretivism that have influenced its development (Crotty, 1998); symbolic interactionism, phenomenology and hermeneutics.

a) Symbolic interactionism

The symbol we interact with is the language used and encountered in the research setting. According to Cohen et al (2000), Blumer's (1969) interpretation of the work of Mead (1934) suggests that in symbolic interactionism human beings act towards things on the basis of the meanings that these things have for them. The meaning of such things is derived from, and arises out of the social interaction with ones fellows. These meanings are modified through an interpretative process used by the person in dealing with the things encountered. We owe to society our very being as conscious and self-conscious entities for that being arises from a process of symbolic interaction – interaction by way of significant gestures (Crotty, 1998). Symbolic interactionism is an approach to research that requires the researcher to put themselves in the place of those being studied and take their standpoint. This is a research approach that I could have adopted. However, since this case study explores multiple stakeholders and their interactions, it is not an approach that I believe I could have undertaken equitably.

b) Phenomenology

A phenomenological approach suggests that phenomena that present themselves immediately to us as conscious human beings through our direct experience of them cause us to interpret these experiences. 'In its broadest meaning, phenomenology is a theoretical point of view that advocates the study of direct experience taken at face value ...' (Cohen et al, 2000: 23). Phenomenology requires us to place our usual understandings in abeyance and take a fresh look at what we have experienced to discover potential new meanings or in order to authenticate and enhance the former meaning that an experience has for us (Crotty, 1998). Phenomenology, according to Heron (1992: 164),

...exhorts a pristine acquaintance with phenomena unadulterated by preconceptions: it encourages the enquirer to sustain an intuitive grasp of what is there by 'opening his eyes' ... keeping them open ... looking and listening ... 'not getting blinded'.

It could have been possible to adopt a phenomenological theoretical perspective to this research. However, the notion of acting as a researcher 'unadulterated by preconceptions' would, in reality, be difficult to achieve. I suggest that I am too intimately linked with the subject matter to set aside my preconceptions. Another researcher may well be able to answer the research question phenomenologically if they were remote from the field of education and had no experience of the professional teaching culture.

c) Hermeneutics

Wellington (2000: 197) describes hermeneutics as 'the art or science of interpretation, a term first coined by William Dilthey'. Hermeneutics is a method of sharing meaning between people or communities of people, and texts are a means of transmitting those meanings, experiences, beliefs and values. Crotty (1998) describes modern hermeneutics as determining meaning as a matter of practical judgement and common sense, not just abstract theorising. This sharing of meaning positions hermeneutics within our historical context and within our culture. For my research question this includes the historical and cultural perspectives of teaching pupils with challenging behaviour, PRUs and the use of outdoor education as a medium for personal and social development. As the researcher I have this cultural and historical appreciation from which to help assemble an understanding of those students, staff and the processes of the PRU which are all part of this research.

3.3. Illuminative Evaluation

The introduction of the term 'illuminative' evaluation in 1972 by Malcolm Parlett and David Hamilton was a reaction against the dominant 'agricultural' or technical approach found within educational evaluation at the time. They state 'Illuminative evaluation is not a standard methodological package, but a general research strategy' (Parlett and Hamilton, 1977: 64). Additionally, it was an early post-positivist attempt to focus upon the holistic study of educational programmes. Parlett and Hamilton suggest that illuminative evaluation is a form of social anthropology and as such, the research belongs to the alternative or 'social anthropology' paradigm. This new approach was proposed in order to make an intensive study of educational programmes as a whole, from the perspective of all those involved. Their argument was that the

programme's rationale, operations, achievements and difficulties should all be studied within the context in which they occurred (Parlett & Hamilton 1977).

Illuminative evaluation 'aims to discover and document what it is like to be participating in the scheme, whether as teacher or pupil; and, in addition, to discern and discuss the innovation's most significant features, recurring concomitants and critical processes' (Parlett & Hamilton 1977: 61). Thus illuminative evaluation could be used to address and to illuminate the complex array of interactions found within the PRU.

Two main concepts underpin the illuminative approach, the 'instructional system' and the 'learning milieu.' Firstly, the instructional system may include a set of pedagogic assumptions, a new syllabus, and details of techniques and equipment that are used. This instructional system is an idealised specification of the scheme: a collection of essential items arranged in a coherent plan. The instructional system refers to the process by which the curriculum is transmitted. An illuminative evaluation, works on the assumption that no curriculum is ever delivered in pure, unaltered form, due to the 'learning milieu'. The 'learning milieu' refers to the social-psychological and material environment in which teachers and pupils work together. It thus represents a network of cultural, social institutional and psychological variables. The configuration of the learning milieu, in any particular setting, depends upon the interplay of numerous different factors (Parlett and Hamilton, 1977).

There are characteristically three overlapping stages, within which the evaluator observes, inquires further and then seeks to explain, drawing, as and where appropriate, on both quantitative and qualitative methods. The 'illumination' is most likely to arise from exploring the perspectives of as wide a range of stakeholders as possible. The notion is therefore rejected of any one objective reality, replaced instead by an acceptance that perceptions of reality are constructed and multi-faceted. This places this methodological approach firmly in the interpretive paradigm. The role of the illuminative evaluator is not to provide evidence of who is right or who is wrong, but to bring into the public domain the fact that these different perspectives occur.

So, why use illuminative evaluation for my thesis? Illuminative evaluation was developed in the course of studying small-scale educational programmes. It is characterised by a flexible methodology that capitalises on available resources and opportunities and draws upon different techniques to fit the conditions of each study (Parlett, 1981). The 'available resources and

opportunities' issue suggests a level of appropriateness for a professional doctorate. Whilst illuminative evaluation is not confined to education, it is particularly suited to intensive studies of small sized programmes, such as the Explorer PRU whose work I am exploring. It is *not a standard methodological package but a general research strategy* (Parlett and Hamilton, 1977: 64) that comes in diverse forms. This then offers my research an adaptable approach to gathering data. Indeed Parlett & Hamilton suggest that 'different techniques are combined to throw light on a common problem' (1977: 64). As well as viewing the problem from a number of angles, this triangulation allows for cross checking of potentially tentative findings. Illuminative evaluations rely extensively on interviews and observing in the field, along with analyses of documents and the study of stored records, such as test scores and admissions data (Parlett, 1981).

Patton describes illuminative evaluation as another variation on the transaction model of evaluation, alongside Stake's (1975 cited in Patton, 2002: 171) 'Responsive Illumination' model and highlights the importance of personalising and humanising the evaluation process. However, the research literature does not give a wide ranging critique of it as a specific method. More generally, Lincoln & Guba (1980: 70) argue that evaluations of worth 'must be grounded in field studies of local contexts and pluralistic value systems and cannot be carried out by conventional experimental ... inquiry modes'. This suggests that an illuminative evaluation would be *of worth* by their definition.

Additionally, it is apparent that illuminative evaluation has been successfully used over the last twenty five years in peer reviewed research. For examples see: Shapiro et al (1983) in management training for women, Crotty (1990) in innovative nurse education programmes, Robinson (1991) in the outcomes of an outdoor education centre, Burden (1998) on the effectiveness of educational institutions, Dewar & Walker (1999) in successful teaching and learning strategies, Kayser (2003) in a doctoral study, Banning & Cortazzi (2004) in student learning in higher education and Ellis (2005) in the provision and perceptions of professional doctorates.

As such this approach is very appealing. However, I am *not* suggesting that this research is a classic illuminative evaluation for reasons discussed below. I am arguing that it is *informed* by illuminative evaluation as a case study.

3.4. Case Study Research

The case study is one of a number of ways of doing social science research. Others include surveys, experiments and the analysis of historical archives. These and other choices represent diverse research strategies. Each is a different way of gathering and analysing empirical evidence. Each has its own advantages and disadvantages as they follow their own research trajectory.

The difficult situation that arises in defining a case study as a unique form of research is recognised by Stake (1994). To solve the problem, he uses the principle that case study research is not defined by a specific methodology but by the object of study. Stake states (1994: 237) 'The more the object of study is a specific, unique, bounded system, the greater the rationale for calling it a case study'. However, Yin (1994) disagrees with Stake's definition of a case study, arguing that it is too broad. He highlights other features he believes that differentiate case study from other research strategies.

The type of research question asked and the context for the research (i.e. the setting and the researcher's level of control) quite often determines the research strategy to be employed argues Yin (1994). When 'how' or 'why' questions are asked, and the researcher has little control over events, and when the focus is on a current phenomenon within some real-life context, 'then case studies are the preferred strategy' (Yin, 1994: 1).

Different research strategies may have common characteristics. For example quasi-experimental designs maybe used where the researcher has no control over the behavioural event. Histories can relate to contemporary events. None the less, it is useful to define a case study as an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, particularly when 'the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident' (Yin, 1994: 13).

The case study as a research strategy is used in many situations to contribute to our knowledge of individual, group, organisational, social, political and related phenomena (Yin, 2003). The emphasis is on placing an interpreter in the field to observe the workings of the case, who records objectively, what is happening, but simultaneously examines its meaning and redirects observation to refine or substantiate those meanings (Stake, 1995). The use of case study as a tool of educational research is well documented (Golby, 1994; Cohen & Manion, 1994, Bassey, 1999;

Cohen et.al., 2000; Opie, 2004; Gray, 2009). Bassey suggests that case study can be a prime research strategy. He states that case study is useful for developing educational theory which illuminates policy and enhances practice since the outcomes can be 'fuzzy generalisations' (as opposed to statistical generalisations) and these can become part of a professional discourse (Bassey 1999: 4).

Yin (1994, 2003) defines three distinct types of case study; *exploratory* (as a pilot study), *descriptive* (providing narrative accounts) and *explanatory* (which seek to judge and explain or be evaluative). In *exploratory* case studies, fieldwork, and data collection may be undertaken prior to the definition of the research questions, however, the framework of the study needs to be created ahead of time. *Descriptive* cases require that the investigator begin with a descriptive theory. What is implied in this type of study is the formation of hypotheses of cause-effect relationships. *Explanatory* cases are suitable for doing causal studies and this approach contains post-positivistic overtones and as such contradicts my epistemological position. Therefore my methodology is an *exploratory case study*.

Stake (1995) recommends that the selection of the particular case offers the opportunity to maximise what can be learned, knowing that time is limited. Hence the cases that are selected should be easy and willing subjects. The emphasis for this case study was to explore this pupil referral unit (PRU) in order to describe and interpret its functioning, rather than to take measurements and make predictions. This was done in order to highlight its most significant features and evaluate its operation. As such, I suggest that this exploratory case study has many features of a classic 'illuminative evaluation' of Parlett & Hamilton (1977) as discussed above.

So, why am I suggesting that this exploratory case study is not a classic illuminative evaluation? The reason is the level of immersion I was able to achieve within the programme of the PRU. Parlett (1981) discusses the need for extensive observations and interviews. Kayser (2003) undertook an illuminative evaluation for a successful doctoral thesis. Kayser (2003: 50) was a *participant/teacher observer* who was able to make extensive observations, interviews and evaluations based upon a complete immersion in the programme studied in her own school. This was not practically possible for my data collection. I was fully employed in my own educational institution and managed to schedule two days per week for the school summer term in which to make field visits to conduct interviews. So, despite the welcoming and helpful reception I received from the PRU staff and pupils, the time for data collection was not that extensive. As such, I

suggest that this thesis was aspirationally an illuminative evaluation, but pragmatically the level of immersion and time available to collect data meant that it was not extensive. This became evident during my visits when due to the volatile nature of PRU pupils, there were times when the pupils were not receptive and data collection was poor or not existent. Therefore, I suggest that the methods and underpinning research philosophy are still well supported by the illuminative evaluation approach, and that this thesis is best described as an *illuminative exploratory case study*.

3.5. Methods and Procedures

The methods employed were both quantitative and qualitative. This could be described as a mixed methods approach, although predominantly the data were qualitative in nature, there was some quantitative data collected and these were used interpretively.

In recent years, the advantages of mixed methods research have been increasingly recognised. In particular, Onwuegbuzie and Leech (2005: 376), note that combining quantitative and qualitative research enables researchers to be more 'flexible and holistic' in their investigative techniques. They advocate that both quantitative and qualitative research be utilised and appreciated in order to work effectively as 'pragmatic researchers'. For a small scale study such as this doctoral thesis, *holistic* and *pragmatic* are adjectives that represent my approach to this research, particularly for the data collection.

At the end of the primary data collection phase the information consisted of: a set of **video diaries** with data from twenty three transcribed sessions from a total of thirteen different pupils; **semi-structured interviews** with two of the key leaders of Explorer that were comprehensive in coverage and transcribed for analysis; one transcribed **focus group** of eight of the teaching staff including indoor, outdoor and support teachers; a set of **Field Observations** that were noted in my research diary as summarised in appendix S. Additionally, there were (only) nine complete sets of **PASS Data** (Pupils Attitudes to Self and School) available for interpretation from the Explorer records system. These data collection methods are now considered in more detail.

3.5.1. Pupil Video Diaries

Listening and reflecting on the meanings and significance of what people have to say about their lives is a critical aspect of social research and has a long history (Silverman, 2000). I was particularly interested to obtain the perceptions and experiences of the pupils in the PRU, given the stigma that is often associated with exclusion. For a more detailed consideration and historical perspective of hearing the voice in contemporary research, see France (2004). The gaining of pupils' perspectives is part of the growing use of research processes that include; pupils' voice (Flutter & Rudduck, 2004), a belief in children's rights (Greene & Hill, 2005) and respect for young peoples' ability to reflect on and have agency in their individual encounters with their worlds (Davie *et al*, 1996; Lewis and Lindsay, 2000). I therefore considered this an essential aspect of researching the PRU. Video diaries were used in order to hear the *pupil's voice* as their views mattered in this study.

The use of reflective diaries is well documented, as a means of exploring understanding and gaining further insight into one's own continuing professional development. There is a body of academic literature that suggests their appropriateness for use with doctoral students (Leshem & Trafford, 2006), those in medical practice (Raw et al, 2005), practitioners engaged in nurse education (Platzer et al, 1997), and social workers dealing with homeless families (Anderson et al, 2006). These diaries have mature, motivated adults, engaged in professions, who utilise this reflective process. I considered the use of reflective diaries for the pupils in the PRU. However, having observed the pupils at the PRU, it was clear that a written diary in the traditional sense would be seen as yet another form of schoolwork. Problems with traditional reading and writing tasks were very often a contributing factor to pupils challenging behaviour and their attendance at the PRU, and I was unconvinced as to the quality of the 'pupil voice' that would result.

However, the work of Noyes (2004) describes the use of a *Big Brother* style video diary as an innovative method for qualitative research in education. The video diary technique was developed and used alongside other qualitative methods. Noyes (2004: 197) states that 'my intention was to recreate an environment that might generate interesting data'. In essence the aim of the video diary was set up to resemble the *Big Brother* diary room from the popular television show.

Noyes (2004) found that the video diaries potential for opening up new avenues of inquiry was invaluable and a useful tool for those interested in the socio-cultural influences that affect learners. The data produced was complex, but therein lays an advantage of the technique: it enables the researcher to carry out multilevel analysis of data, particularly aspects of children's lives that are not accessible through conventional classroom-based research methodologies. Noyes (2004: 198) comments on the increased depth to the comments of the diarist's. He observes how 'their video responses were somehow far more compelling ... the entries were, at times, both highly amusing and quite poignant'. Noyes (2004) article on the video diary as a research method led me to include it as one of my research tools. I believed that I stood a better chance of *generating some interesting data* with this approach, in order for my research to hear the pupil voice. The ethical issues of this method are considered below, and the emergent issues of using this research method are discussed in the analysis section.

The pupils were aware of the research aims and a discussion took place to allow some degree of consensus as to how their video diary would be used. It was designed to be used primarily for the individual to talk about themselves and their experiences of arriving and being in a PRU. The issue of confidentiality was central to the use of the video diary, in order to try and gain the most honest account from the pupils.

The *Big Brother* style pupil video diaries were conducted and recorded on a laptop computer and evolved over the weeks that this method was used. Following an ethical statement that was part of the computer animation (see a screenshot in appendix C) that the pupils had to acknowledge (discussed below), an animated question was shown in order to ask a specific question (see an example screenshot in appendix D). The computer was then used to record the response onto the hard drive, via a webcam. The laptop was then taken away at the end of the session. As the researcher I prompted with additional questions in order to explore the response given. So, I stayed in the room, unless requested to leave, in order to help the pupils articulate their 'voice'. This was suggested by the PRU staff when I met with them to outline the video diary approach. Additionally, some pupils wanted me to stay as, by their own admission, they found it difficult to read the questions. The Big Brother part of their day became a 'hook' for them to talk to me. This could be criticised as a being a mere gimmick, since the final version of the video diary was not done in isolation, nor was there a remote voice in order to prompt and ask the participants questions. However, it did produce an engagement with a number of pupils, who developed a

level of trust and openness (see my research diary, 22/5/2008 or 24/6/2008 in appendix S) and as a result produced some interesting data.

The pupil diaries were transcribed (examples in appendix H & I), and as they were a video and audio recording of the interview that took place, this meant that it was possible to revisit the original recordings many times in order to analyse themes across all the data, as well as to analyse each pupil in depth. However, as France (2004: 179) warns there are dangers of listening to the voice in isolation without understanding the broader context '... others may also have an important contribution to make ... professionals may have an alternative perspective that adds to our understanding of the broader social and cultural processes ... including these in analysis is essential ...' and as such, the following methods were also employed.

3.6. Leadership Interviews

The interviews undertaken were of those key figures on the staff team who I discovered were responsible for, or influenced, the strategic development of the PRU. This included the headteacher and the director of outdoor learning.

I adopted a semi-structured interview approach, rather than a fully structured interview or an unstructured interview. The advantage of semi-structured interviews is they have predetermined questions and that the order of those questions can be modified. Based upon my perception of what seemed most appropriate, the question wording was changed and explanations given; particular questions which seemed inappropriate with a particular interviewee were omitted or additional ones included (Robson, 2002).

Fontana & Frey (1994) highlight the need to gain trust and establish rapport with the interviewees, once access to the organisation has been obtained. I had made numerous visits to the PRU over the course of the previous 12 months, and had informal meetings with the staff to discuss my proposed research. These meetings had been productive and positive, in terms of research design, and good levels of trust and rapport were established. As one staff member put it 'you're quite a normal bloke really!' (Leather, 2008).

Patton (2002) categorises this method as an interview guide approach. The characteristics of this approach are that the topics and issues covered were specified in advance in outline (see appendix E). I decided the sequence and working of questions during the course of the interview. The strengths of this approach are that the outline increases the comprehensiveness of the data and makes data collection somewhat systematic for each respondent. Logical gaps in the data were anticipated and closed. The interviews remained fairly conversational and informal. The weakness of this approach is that important and salient topics may have been inadvertently admitted. My flexibility in sequencing and wording questions could have resulted in substantially different responses, thus reducing the comparability of responses (Patton, 2002).

Nonetheless, the conversational style with a planned focus in advance, allowed me to most efficiently use my time as an interviewer. Since the undertaking of a doctoral thesis is also my personal journey, the statement by Fontana and Frey (1994: 373-4) about interviewing has a great resonance,

... in learning about the other, we learn about the self. That is, as we treat the other as a human being, we can no longer remain objective, faceless interviewers, but become human beings and must disclose ourselves, learning about ourselves as we try to learn about the other.

I found that the interview process at the PRU was well described by their observation.

The interviews were digitally recorded and then analysed. The interviews were transcribed using the 'clean transcript' approach described by Elliot (2005) where unnecessary words or sounds are not included. Finally, the transcripts were returned to the interviewees in order for them to check the meaning. This process of *member checking* (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) is discussed below in the section on 'Quality Control'.

3.7. Staff Focus Group

The focus group approach to research is a group interview on a specific topic; 'which is where the 'focus' comes from'. (Robson, 2002: 285). It was an open ended group discussion, guided by the research, extending for approximately 90 minutes. Opinion varies on the optimum size of the group. Figures of eight to twelve are usually thought suitable, although smaller group sizes have

been used (Robson, 2002). Fontana & Frey (1994: 365) describe my approach to a focus group as a 'field, formal group interview'. It is conducted in the field and my role as interviewer is somewhat directive and the question format that I used was semistructured'.

The contrived nature of a focus group is both its strength and its weakness. They are unnatural settings, yet they are very focused on a particular issue and, therefore, yield insights that might not otherwise have been available in a straightforward interview. They are economical on time, producing a large amount of data in a short period of time, but they tend to produce less data than interviews with the same number of individuals on a one-to-one basis (Cohen *et al*, 2000). Group interviews have the advantage of being inexpensive, data rich, flexible, stimulating to respondents, and cumulative and collaborative, over and above individual responses (Fontana & Frey, 1994). The disadvantage of this type of approach is the requirement for my interviewing skills to be greater because of the group dynamics or as Robson (2002: 285) suggests 'facilitating the group process requires considerable expertise'. I do not claim considerable expertise; however, the benefits afforded to this research by running one focus group seemed to outweigh the disadvantages.

I was able to gain access to a cross section of the PRU staff, who were available for a focus group on one of their staff development days in the summer term. The time available and used was approximately 90 minutes. This is another illustration of why this exploratory case study is *not* an illuminative evaluation, since the time available did not allow for an exhaustive and extensive discussion of all the areas of my research interest. I was able to recruit a heterogeneous group, who differed in background, experience and position. The group comprised of one deputy head/indoor teacher, two other indoor teachers, one senior outdoor instructor, one outdoor instructor, a part-time indoor teacher/outreach worker and an indoor classroom assistant. The time of service at the PRU ranged from several months to five years. The relative advantages and disadvantages of heterogeneous or homogeneous groups for group interviews are well explored in the literature (Robson, 2002). The reality of this small scale study was that on a given day these members of staff willingly participated, so there was no real choice for me in terms of group construction.

3.8. Field Observations

In order to understand the workings of this PRU, I had a research diary that I kept whilst in the field. Here I was able to record occasional observations, general impressions and specific instances, so that all of my time spent at the PRU helped form my understanding of the participants and processes involved. Additionally, I was able to record my personal reflections on the research process. For two specific outdoor learning days, these were written at the end of the days, as it was not possible to make notes as I went along see appendix M.

3.9. Pupil Attitude to Self and School (PASS) Scores

The PASS data is a computer based educational profiling tool. The PASS Rating Scale was developed over eight years in collaboration with three U.K. universities and piloted with more than 100 schools to measure specific aspects of children's attitudes towards themselves as learners and their attitudes towards school. PASS assesses nine core dimensions based around learner self worth, curricular and general motivation, pupil perceptions of their learning environment, task persistence and attendance attitudes. For a fuller description of the nine key factors please see appendix B. Assessment is standardised and nationally benchmarked for students of eight years of age and above (W3 Insights, online).

The classroom teachers administered the PASS questionnaire every twelve weeks, and the software generated a report. At the end of the summer term, I collected all the data that had been generated within the school since the use of the PASS software had started. For some pupils there was just one report and for others there were three sets of data, depending on how long the pupils had been attending the PRU. Since the sample size was small, with only nine sets of complete data for pupils (n=9), there was no quantitative analysis intended. Additionally, I had reservations about the validity of this measurement tool as discussed below. However, since this is a tool used by the school, its general use and results were used in an interpretive manner. This evidence was not used directly to help interpret the data gathered from the pupils. This was as a result of a lack of correlation between the specific pupils with whom I had contact and subsequently interviewed and the PASS data results available from the PRU, over which I had no

direct control. As such, the PASS data was used interpretively to provide illumination as to the affective outcomes of the provision at the Explorer PRU.

My reservations over the validity of the PASS data were because critical academic evaluation of the PASS measurement appears non-existent. That is despite my extensive searches on educational databases, such as the British Education Index and Education Research Complete accessed through the University library. In an article in the Times Educational Supplement Pinkus (2007) regards PASS as a helpful tool for schools in assisting in the creation of a parent friendly school. Pinkus (2008) considers that the PASS survey is a good way to assess a school's effect on a student's self-esteem. This is done by strategically sampling work at three different points to evaluate a student's progress. W3 Insights Ltd are a commercial organisation, and tend to involve themselves 'more in the validation with partners rather than the very time consuming aspects of publication' (Williams, 2007). The lack of critical review remains a concern. However, this was only one method of data collection that informed this case study, and it was used interpretively rather than statistically. Additionally, the quality of PASS could be considered to be supported by a variety of other factors. The number of Local Education Authorities who had purchased this product was considerable, and there were many schools who gave recommendations on the 'AWARDS, RECOGNITION & ENDORSEMENT' on the company website (W3 Insights, online). Furthermore, the involvement of the University of Exeter was also significant. They were involved in the original preliminary survey construction and predictive validation, as well as the extensive item and factor analysis (Williams, 2007). Moreover, the PASS measurement had been developed from underpinning theoretical perspective based on the work of Burden (1996). Professor Burden has an international academic reputation particularly in the field of self-concept and child development and it was this theoretical origin along with the commercial factors that gave me the confidence to use the data generated by the PASS measurement system in the interpretive manner described.

3.10. Ethical Considerations

There were a number of ethical considerations for this research. Firstly, before any data was collected, the proposed research was approved by the University of Exeter. As such I detailed my

research proposal and received a *Certificate of ethical research approval* number D/07/08/11 from the ethics committee of the School of Education and Lifelong Learning.

The most important ethical consideration for me was informed consent. I gained informed consent from the adults participating in this research and a copy of the consent form can be seen in appendix F. The principle of informed consent arises from the subject's right to freedom and self-determination. There is much written in the research literature which I considered (Punch, 1994; Crotty, 1998; Cohen *et al*, 2000; Robson, 2002) and these provide for a fuller consideration than given here. Before each adult signed the consent form, I talked through with them the purpose of the research, as well as the implications of consenting to my interviewing them. Issues of rights of participation, confidentiality and anonymity were addressed.

The PRU had gained parental consent for their children to be engaged in research. However, as I was committed to listening to young people's voices, I needed to give them detailed information about the research so that they could make their own informed decision. I met with each pupil and their class on several occasions before I began to use the Big Brother video diary. I was then able to talk through the consent form (see appendix G) with them and ask them to sign it, if they so chose.

There was also the issue of disclosure. Since the 1989 Children Act (England and Wales), professionals and adults who come into contact with children and young people, in either a professional or an informal context, have a responsibility to protect them from harm (France, 2004). Government guidelines (HMG, 2006) give the clear message that it is not appropriate to withhold information if a child or young person is identified as being in danger. Although this is not legally enforceable, France (2004: 186) suggests *that it is seen as immoral and unacceptable practice for professionals not to report incidents or suspected abuse*. In order to address this potential problem, I discussed this as an issue with each pupil. Additionally, each time they started the Big Brother computer, there was an ethical statement about disclosure, with which they chose to agree or to disagree (see a screenshot in appendix C). If they did not agree then nothing was recorded.

Noyes (2004) addresses the issue of informed consent and anonymity using video diaries. There is clearly a conflict between the ethical demands of confidentiality and the basic principles of using a video diary. As a consequence, great caution was needed when selecting the extent of the data

that could be used explicitly within this thesis. Changing the name of the pupil works in the written thesis, and since there is no video component to the thesis, then anonymity is not an issue.

After all of my ethical deliberations, anxieties and concerns, I am reassured by Punch (1994: 94-95) when he states:

Each individual will have to trace his or her own path. This is because there is no consensus or unanimity on what is public and private, what constitutes harm and what the benefits of knowledge are. ... In essence ... simply go out and do it ... [but] before you go, you should stop and reflect on the political and ethical dimensions of what you are about to experience. Just do it by all means, but think a bit first.

I have certainly thought about the ethical considerations, and indeed I believe more than 'a bit'! I have acted as ethically as I possibly could.

3.11. Quality Control: Issues of Validity and Reliability

Quality control is an issue about the rigour of this research. There are a number of ways in which a case study design can be rigorous. Traditional concepts associated with positivist research are not applicable to qualitative studies such as this, since the process of qualitative analysis is partly dependent upon the creative insights and conceptualisations of the researcher (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Reasonable procedures are needed that reduce as much as possible factors such as observer bias, uncharacteristic events being taken as typical, false inferences and insecure generalisations. A variety of techniques have been developed by qualitative researchers to increase the rigour of this research design and overcome the problem of validation. The factors that I have considered are discussed below.

However, before I discuss these more fully, I wish to recognise the influential work of Guba and Lincoln in the 1980s. They substituted validity and reliability as terms to establish rigour with the parallel concept of 'trustworthiness'. They argue that establishing the trustworthiness of a research report lies at the heart of issues conventionally discussed as reliability and validity. It is worth noting that in the interpretive paradigm that trustworthiness is not an absolute term and according to Seale (2003: 172) is 'always negotiable and open-ended, not being a matter of final

proof whereby readers are compelled to accept an account' and in the reading of this thesis I believe that this is worth bearing in mind.

Guba & Lincoln (1989: 233) developed 'authenticity' criteria which were 'embedded in the basic belief system of constructivism itself'. These are unique to the constructivist assumptions and can be used to evaluate the quality of the research beyond the methodological dimensions. Two aspects of authenticity I suggest were appropriate in this exploratory case study.

3.11.1. Fairness

Guba & Lincoln (1989: 245) describe fairness as 'the extent to which different constructions and their underlying value structures are solicited and honoured within the evaluation process'. The process of identifying all potential stakeholders and seeking out their constructions contributes to fairness. Within this exploratory case study I considered the pupil voice as well as that of teaching staff, teaching assistants, outdoor specialist tutors and school leaders. As such I considered all the participants who constituted the people present within the school building during the teaching day. I did not consider representatives from the associated educational community; the local authority, the educational psychologists and the feeder schools. Nor did I include the parental voice. This was a pragmatic consideration for the management of the research, and as such illuminates the structure of this case study and why it is 'exploratory' rather than fully 'evaluative'.

3.11.2. Ontological authenticity

Guba & Lincoln (1989: 248) state that this is literally the 'improvement in the individual's (or group's) conscious experiencing of the world' and when individual stakeholders can attest to the fact that they now comprehend a broader range of issues, or that they 'can appreciate (understand, comprehend) issues that they previously failed to understand' then there is evidence of ontological authenticity. The structure of my research and the access I had to the participants means that this change in understanding is uncertain for all the participants. The process of interviewing the leaders and the focus group discussion allowed for their development of understanding about their practice. This happened through the questioning and reflection processes that took place.

Morse *et al* (2002) argue for a return to 'validity' as a means for obtaining rigour through using techniques of verification. This is despite Guba and Lincoln's development of alternative terminology, to reflect the different paradigmatic assumptions. In order to verify the rigour of my research I wish to consider the following aspects of my research design.

3.11.3. Construct validity

This refers to the need for correct and appropriate methods for the construct being examined. Construct validity needs special attention in case study research because of the difficulty of defining the constructs being investigated (Yin, 2003). A failure to develop a sufficiently operational set of measures leaves the research open to the criticism of subjectivity or impressionism in their conclusions. Golby (1994) argues that there are two main ways of increasing construct validity. The first is the use of multiple sources of evidence, a strategy known as triangulation discussed below, in a manner encouraging what Yin (2003: 36) calls 'convergent lines of inquiry'. This approach is relevant during data collection. Another approach is the researcher seeking to authenticate with the respondent groups the constructions that are developing as a result of the data collected and analysed. This is a technique known as member checking and is discussed below.

3.11.4. Triangulation

Perhaps the most widely stressed validation technique in the educational research literature is triangulation (Denzin, 1989). Although different types of triangulation are available in the literature (for an exploration see Cohen, *et al* 2000) the most common involves checking information from different sources or methods for consistency of evidence across sources of data. In this research multiple methods such as focus group, interviews, video diaries, observation and document review were used, and as such information was gathered from multiple sources. The basic principle of triangulation is straightforward, in that if a variety of different methods or sources of data point to the same conclusion then this lends credibility to that conclusion.

However, Guba & Lincoln (1989) do not support this concept of triangulation because it implies that it is possible (or desirable) to find consistency across sources, which contradicts the notion of 'multiple realities' found in the interpretive paradigm. They say that triangulation can still be used to check on 'factual data', but recommend the use of member checks for other types of data. Stake (1995) points out that the stronger one's belief in constructed reality; the more difficult it is to believe that any complex observation or interpretation can be triangulated. He suggests (1995: 115) that for many qualitative researchers 'the protocols of triangulation have come to be the search for additional interpretations more than the confirmation of a single meaning'.

Consequently, triangulation is widely accepted in the research community as one way of adding rigour to a research design. In particular, the process of triangulation where the researcher uses multiple sources of evidence carries an important advantage. That is, the development of convergent lines of inquiry, where any finding or conclusion is likely to be much more convincing and accurate if it is based on several sources of information. Triangulation has come to assume a variety of meanings although the association with the combined use of two or more research methods within a strategy of 'convergent validity' is the most common (Crano & Brewer, 2002).

3.11.5. Member checking

The process of *member checking* (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) gives participants the opportunity to correct errors and challenge what are perceived as wrong interpretations and also provides the opportunity for them to volunteer additional information which may be stimulated by the reviewing process. However, member checking relies on the assumption that there is a fixed truth of reality that can be accounted for by a researcher and confirmed by a respondent. From an interpretive perspective, understanding is co-created and there is no objective truth or reality to which the results of a study can be compared (Sandelowski, 1993). Although this process is contestable, I used it in order to check the accuracy of my transcription, the meaning drawn from it, as well as the opportunity for participants to provide additional information. For Lincoln & Guba (1985: 314) 'the most crucial technique for establishing credibility' is through the process of 'member checks'.

Member checking is the method '...whereby data, analytic categories, interpretations, and conclusions are tested with members of those stakeholding groups from whom the data were

originally collected' (Lincoln & Guba, 1985: 314). By using this technique the researcher attempts to verify with the respondent groups the constructions that are developing as a result of data collected and analysed. In case study, Stake (1995: 116) states 'that all my reports have been improved by member checking'. Member checks can be formal and informal. In my research the video diaries were member checked by multiple questioning and watching the video with the pupil at the end of the session. The formal interviews were informally member checked by the paraphrasing technique. Additionally, once transcribed these were sent to the participants and discussed and amended at a follow up meeting.

The importance of member checking as a validation technique has consistently been emphasised especially in ethnographic research (Hammersley, 1992). However, whilst member checking is useful for increasing or broadening analysis, essentially it does not ensure the trustworthiness or validity of the conclusions. What it may provide is an opportunity for the participants to contribute in the construction of descriptions of themselves, to give them access to data so they have an opportunity to reflect on their stories, fundamentally to allow participants power in the research process. For these reasons, the participants' views were sought throughout the research process, without, however, relying solely on their account for what counts as a 'valid' conclusion of the study.

3.11.6. Analysis and Interpretation

When I was analysing and interpreting the data I used direct interpretation and categorical aggregation. Stake (1995) suggests that these are two strategic ways to reach new meanings in case study research. I began by personally transcribing the data from the interviews and focus groups. The video diaries were repeatedly viewed and personally transcribed in order to extract the meaningful phrases. This was a time consuming yet worthwhile process as I was able to immerse myself in the words, sentences and consider their possible meanings. I analysed these by reading the transcripts on multiple occasions whilst analysing vertically and horizontally across and down the data. This categorisation is described by Stake (1995: 74) as 'intuitive aggregation' through direct interpretation of the individual instance. Categorical aggregation is 'the aggregation of instances until something can be said about them as a class'. It is worth noting that while each of these themes may not be applicable to each participant, together they provide

a deeper understanding of the case (Stake, 1995). I was also informed by the hermeneutic approach used by Patterson et.al. (1998) in their study of the nature of wilderness experiences and I developed themes until I was satisfied that they served the aims of the inquiry. Consequently, my findings are a series of themes that are classified into different categories.

3.11.7. External Validity

This deals with the problem of knowing whether a study's findings are generalisable beyond the immediate case study and is 'one of the most problematic issues faced by the case study approach' (Gray, 2009: 261). Critics of case study classically state that single cases offer a poor basis for generalising. Such critics are implicitly contrasting the situation to survey research in which a random sample readily generalises to a larger population. This is because survey research relies on statistical generalisation, whereas case studies rely on what Yin (1994) calls analytical generalisation.

Surveys rely on statistical generalisation, whereas case studies rely on analytical generalisation, that is, generalisation to theory. Generalisation is based on repeated observation and one case study provides an observation that can be generalised to a general theory, particularly when considered in concert with the results from other studies (Miller & Brewer, 2003). This generalisation to a general theory, based in literature from other studies, is what will give this thesis external validity.

Yin (1994) also argues that the generalisation is not automatic. A theory must be tested through replications of the findings in a second or even third case where the theory has specified that the same results should occur. Once such replication has been made, the results might be accepted for a much larger number of similar cases, even though further replications have not been performed. This replication logic is the same that underlies the use of experiments. However, such a replication process is based on the conduct of a multiple case study. This would require extensive resources and as such was considered an inappropriate approach for this thesis.

3.11.8. Reliability

Conditions for reliability are met if the findings and conclusions of one researcher can be replicated by another researcher doing the same case study (Gray, 2009). Robson (2002: 176) suggests that researchers using flexible designs involve not only being 'thorough, careful and honest in carrying out the research, but being able to show others that you have been'. Reliability can be achieved if researchers document procedures through what Yin (2003: 67) calls the 'case study protocol'. A protocol is a plan of data collection instruments and the procedures for using them which a subsequent researcher can follow. As well as being 'thorough, careful and honest' I trust that this thesis is clear about my protocol for data collection.

3.11.9. Researcher Positionality

I have stated my positionality early in this thesis; please refer to section 1.3. in the introduction. This may be more simply understood as the interests and values of the researcher and is usually 'the most significant factor that influences choice and use of methodology and procedures' (Sikes, 2004: 18). Wellington *et al* (2005: 21) argue that positionality requires consideration since 'it is impossible to take the researcher out of any type of research or at any stage of the research process'.

The concept of 'where the researcher is coming from' is considered in terms of their philosophical position and their fundamental assumptions concerning their: ontological assumptions (social reality), epistemological assumptions (the nature of knowledge) and their assumptions about human nature and agency (Sikes, 2004). Therefore it has been necessary to make known to the reader my own prejudices and assumptions and this is discussed above in the introduction to this thesis.

3.11.10. Accounting for bias

I consciously made an effort in data collection and interpretation to attempt to avoid bias by taking my own positionality into account. I consider myself to be a critically reflective educator as

discussed in section 1.3. above. As such I was aware of my perspective and potential for prejudice, and as a result thought carefully about the issues I was exploring and how I framed my questions.

There were two areas where I was acutely aware of my own experience. Firstly, there are the pupils who are disaffected and excluded from mainstream school and who consequently may end up in a pupil referral unit. As a practicing secondary school teacher, I did not have the time, energy or patience to give the individual attention that these young people demand, and generally as a consequence, was not able to build these relationships. The exception to this was when I had a specific 'Lifeskills' class or I had participated in extra-curricular activity with these pupils. Consequently, there were times that these pupils would have been excluded from my undivided attention and then perhaps inevitably from my lessons when their behaviour became 'inappropriate' for the classroom. My perspective then was that these children were not able to conform to school's societal norms, and that was their choice. I had grown up in an era of exclusion and special schools and was well into my secondary education by the time of the seminal Warnock Report in 1978. None the less, by the time I qualified as a teacher I ideologically believed in inclusion for all pupils, so long as a) they were able to conform b) I had the skills and resources to support their learning needs and c) the needs of the many were not subjugated by the greater needs of the few. Therefore, these children were 'naughty' either out of choice or unfortunate personal circumstance, be it parenting or medical problems.

I was aware that I needed to be open-minded and non-judgemental about the Explorer pupils. It was crucial for me to develop a relationship with pupils and staff alike, and as such it became imperative for me to approach this as an impartial researcher. I believe that since I was able to develop relationships over an extended period of time, I was able to do this, collect and interpret data and avoid bias in this respect. My responsibility was to the research and as such I had no responsibility for the daily actions of pupils or staff, except to explore and illuminate the practices at Explorer. I believe that I was able to achieve this mind-set. Whilst constructing the video diaries, and developing the questions for the leadership team and regular staff, I had got to know these people, developed a level of rapport and had grown into my role of researcher.

Secondly, having a Master's degree in Outdoor Education, I was well aware of the use of outdoor education programmes with young people who are described by Barrett & Greenaway (1995) as 'at risk'. There were two main areas for bias in relation to outdoor education. Firstly, there are some within education who consider outdoor educational approaches as a panacea for all of the

problems facing society. As I have discussed within chapter 2, this Hahnian notion of outdoor education as 'good character building' from the perspective of muscular Christianity is deeply culturally rooted within the British psyche, as examined by Cook (1999). This suffering physical hardship on the road to some greater enlightenment appears to be firmly held (Brookes, 2003). Since my professional practice includes aspects of outdoor education, I am aware of my prejudice for outdoor learning but am also cognizant of how dogmatic some outdoor practitioners can be about what Barnes (1997) describes as the 'power' of the outdoors. Consequently I explored this issue with the staff and leadership at Explorer. The other preconception, about outdoor education and disaffected young people, is that adventurous activities are somehow rewarding the 'bad behaviour' of these disaffected pupils. This was an area of questioning that was fully explored with the pupils and staff to gather their perceptions about the purpose and meaning of outdoor learning sessions at Explorer.

I believe that my informed criticality has helped account for issues of bias for the matters detailed above. I also suggest that the levels of self-awareness and reflection in action that I experienced throughout this thesis have done as much as possible to reduce or dampen the effects of my positionality and the potential for prejudice and bias.

4. Data Presentation and Discussion

This section of the thesis presents and discusses the data I collected. This format is informed by what Miles and Huberman (1994: 90) term 'Within-Case Displays' and appears to provide for a more coherent narrative than placing the data separately within the appendices. These data have been generated and analysed through my own educational lens, and as such I suggest that the reader re-visits the introduction to the thesis in order to understand my positionality and the 'filters' with which I viewed these experiences.

I have approached the analysis of this thesis from a socio-cultural theoretical perspective that considers the sociological concept of social capital. I have done this because the work of Munn (2000) provides a critical perspective on social capital, schools and exclusions and she argues a strong case for its appropriateness. My research diary (appendix S) also points to the 'bingo' moment (19/10/2007) when the suitability of socio-cultural theory became consolidated in my thinking, as well as a re-examination of this theoretical perspective on subsequent occasions (appendix S, 17/5/2008). Additionally, during my time spent formally and informally researching the Explorer PRU, it was evident that their approach to education appeared to be designed to build and develop pupil's individual capital and give mechanisms for pupils to engage in gaining social capital (see appendix S, 12/6/2008). I consider this below and address issues surrounding this in the conclusions.

This analysis of the data is structured upon what Miles & Huberman (1994: 127) describe as a 'conceptually ordered display', presented in a 'conceptually clustered matrix'. A conceptually clustered matrix has its rows and columns arranged to bring items together that belong together. This may be a 'conceptual' outcome where 'the analyst may have some a priori ideas about items that derive from the same overarching theme'. The systematic approach advocated by Miles & Huberman (1994) was appealing to me since I am most comfortable reducing the complexities of educational interactions into generalised themes, and since I was researcher and analyst, this method of analysis and presentation therefore seemed most applicable.

The basic principle of this approach is one of conceptual coherence (Miles & Huberman, 1994). As such I believe that this analysis offers a level of coherence to understanding the workings of the Explorer PRU. This conceptual matrix (Table 3 below) acts as a summary of my findings.

Additionally, this matrix shows the level of triangulation from the three sources of data across the

emergent themes that were investigated. The key points are further explored in detail below following this summary. All names used are pseudonyms.

Table 3: Data Summary Conceptual Matrix

	VIDEO	LEADERSHIP	STAFF FOCUS
	DIARIES	INTERVIEWS	GROUP
	<p>data from:</p> <p>23 transcribed videos</p> <p>13 different pupils</p>	<p>data from:</p> <p>2 transcribed interviews</p> <p>headteacher</p> <p>director for outdoor learning</p>	<p>data from:</p> <p>1 transcribed group</p> <p>8 members of staff</p>
Relationships	<p>Their previous school experience is characterised by generally poor relationships with teachers.</p> <p>The teachers and classroom assistants at Explorer are characterised as helpful, caring, nice, fun and better than their previous school experiences.</p>	<p>My research suggests that the strength and quality of relationships between staff and pupils is one of the key factors in the successes of Explorer.</p> <p>The vision is based upon building caring relationships that are founded on a mutual respect.</p>	<p>The relationships have many aspects, take time and effort to build and they essentially require forgiveness by staff whilst pupils learn to behave and act appropriately.</p> <p>The intensity of this relationship is highlighted by Sophie when she contrasts the Explorer experience with that of mainstream education.</p>
Perception of school	<p>It was clear that there was anger about their experience of their previous schools.</p> <p>The perception of Explorer is that it is good or better than pupils' previous schools.</p>		
Curriculum	<p>As such the Explorer curriculum receives generally positive approval</p>	<p>The curriculum approach at Explorer has two significant features. Firstly</p>	<p>The staff consider outdoor learning to be an intrinsic and fundamental part of</p>

	from the pupils.	it works at Level 1 or the 'What Are We Trying To Achieve' level of the National Curriculum Secondly, outdoor learning lessons are an integral part of the curriculum for all pupils on a regular weekly basis.	the Explorer curriculum.
Perception of success	Pupils generally perceived Explorer as a place where they could and had been successful in a number of different ways.	On an individual level, successful pupils are perceived as 'being more in control of their own emotional intelligence, being able to understand how to socially integrate with other people, to be aware of the rights and responsibilities that that come with them with regards to themselves and other people'	It was clear that concepts of success are multi-dimensional, individually and collectively for the pupils, the staff and the PRU. The staff characterised the success of Explorer with the terms open-minded, trusting, responsive, ethos and relationships.
Explicit targets	The pupil response to the explicit targets was mixed. There was a generally positive perception of their value to the individual.	'I like to use it [REACH] to get the young people to think about how they behaved in those categories, to see where they have been successful. I use it as a reflective thing to get young people thinking. I use it as a refined tool, not a dogmatic approach to behaviour'	The formal REACH system was positively regarded.
Leadership		A very strong sense of self-belief, both in himself as a leader as well as his personal educational philosophy.	It is clear that this leadership is consultative from a staff perspective. The term supportive was the most frequent in the list.
Behaviour Management	The REACH system produces quite a negative response as it forces the	The approach to behaviour management has a clear basis, a sound rationale	The regular use of REACH as a reflective tool for pupils to take responsibility

	pupils to confront how they have been behaving. However, there appears to be recognition of the usefulness of REACH for other pupils in general terms.	and is operationalised through a structure (the REACH targets) that allows it to be consistently and constantly addressed.	for their own behaviour and having this built on a clear 'rights and responsibilities' philosophy clearly provides a coherent and consistent approach to behaviour management.
Teaching and staff	<p>The pupils regard most of the teaching staff favourably, especially Brett and Rich.</p> <p>Respect for staff was not universal. There were numerous negative views that were vehemently expressed about Charlie.</p>	These two key staff members are both characterised by being passionate about the work and methods of Explorer and a belief that they can and should make a difference to the lives of the pupils arriving at the PRU.	The staff were in agreement that they had to be caring about the pupils at Explorer. This was considered to be important in different ways.
Constraints and challenges		<p>'The ones that are least successful are the ones that have far too many other issues and problems that aren't just related to school because you're only dealing with a small proportion of what the issue is...'</p> <p>Rich acknowledges that he and the members of staff are the biggest challenges at Explorer.</p>	<p>'There are not enough suitable professional educational settings for them to move on to '</p> <p>'The physical accommodation and the budget behind it... the physical restraints of the buildings is just criminal...we are a school and we don't have any outdoor space'</p>
PASS Data	Generally, it seems reasonable to suggest that according to the PASS measurements, that the PRU has an overall positive effect on most of the attitudinal factors measured for most of the pupils.	The results data was not apparently being interrogated to inform the whole PRU approach.	<p>I suggest that the note of caution 'it's got to be treated quite carefully' is most appropriate both for its' application and its interpretation.</p> <p>It is clear that the PASS instrument was not being used consistently across the PRU, nor was it being used to its full potential.</p>

4.1. General Pupil Data

The general pupil data is the demographic student records provided by the headteacher as an annual summary to the local authority and can be seen below in Table 4. This shows that the mix of pupils that passed through Explorer in the academic year is approximately an even mix of permanently excluded pupils (PEX) and those who are close to being excluded and are on an intervention placement (IV). Pupils permanently excluded cannot legally return to their original school. Pupils on an intervention placement will return to their original school. It is reasonable to suggest that both these types of pupils are the most challenging, especially in their attitudes to school and their resultant behaviour.

This information was supplied by the headteacher as a copy of his end of year return to the local education authority. With 33 out of 61 pupils being re-integrated into mainstream key stage 4 provision, it appears that the PRU enjoys a success rate of around 50% in this area. However, if all of the re-integrations are considered including to alternative and special school provision, and including those who stay at Explorer, then the success rate appears substantially greater, with all pupils except the 2 who subsequently left (with undocumented reasons in this data) finding a place to continue their education. This could be argued to be a success rate of over 95% for Explorer pupils staying in and continuing their education.

However, whilst numbers and percentages are simplistically attractive in order to demonstrate relative levels of success, the detail of the experiences of pupils and staff, as explored in this thesis, are what perhaps better explains and describes the functioning and successes of the Explorer PRU.

Table 4: PRU Generated General Pupil Data

SUMMARY OF PUPIL STATISTICS - 2007/8:			
Total number of Pupils on roll:	61		
Total with Statement:	18		
Total CiC:	7		Child in Care of the local authority
Number of PEX pupils:	22		Pupils Permanently Excluded and cannot legally return to their original school

With Statement:	6	
CiC:	1	
Number of IV pupils:	30	An intervention placement and will return to their original school
With Statement:	6	
CiC:	2	
Number of RFC pupils:	9	Referral from County – removed from school but not PEX in order to keep those numbers lower
With Statement:	6	
CiC:	4	
Exit Statistics:		
No. reintegrated to KS4 Mainstream:	33	Since Left: 2
No. reintegrated to KS4 Special:	6	
No. reintegrated to Alternative:	5	
No. that moved away (OOC):	3	Out of County ~ so no longer a concern
No. staying at Explorer:	14	

4.2. Pupil Attitudes to Self and School - PASS Data

Table 5: PASS Factors Summary Statements

FACTOR 1	<p>Feelings about school. This measure samples a young person's feelings of inclusion in, or alienation from, the school community. It is what the Americans call 'School Connectedness'. A low score on F1 can indicate feelings of social exclusion and also potentially bullying.</p>
FACTOR 2	<p>Perceived Learning Capability. This measures the feelings of success (or lack of success) that a young person has. It is a recently introduced measure which seeks to capture the feelings experienced in the 'here and now'. It offers a snapshot of a learner's unfolding impressions of her 'self efficacy' and its value lies in the fact that it can provide early warning of demoralization and possibly, later, disaffection.</p>
FACTOR 3	<p>Self regard. This is a much more robust measure than F2 of the learner's sense of self worth measured in the long term. The generic equivalent is called 'self esteem' but is much more focussed on learning and consequently has a greater correlation with achievement than standard measures of self esteem commonly used in other environments, such as the workplace for example. In simple terms, it can be thought of as a cumulative account of the many F2 'snapshots' collected over</p>

	a period of time. It would be feasible for a learner to feel uneasy about his current learning capabilities in the immediate short term while retaining a general impression of himself as likely to be successful in the long term.
FACTOR 4	Preparedness for learning. These questions prompt young people to stand back from their learning situation and ask themselves 'Do I have the tools to do the learning job?' It is mainly about study skills, including attentiveness, powers of concentration and emotional responses to learning demands. It would be quite possible for a learner to score very low on this measure while retaining strong self regard. Of all the factors this one correlates most closely with behavioural difficulties in the classroom.
FACTOR 5	Attitudes to teachers. This measures a young person's perceptions of the relationships they have with the adults they work with in school. Interestingly, of all the factors this one is the most positive in terms of maximum response nationally.
FACTOR 6	General work ethic. The first of two motivational measures. It is about motivation to succeed in life. It is about purpose and direction, not just at school but beyond.
FACTOR 7	Confidence in learning. This is a measure of perseverance in the face of challenge. Does a student see themselves as giving up at the first hurdle or do they see themselves as having 'stickability'? It differs from F2 and F4 in its focus on specific learning situations. A student may agree with the prompt, 'I enjoy doing difficult work at school' while in the grip of a present anxiety about how well equipped she is to tackle it successfully or disaffection with many of the learning situations she is encountering currently.
FACTOR 8	Attitudes to attendance. This factor is self explanatory. It is very highly correlated with an individual's actual attendance.
FACTOR 9	Response to curriculum demands. The second motivational measure. This time learners are asked to focus more narrowly on their motivation to undertake and complete tasks set within the school's curriculum.

The Pupil Attitudes to Self and School (PASS) measurements provide this research with some useful indicators. However, due to the size and consistency of this testing I suggest that it is not appropriate to use statistical analysis of these data.

This is a small sample size with only 9 pupils out of 61 on roll having a complete set of data. It is frustrating that not all pupils across the PRU were tested. The PASS data provides a snapshot of the progress made by the pupils and does not necessarily represent the fullest and most detailed of pictures. None the less, the overall sense that these data provide is a very positive affirmation of the processes, procedures and personnel of the Explorer PRU.

There were only nine sets (n=9) of complete data (i.e. with at least two test points) available to me. There could be several reasons for this. The software was introduced part the way through

the year, and staff training in its use was perhaps inconsistent. Some pupils arrive and leave the PRU within the 12 weeks between the testing points that the PASS tests are designed with. This is because either they are quickly turned around and return to mainstream education, or because they are permanently excluded from the PRU. Additionally, some pupils may be absent or temporarily excluded from Explorer when the PASS test is administered and the data is collected. As a result, the data I had access to had eleven pupils with only one measurement, and these have not been included in the data analysis as they could not show development and as such are incomplete.

The PASS test was administered by the class teachers and not by me. As such I have no real knowledge about how the test was administered, i.e. the time of day, the setting, the pupil's mood and behaviour on the day of the test, their previous days experience, the member of staff (was it the class teacher or the teaching assistant is unknown). Additionally, the reliability and rigour with which the test was conducted is also unknown.

4.2.1. PASS Data – The Pupils

Table 6: Pupil Change in PASS Factors

PASS FACTORS CHANGE OVER TIME			
	positive changes	negative changes	no change
Kyle	9		
Chris	9		
Luke	9		
Nathan	7	2	
Stevie	6	3	
Dave	6	2	1
Scott	5	4	
Matt	4	4	1
Bruce	3	5	1
TOTAL	58	20	3

For some students, such as Chris in Figure V and Luke in Figure VI, the PASS results appear to show that the Explorer PRU has a profound and dramatic affect on their attitudes to self and school. The graphs provide a useful visual picture of the changes in attitude for pupils, particularly for those whose results are most extreme in their changes in attitude.

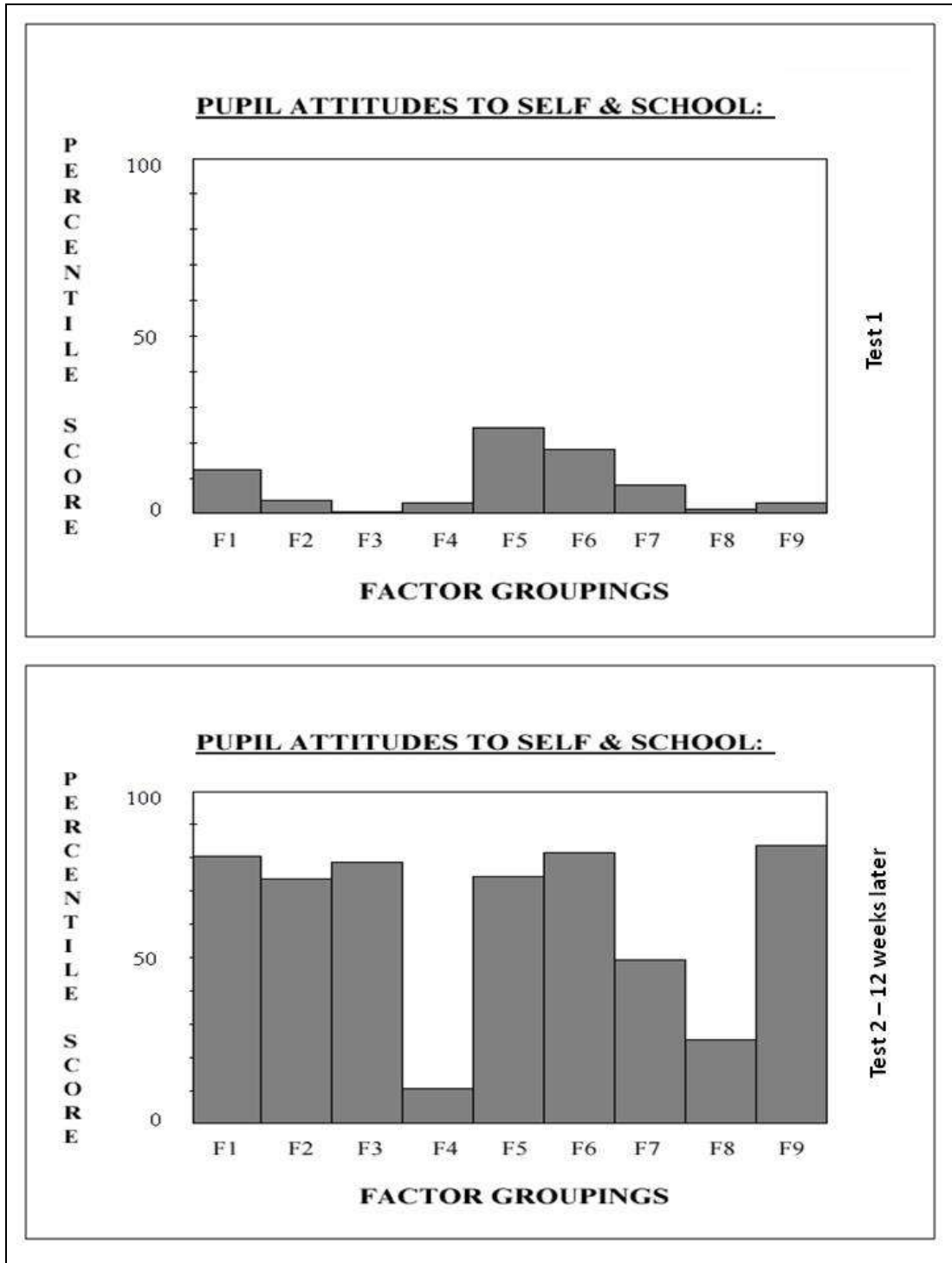


Figure V - Pupil Chris - Change in PASS Factor Scores

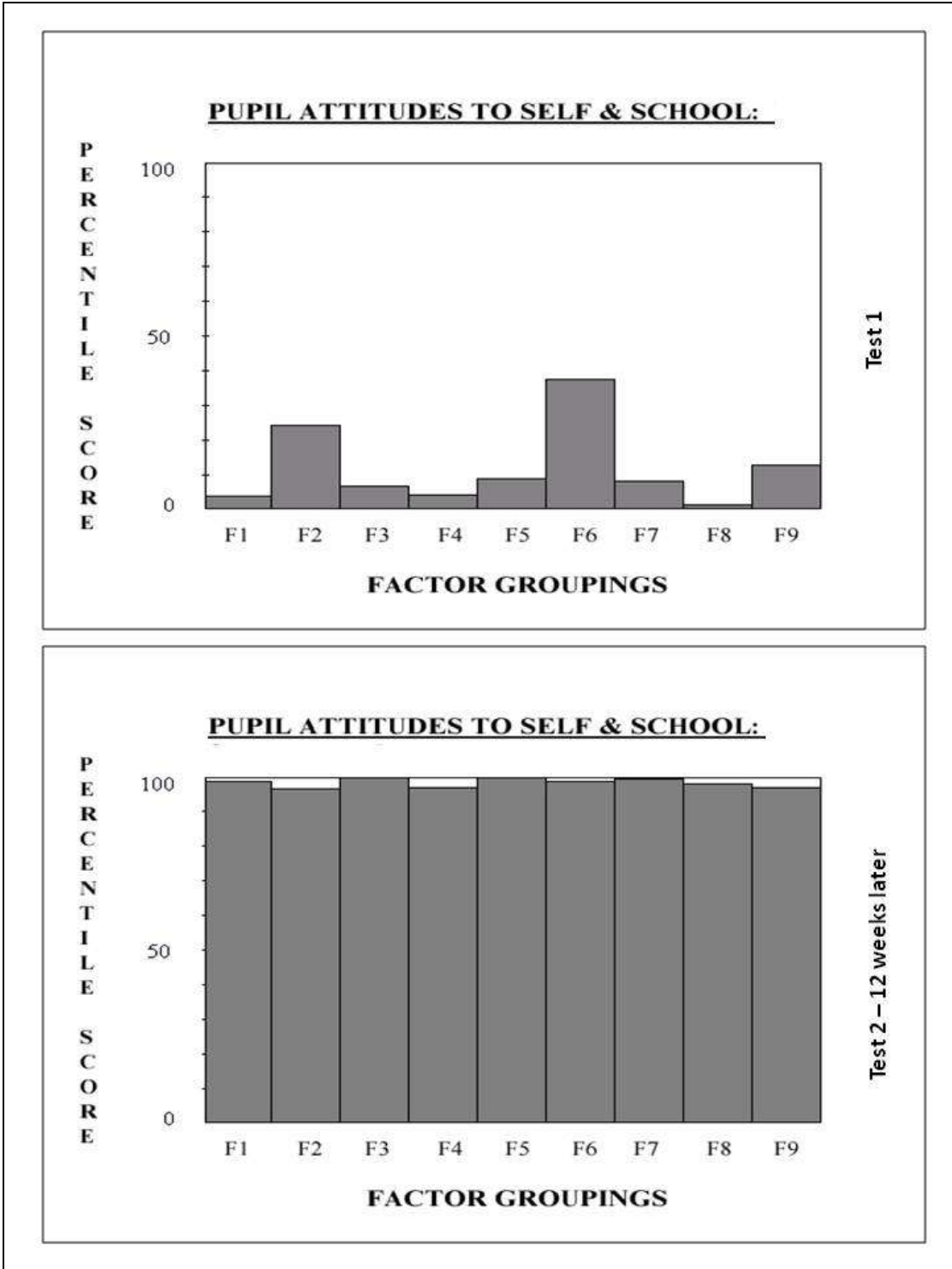


Figure VI - Pupil Luke - Change in PASS Factor Scores

Some pupils (Bruce, Chris, Matt) had 3 sets of test results, due to their longer stay in the PRU. Their individual differences are interesting. There is a variety of trends for these pupils across the PASS factors. Some factors improve consistently, whereas some factors for some pupils peak on test 2 and then decline, others decline consistently. There are no generalised trends that I intend to explore here. I suggest that these data would best be used by the class teacher and the PRU team on an individual and personalised level. Overall there appears to be a spectrum or range of changes in attitude as defined by the PASS tests (where n=9).

3 pupils had all positive changes across the factors

4 pupils had a majority of positive changes across the factors

1 pupil had an even balance of positive and negative effects

1 pupil had a majority of negative changes across the factors

There are no results at the totally negative end of the spectrum. This could be for a couple of reasons. Firstly, it could be argued that the Explorer PRU generally has a positive effect on all its pupils. Secondly, it may be that the most negative of pupils do not last for 12 weeks at the Explorer PRU and become excluded or moved to another form of education. This is an important point, which is worth exploring further. However, I do not have access to that detailed information upon which to draw.

This data was used to triangulate the findings from the qualitative analysis of the video diaries. Pupil Chris, shown in Figure VI above and his edited comments appear first in the following tables, along with the relevant PASS factor, as detailed in appendix B, as an example of the triangulation that the PASS data provided. However, there were limitations to this approach. For example, pupil Luke shown in Figure VII above was not one of the pupils who were interviewed as he moved on to the next phase of his education as I was starting my research. As such not all of the pupil PASS data were able to specifically triangulate the statements made in the video diaries. Additionally, the comments made by some pupils did not necessarily have any PASS data which could be used in the triangulation process.

Generally, it seems reasonable to suggest that according to the PASS measurements the PRU has an overall positive effect on most of the attitudinal factors measured for most of the pupils, who remain at the PRU for at least 12 weeks.

4.2.2. PASS Data – The Factors

Looking at the PASS analysis summary Table 7, the PASS measurements have the potential to be a useful tool in evaluating pupils and their progress at the PRU. From the results in this study, there is some indication that the Explorer approach generally makes a positive impact on most pupils' attitudes.

Table 7: PASS Factors – Overall PRU Score

PASS	Description	POSITIVES	NEGATIVES	no-change
F1	Feelings about school	8	1	
F8	Attitude to attendance	8	1	
F4	Preparedness for Learning	7	2	
F2	Perceived Learning Capability	6	3	
F3	Self-regard as a Learner	6	3	
F6	General work ethic	6	2	1
F9	Response to curriculum demands	6	2	1
F5	Attitudes to teachers	5	3	1
F7	Confidence in Learning	5	4	

All nine PASS factors showed a positive change for the majority of the pupils, whilst no one single PASS factor had all pupils with a positive change in their attitude. The measurements indicate that Explorer generally has a positive effect, for all the factors for the majority of pupils. This positive effect is more consistent with regard to their feelings about school (factor F1) and their attitude to attendance (factor F8). It is less consistent with their attitudes to teachers (factor F5) and their confidence in learning (factor F7).

The size of the change in pupil attitude (positive or negative) is a layer of analysis that has not been explored here. The reason for that is that it has not yet been fully developed as an indicator by the authors and owners of the PASS software. They are however, 'planning to benchmark

magnitudes of attitudinal changes over the coming 12 months' (Williams, 2009). However, it can be seen that some changes are small in number whilst others are large in number terms. I suggest that to attribute a percentage change as a numerical representation would have over-stated and complicated the PASS data results. The size of these changes, both positive and negative, could be useful for teaching staff working on an individualised pupil basis.

The negative effects for the individual factors appear to be when pupils score highly (90+) when they are first tested. Whether their sense of reality about their attitudes and abilities is misplaced or over-inflated is unknown, as is whether they are so 'over-tested' on passing through the education system and have responded accordingly.

For Explorer, the general trends could be useful. The PASS factors have been arranged in Table 3 above. The Explorer approach appears from this sample group to be more successful regarding factor 1 'Feelings About School' and factor 8 'Attitude to Attendance' than factor 5 'Attitudes to Teachers' and factor 7 'Confidence in Learning' which is surprising.

4.2.3. PASS Data – Staff Perceptions

It is clear that the PASS instrument was not being used consistently across the PRU, nor was it being used to its full potential. There was no evidence of a system of monitoring and evaluation of its use. This was acknowledged by the director of outdoor learning 'we're definitely not using the data as much as we could, or as much as we should be.' It was deployed on an individual basis amongst the indoor teaching staff. The results data was not apparently being interrogated to inform the whole PRU approach. For instance Brett the Headteacher states 'I think that it's [PASS factor 5, the attitudes to teachers] quite important as it's all about relationships and the key thing for any people to succeed anywhere has got to be able to do relationships...' and from my analysis here that factor is one with the least consistency of positive response from the pupils. The reasons for this could be explained by teacher Sophie when she states 'it's a bit tricky with PASS because some days you'll decide to do PASS with your group and an individual in the group will be particularly in a bad mood that day and it will be appalling results compared to what it's telling us that he has gone backwards and of course it works the other way he could have a great day... it's got to be treated quite carefully.'

I suggest that the note of caution 'it's got to be treated quite carefully' is most appropriate both for its' application and its interpretation. The PASS system provides a useful measurement and indicator for Explorer. A methodical and systematic approach to its use would I believe benefit the pupils and the staff, especially since the fundamental purpose of the Explorer approach is to influence attitudes and change pupil behaviours. There is room for further research regarding the use of the PASS measurement tool, both inside and outside the Explorer PRU.

Table 8: Teacher Perceptions of PASS

<p>From interview with Rich, Director of outdoor learning:</p> <p>it seems to be providing information about pupils that shows we are making a difference</p> <p>we're definitely not using the data as much as we could, or as much as we should be.</p> <p>it's not something I do with the pupils outdoors and at the moment the information collected indoors isn't open to all the staff. And this is frustrating.</p>
<p>From interview with Brett, Headteacher:</p> <p>The PASS data is very useful because we do it straight away with them when they arrive here and it gives us a snapshot of what they currently think about education and themselves...</p> <p>one of the key factors is they hate teachers ... the score on that factor [factor 5 Attitude to Teachers] is astronomically low</p> <p>the PASS data is very useful because it tells you where they've come from.</p> <p>I think that it's [PASS factor 5, the attitudes to teachers] quite important as it's all about relationships and the key thing for any people to succeed anywhere has got to be able to do relationships...</p> <p>response to curriculum demands [PASS factor 9] is a key indicator for the school</p>
<p>From staff focus group</p> <p>Chloe: it's a bit tricky with PASS because some days you'll decide to do PASS with your group and an individual in the group will be particularly in a bad mood that day and it will be appalling results compared to what it's telling us that he has gone backwards and of course it works the other way he could have a great day... it's got to be treated quite carefully.</p> <p>Doug: we need to be clear about this PASS data and how it's been used</p> <p>Chloe: ... I think it's a powerful tool for us and when it worked it's been successful to go look, look how that really help this person to become more confident, they are learning, and they like education, we just need to bear in mind all these factors; when you do it how you do it...</p>

Liam: things I've found it useful for is when you do it and it then backs up what you feel as a teacher that's really nice because you've got some statistical data, which unfortunately we are all measured by, you've got something backing up your professional judgment and it gives you that the validity to say, yeah I know, but here is a measurement a number that says this child has improved just as much as I said he had

Chloe: and also importantly for the child, I've had it before with one of mine who has improved greatly and shown it to them and they've gone "wow" ... and can I take a copy home, I have improved my attitude? So it can be really successful to use with the pupils.

4.3. Video Diaries

The 'big brother' video diaries were originally designed to allow pupils a free reign for expression, without the influence of an adult presence. The 'big brother' diary room set up developed and emerged as a research tool. When the pupils requested access to the room, complete with software, laptop and webcam they were able to access it. It was only available when I was physically at the PRU. All the recording was done digitally directly to the hard drive of my laptop personal computer. Questions were prompted by a custom built piece of animated software, which then controlled the recording and storing of data onto the laptop.

Once I had visited the pupils in their classes with their teachers and classroom assistants, I was able to develop a relationship with them. We discussed my research and the purpose of the 'big brother' diary room. The first couple of sessions with the laptop allowed the pupils a chance to familiarise themselves with the operation of the software programme. This included a consent statement every time the software was launched see appendix C.

The 'big brother' visit became a weekly session for the pupils over the summer term that was built into their day by the teachers. This involved my presence in the school, and at times plenty of waiting around for the right opportunities for the pupils to be ready to talk. It became clear that most pupils requested that I sit with them to help them answer the questions on the screen, especially those with poor literary skills. My presence allowed for the questions and answers to be more fully developed than those responses gained from pupil only sessions. Additionally, it was possible to watch the pupils recording with them to further interrogate the meaning to what they were saying. Most pupils were keen to watch themselves on screen and hear their own voices.

The first session for many pupils involved a 'swearing free for all!' The concepts of confidentiality and saying exactly what they wanted to without any consequence (within the bounds of the consent statement) were clearly an exciting opportunity. Showing off in front of the camera and then watching themselves was all part of the relationship that I developed with them in order to get them to talk freely.

In its final form, the reality of the 'big brother diary room' for these pupils was a hook in order to get them to engage in the research and as such became more of a semi-structured interview. This was not my original intention, nor was it a piece of deception on my part, merely the consequence of the pupils, myself and our collective available resources. I believe that with the resources of a TV production company, with multiple cameras, two way feedback and a hidden voice and script writers, then these pupils would talk freely to camera. The limited resources of time accessing the pupils, the laptop PC and some simple interview animated questions that I used, could work I believe with pupils who are more able to express themselves and understand their feelings, actions and behaviours. The paradox for this research was that the pupils' literacy and emotional literacy meant that they were and are poor at analysing their attitudes and behaviours and then articulating their thoughts and feelings in a coherent manner, as evidenced in my research diary (appendix S, 9/5/2008). The irony in doing this to give the children 'their voice' for those that need to be heard when they are not able to do this independently, was not lost on me.

None the less, the results of the hours of interview using the 'big brother diary' have produced data for these pupils, and more than I believe would have been accessible using other methods, such as reflective written diaries. The videos have not been analysed for their visual content, except where a particular note was made in my research diary. They have been transcribed, and examples can be seen in appendices H and I, and the themes that emerged from the text are presented below. For the purposes of triangulating the findings using the PASS data, pupil Chris appears at the top of the tables with a note regarding the associated PASS factor (see appendix B for Factor descriptions).

4.3.1. Relationships with Staff

Table 9: Pupils perceptions of their experiences prior to Explorer - RELATIONSHIPS

	Positive Aspects	Negative Aspects
Relationships	<p>Nearly all the teachers liked me there but there were some that disliked me (Chris) FACTOR 5</p> <p>No none... except miss XXXX she worked in learning support (Bruce)</p> <p>Yes there were some teachers that I liked... (Drew)</p> <p>not really [any teachers I liked]... (Kirk)</p> <p>Yes, the art teacher ... because they were good at art (Matt)</p> <p>Not really...[any teachers liked] (Nathan)</p> <p>The English teacher Mrs XXXX who used to help me a lot, and helped me with my anger... and yes Mr XXXX.... he helped me when I got wound up I could go to his office...</p> <p>Mr XXXX [head of year] helped me to get into here... which is a good thing (Scott)</p> <p>A couple... because they like understand you more... unlike other teachers who didn't help out and had a go at me when I didn't understand (Stuart)</p>	<p>anger, hatred, frustration evident on the face of pupil Chris [video evidence] FACTOR 5</p> <p>Do you think the staff care about you at Explorer? Yeah... the last school didn't (Chris) FACTOR 5</p> <p>Mr XXXX and Mr XXXX ... they used to pick on me... if I asked in the lesson what are we doing, they used to say 'get out' (Bruce)</p> <p>The reason I have to come to Explorer is because I kicked a teacher in the nuts! At my old school Mr XXXXX who is a fat tosser. (Dave)</p> <p>Crap! Because I've got a bunch of wankers for teachers (Dave)</p> <p>It was crap because all the teachers were mean... (Kirk)</p> <p>Yeah... miss XXXX... she just used to look at me... and moan all the time... about pathetic things... and moaning all the time... it was boring but most of the time it was me misbehaving but I didn't like 'em so I didn't care... (Kirk)</p> <p>I hated the teachers mainly, the stuff we did was pointless ... the teachers were always shouting 'do this, do that' (Matt)</p> <p>English, maths, history ... I hated the teachers (Matt)</p> <p>no one listened to me at my last school... (Matt)</p> <p>disliked?... all of them... because they gave me a hard time... and detention... and didn't help me if I couldn't do something...</p>

		<p>(Nathan)</p> <p>Yeah lots, loads... I just get so angry when I get shouted at (Scott)</p> <p>I get angry when teachers shout at me for things I hadn't done ... (Scott)</p> <p>I get distracted and people wind me up.... they pick on me because how I look, they call me 'cock-eye' ... and that pisses me off a lot... and then I get angry really easily ... it happened in primary school, still happens about the same and it still makes me angry... I wasn't born like it; I sat to close to the TV until I was about 2... that's what my dad told me... (Scott)</p> <p>[disliked] the ones who didn't help me.... the snooty and smug teachers (Stuart)</p> <p>[Teachers helpful] no not really... and that was really annoying (Stuart)</p>
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Table 10: Pupils current perceptions of their experiences at Explorer - RELATIONSHIPS

	Positive Aspects	Negative Aspects
Relationships	<p>there's more teachers and they help you and everything kinda like a school (Chris) FACTOR 5</p> <p>and the teachers are nice... they are better... they help me here... I like coming here... I get bored at home...(Chris) FACTOR 5</p> <p>[Explorer] Better... [care about you?] YEAH [interested in you?] YEAH... (Bruce)</p> <p>Do you think the staff care about you at Explorer? Yeah... the last school didn't (Chris) FACTOR 5</p> <p>They care about you... they help you more... you can have fun with them, when you are doing good activities with them.... like art...(Chris) FACTOR 5</p>	<p>Charlie [member of staff] is horrible... [why?] he's a dick... no-one likes him... cos they all think he's a geek and a pratt... [what makes him a geek?] look at the way he talks {so which members of staff do you like?} everyone else... He [Charlie] is like all the teachers at my last school... TWATS! (Bruce)</p> <p>Yep... he's [Charlie] just been a little fucker... he gets me to do my lessons when I'm in a mood, he grabs me and tries to chuck me out the door... so I tried and legged it... (Dave)</p> <p>I think it's terrible... absolutely terrible... absolutely terrible... rubbish... don't like the teachers they're boring... don't like the teachers because they are even more</p>

	<p>[Why are they fun?] Because we are with Rich... (Chris)</p> <p>The staff here help me... they help me with misbehaving and that lot... it's like oh sorry miss and then just get back on with the lessons. (Dave)</p> <p>Some of them are nice and some are wankers. Sarah's nice... Liam's nice... Rosie and Chloe's nice... Lloyd and Rich are nice... Brett is nice and Charlie is a prick. (Dave)</p> <p>Yeah... they're interested in me... they help me (Dave)</p> <p>Rich... he's class... he's funny... especially the way he rides [a mountain bike]... I laugh at him and he laughs at me especially when I fell off in the puddle. (Dave)</p> <p>Yeah, cos if they don't care about people... if the adults don't help you, how are the little ones going to learn? The staff here really help me. (Dave)</p> <p>It's a bit small. The staff's fine... I'd like a bigger building and some place outside... I like cooking though... and going outdoors (Kirk)</p> <p>They're not strict... they moan too much... they don't make you do things you don't want to do... and they don't tell you off as much... and they don't shout at you as much... and they don't get angry here and they did in my last school (Kirk)</p> <p>Yeah... I like most of them... they are funny (Kirk)</p> <p>I think Brett is just weird... his funny but cocky... way more cocky than me... his cocky 24/7... (Matt)</p> <p>Liam... I suppose and Lloyd, until he went back to Australia... shame... Lloyd was the funny Australian man ... he would take a little crap, but if we were joking around he</p>	<p>boring... yeah... DONE! (Drew)</p> <p>the problem is going back to school into a group of 25-30... but I prefer bigger groups because I get on better... here if a couple of kids kick off it affects the whole class because there's only 5 of us... (Nathan)</p> <p>not so good with Charlie... if I say to Charlie I need 5 minutes to calm down outside, he comes down and says 'we're working in the classroom, we're working in the classroom' and then he keeps on following me around... even Sarah and Rosie [other staff] said to him 'he's just taking 5 minutes out' (Nathan)</p> <p>I don't really think that Charlie or Rosie understand what's wrong with people and what help they need... (Stuart)</p>
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	<p>knew we were joking around... but we knew when he was serious... (Matt)</p> <p>They are different... it's much smaller here... so they can help you more (Nathan)</p> <p>[Rich] he always talks about fun all the time... and he is funny... I don't know why, he's just a laugh... so was Lloyd... it's all part of going outdoors, having a laugh... (Nathan)</p> <p>[indoor staff?] Sometimes... depends... I can make them laugh; they might not always make me laugh... (Nathan)</p> <p>Brett just gets on your nerves because he thinks he is funny, and he is funny but in an annoying kind of way... he is quite funny just annoyingly funny (Nathan)</p> <p>The best bits are cooking and going outside having a laugh with Rich... (Nathan)</p> <p>Calmer... calmer about when we get angry... because when teachers shout at me I get really angry (Scott)</p> <p>I get on well with the teachers... (Stuart)</p> <p>Liam's good, he understands what's going on quite a lot, Lloyd's good for the same reason and Rich... (Stuart)</p> <p>Yeah... they want you to do well... and they make an effort to help... (Stuart)</p>	
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The intensive everyday interactions between pupils and teachers in schools open up many opportunities for mutual contacts and acquaintanceships, and point to teachers' very central status in their pupils' lives. Tatar (1998) suggests that secondary school pupils evaluate their teachers according to their capability to teach a subject matter, their sensitivity to pupils' individual needs, their ability to develop personal relationships with pupils, and their professional competence.

Their previous school experience is characterised by generally poor relationships with teachers. Teachers are perceived as not being helpful, friendly or sensitive to their needs. 'It was crap because all the teachers were mean... (Kirk)'. They are characterised as moaning or shouting and treating pupils unfairly 'I get angry when teachers shout at me for things I hadn't done ... (Scott)'. Research by Tatar & Horenczyk (1996) showed that secondary school pupils expect their teachers to be (in descending order of importance) fair, competent and helpful when needed. This was clearly not the case for Explorer's pupils at their previous schools.

Iresom & Hallam (2005) considered pupils liking for school and found that teachers who are able to control the class, pace lessons appropriately, display interest by listening and taking time to explain and help pupils to understand, signals to pupils that they, and their learning, are valued. Whilst this was clearly not the perception for the majority of teachers, most Explorer pupils acknowledged one or two teachers or adults in authority for whom they had a positive regard in their previous school. These were teachers who understood the pupils' problems and were perceived as trying to help them, or as a place of refuge when school became too difficult to cope with.

My research suggests that the strength and quality of relationships between staff and pupils is one of the key factors in the successes of Explorer. This included all the adults at Explorer, and was notable in my research diary (appendix S, 16/5/2008) when discussing the pupils informally with the secretary. The teachers and classroom assistants are characterised as helpful, caring, nice, fun and better than their previous school experiences. 'Yeah... they're interested in me... they help me' (Dave). There is a great sense of the pupils respecting the teachers and recognising that they treat the pupils with respect and sensitivity as individuals. According to Iresom & Hallam (2005: 299), relationships with teachers are likely to contribute to pupils' sense of being valued. Indeed, students are more likely to feel valued and supported if they feel that 'teachers are interested in helping them to learn and are able to provide a positive learning environment.'

However, this is not a universal and immediate right of respect for all teachers at Explorer. It clearly has been earned and developed over time and many interactions. It is clear that one member of staff, Charlie, is not liked by a number of pupils. The history of these negative feelings is unclear, although the interview evidence was collected over the course of a couple of months, so it is unlikely that this negativity was as the result of a recent one-off incident. None the less the strength of feeling from the pupils is strong and shared. e.g. 'Charlie [member of staff] is

horrible... [why?] he's a dick... no-one likes him... cos they all think he's a geek and a pratt... [what makes him a geek?] Look at the way he talks [so which members of staff do you like?] everyone else... He [Charlie] is like all the teachers at my last school... TWATS!' (Bruce). Tatar (1998: 217) found in his research that boys are more likely to 'perceive significant teachers as obstructing their personal development'. I suggest that due to the small size of Explorer, all the teachers and assistants are in the role of 'significant other'. It appears that this poor relationship that Charlie has with the pupils provides an area of potential weakness in the structure and functioning of the PRU.

4.3.2. Perceptions of School

Table 11: Pupils perceptions of their experiences prior to Explorer - SCHOOL

	Positive Aspects	Negative Aspects
Perceptions of School	<p>I want to go back and when I do I don't think anybody will be starting on me because they haven't seen me in a long time and they will have had a bit of a break from me... and I've had a bit of a break from them... (Scott)</p> <p>My old school was quite good actually... (Drew)</p>	<p>My old school was actually quite crap, it was shit, fucking shit (Chris) FACTOR 1</p> <p>boring and I got bullied a lot (Bruce)</p> <p>I don't really care... I hated the place anyway... wouldn't want to go back... (Bruce)</p> <p>Crap! Because I've got a bunch of wankers for teachers (Dave)</p> <p>Yep, and that was crap because you've always got to put on a tie (Dave)</p> <p>My last school was a load of shit (Dave)</p> <p>It was crap because all the teachers were mean... (Kirk)</p> <p>Horrible... Absolutely rubbish (Matt)</p> <p>It was absolutely crap ... it was pointless ... (Matt)</p> <p>I don't want to go back.... (Nathan)</p> <p>I used to get into fights everyday and all</p>

		<p>the year 10s and 11s were punching me in the face and that... (Scott)</p> <p>Boring... I never really did the work so I got myself kicked out... not do the work be stupid.. (Stuart)</p> <p>I don't really have any feelings for it... I don't care about it (Stuart)</p>
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The places where pupils had not been successful were generally not regarded positively. For example 'My last school was a load of shit. (Dave). 'Horrible... Absolutely rubbish ... It was absolutely crap ... it was pointless ...' (Matt). 'I don't want to go back....' (Nathan). These statements were vehemently expressed. It was clear that there was anger about their experience of their previous schools. However, there were also comments about wanting to go back, particularly from Scott who was an intervention pupil and had spent two terms at Explorer and clearly felt ready to return to his old school.

Table 12: Pupils current perceptions of their experiences at Explorer - SCHOOL

	Positive Aspects	Negative Aspects
Perceptions of Explorer the School	<p>and now I'm here and I'm getting along quite well... (Chris) FACTOR 1</p> <p>It's not a school... not a proper school... it's just like a pupil referral unit kind of thing... (Chris) FACTOR 1</p> <p>It's alright, better than my last school... (Bruce)</p> <p>Helped me yeah.... helped me cope with my anger... I walk away... (Bruce)</p> <p>Really good... especially the outdoor ed. ... because you go surfin and that lot... it's really class (Dave)</p> <p>I wouldn't mind going back to school next week just to have a look... yeah Explorer</p>	<p>It's worse [than last school]... there's only one good thing about it... you are outdoors on Fridays and you get half days on Wednesdays... that's two things (laughs) (Matt)</p> <p>it's boring.... there's nothing to do here... Monday I wasn't in, Friday I wasn't in, yesterday I wasn't in.... and I'm not in on Monday cos of a teacher training day... I want to come to school occasionally as I get bored at home. (Matt)</p> <p>Dunno... I don't even know if it is a school... it's more like a day-care centre... it's kind of a school, kind of not... (Nathan)</p>

	<p>has really helped (Dave)</p> <p>It's a bit small. The staff's fine... I'd like a bigger building and some place outside... I like cooking though... and going outdoors (Kirk)</p> <p>it's not a proper school here... and you're not allowed to stay here til year 10 and 11. I want to go to a mainstream school. (Kirk)</p> <p>there's only one good thing about it... you are outdoors on Fridays and you get half days on Wednesdays... (Matt)</p> <p>Yeah... way yeah I'd rather come here than my last school... (Matt)</p> <p>Quite a lot... here if you get pissed off you don't always get excluded whereas at my other school as soon as you kick off you are gone... kicking off here makes people listen to you sometimes.... no one listened to me at my last school... (Matt)</p> <p>I don't really think that it is a school... it's a place where kids can go to learn about their anger, to calm down, to stay away from trouble (Scott)</p> <p>Smaller classes.... and I work better in smaller classes (Scott)</p> <p>I like it! (Stuart)</p> <p>What has been your best day at Explorer? The whole thing... all together (Stuart)</p>	
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The perception of Explorer is that it is good or better than pupils' previous schools 'Yeah... way yeah I'd rather come here than my last school...' (Matt), and that it has helped the pupils e.g. 'Helped me yeah.... helped me cope with my anger... I walk away...' (Bruce). There is also a general perception that Explorer is not a proper school. This can be a positive view 'I don't really think that it is a school... it's a place where kids can go to learn about their anger, to calm down, to stay away from trouble' (Scott) or a negative view 'it's more like a day-care centre... it's kind of a

school, kind of not...' (Nathan). The affective value of school is, according to Iresom & Hallam (2005), related to both their general self-concept in school, and their perceptions of the extent to which teachers display a willingness to help them learn and understand.

4.3.3. Views on the Curriculum

Table 13: Pupils perceptions of their experiences prior to Explorer - CURRICULUM

	Positive Aspects	Negative Aspects
Curriculum	<p>Lessons Liked - PE, ICT and RS (Bruce)</p> <p>NO, none at all (Dave)</p> <p>Art... (Drew)</p> <p>Tech[nology] and PE (Kirk)</p> <p>Art was pretty good ... but I don't like praise, I hate praise. (Matt)</p> <p>PE was alright, gymnastics and gym, I like being strong (Matt)</p> <p>Bit of drama.... music (Matt)</p> <p>Maths, art, cooking (Nathan)</p> <p>PE... because I like sports... (Scott)</p> <p>Geography, music and PE I liked geography because I like surfing and climbing and you need to know what's going on around you... and I liked music cos I like music and PE because it wasn't writing... (Stuart)</p>	<p>The lessons were boring (Chris) FACTOR 9</p> <p>Lessons Hated - Science, French, Spanish, art (Bruce)</p> <p>Yes, [hated] every single one ... except maths ... because the teacher was class (Dave)</p> <p>... the others like maths... (Kirk)</p> <p>Yes I hate English (Matt)</p> <p>Maths, history ... I hated the teachers mainly, the stuff we did was pointless ... the teachers were always shouting 'do this, do that' (Matt)</p> <p>Not really, apart from the laptops... (Nathan)</p> <p>hated ... yes... French, English, maths... because they were boring (Stuart)</p>

Table 14: Pupils current perceptions of their experiences at Explorer – CURRICULUM

	Positive Aspects	Negative Aspects
Curriculum	<p>You can have fun on them [outdoor learning lessons]... it helps you... some people say they don't like it at first but then when they go to it they are 'oh I really like this now' ... (Chris) FACTOR 9</p> <p>Art, cooking and swimming down the leisure centre... I like doing active stuff (Chris) FACTOR 9</p> <p>[Outdoor learning lessons] I like them... (Bruce)</p> <p>[best bits] ... going outdoors... (Bruce)</p> <p>You learn new stuff and that lot... learn how to surf, how to ride a mountain bike properly, how to canoe properly... how to capsize yourself... loads of stuff. (Dave)</p> <p>Explorer should definitely keep going outdoors... YEP! (Dave)</p> <p>Outdoor lessons... I like them... indoor lessons are shit... (Dave)</p> <p>[Best bits] Outdoor ed. ... and swimming ... and if you don't misbehave you don't get 'scluded so you don't miss out... (Dave)</p> <p>It's a bit small. The staff's fine... I'd like a bigger building and some place outside... I like cooking though... and going outdoors (Kirk)</p> <p>[Outdoor learning lessons] Good... I enjoy them... they're fun... [help you] get on more with other people... (Kirk)</p> <p>[Outdoor learning lessons] dunno... it's a bit of a reward for something (Kirk)</p> <p>[the best bits] cooking and outdoor days... that's it (Kirk)</p> <p>[Outdoor learning lessons] They're good...</p>	<p>the worst bit for me is doing 'success maker'...(Chris) FACTOR 9</p> <p>Doing 'success maker' it's just crap... everything... [having to sit there and think about things?] yeah... (Bruce)</p> <p>I don't learn stuff here... I've done maths and English but not really learned anything... I think we should do science and tech (Kirk)</p> <p>the worst bits are doing written stuff on computers... I don't like doing 'success maker' I hate it... it takes too long (Nathan)</p>

	<p>way better than indoor lessons... you learn how to cook in the outdoors and that... learn how to do more things... kayaking, Tyrolean... I like being outdoors and I hate being in... (Matt)</p> <p>Going outdoors is alright... but cooking is the best thing... (Matt)</p> <p>[Outdoor learning as rewarding bad behaviour] No way... its teaching you about the outside world... if we didn't do it I would miss it... (Matt)</p> <p>I'd like to go outdoors every day. We learn more stuff like safety, there's a lot more to health and safety you know... (Nathan)</p> <p>The best bits are cooking and going outside having a laugh with Rich... I like being active, making things doing stuff... (Nathan)</p> <p>I like them [outdoor learning lessons]... they're fun... because on every outdoor ed. day I get a gold REACH (Scott)</p> <p>[So are your outdoor lessons helping you to behave and be successful?] Yeah! (Scott)</p> <p>Outdoor learning lessons with Rich? Yeah [I like it]... quite a lot (Stuart)</p> <p>It would be a bad thing if someone came along to Brett and Rich and said 'this taking pupils outdoors it's too much of a treat, they don't deserve it, they don't learn anything we are going to stop this.' (Stuart)</p>	
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Previous school experiences suggest that practical, kinaesthetic activities and lessons were seen as a positive experience, e.g. art, technology and PE. Many subjects were seen as a negative experience, particularly the non-practical ones e.g. English and French or where a specific teacher was mentioned in a negative way. 'English, maths, history ... I hated the teachers (Matt)'. Iresom & Hallam (2005: 307) found in their research that pupils who feel supported by their teachers and peers are less likely to become alienated and disengaged from their work. They state that their

research 'highlights that for pupils, it is the teacher's ability to provide support and help for learning that is of importance'. As such the Explorer curriculum receives generally positive approval from the pupils. The kinaesthetic activities received the best responses; cooking, swimming and outdoor learning (see appendix S, 26/6/2008). When undertaking this research, the pupils were willing to talk to me. This was unless they were about to start cooking or go swimming.

The outdoor learning lessons as a part of the curriculum is another of the key factors in Explorers success. They are certainly universally well received by the pupils who appear to enjoy them but also see the benefit of participating in them. 'Outdoor lessons... I like them... indoor lessons are shit...' (Dave). 'Outdoor learning lessons with Rich? Yeah [I like it]... quite a lot' (Stuart). 'Good... I enjoy them... they're fun... [help you] get on more with other people...' (Kirk).

There were parts of the curriculum that received a negative response. One of the curriculum approaches to literacy and numeracy was through 'SuccessMaker'. It is a computer based individualised learning software that has been designed to improve standards for pupils up to the age of 14. It contains a variety of courses covering literacy and numeracy and includes skill building courses for students with a low level of mathematics and English, seemingly making it highly appropriate for pupils at Explorer. However, the pupils do not like this 'the worst bits are doing written stuff on computers... I don't like doing 'success maker' I hate it... it takes too long' (Nathan).

4.3.4. Reasons for Exclusion

Table 15: Pupils perceived reasons for exclusion prior to arrival at Explorer

<p>I kept getting into trouble and then it got worse as the days went on and on and on... and then I got expelled because I went too far with all the mischief (Chris) FACTOR 2 & 3</p>
<p>I took a gun into school with me... and got in trouble... it was a BB gun and I was going to shoot the people who were bullying me... and I did and that's why I got kicked out... I actually shot their legs... (Bruce)</p>
<p>The reason I have to come to Explorer is because I kicked a teacher in the nuts! At my old school Mr XXXXX who is a fat tosser. I kicked a teacher in the nuts.... he was peeing me off, so I swore at him called him a fat wanker kicked him in the nuts and then ran... and had all the teachers chasing after</p>

me the teacher was calling me a prick... (Dave)

[outside school] I got into fights... people winding me up so I got into fights.... I got in trouble with the police.... I set a barn on fire because they pissed me off ... and it's my last warning from the police... and if I get in trouble again I go to prison... but I haven't been in trouble with the police for about 3 years now (Dave)

I told the teacher to FUCK OFF and I jumped out of the window... (Drew)

I was excluded.... for stealing a boys dinner money.... [and were you?] no... this little boy was like a 'spac' and he blamed me... (Kirk)

I hit this English teacher... after a disagreement... Got fed up with being talked to by the English teacher, so I knee'd him in the bollocks (Matt)

Didn't go to school for three years and eventually someone said I've got to go to school... (Nathan)

Because I got wound up by lots of people at my old school... they all started winding me up deliberately... starting on me... and I get angry when teachers shout at me for things I hadn't done... and I get schiz... (Scott)

There was one big final event... I punched my teacher in the face because he was pushing me out of the room because I was being naughty and he stabbed a pencil in my eye, by accident, and I just got angry and punched him in the face AND I had a massive row with Mrs XXXX [Head of something] because she nicked my hat (Scott)

Loads of different things [such as] letting French bangers off next to teachers, fighting (Stuart)

Who was responsible for you ending up at Explorer?

ME! Because I took a gun in! (Bruce)

Me (Chris)

Me... me and the teacher (Dave)

Me.... me (Drew)

Me... (Kirk)

I haven't got a clue (Matt)

ME! for my behaviour in school... (Scott)

Me! Because how I acted (Stuart)

The pupils characterise their exclusion by a sequence of escalating incidents. There appears to be a final 'last straw' often involving aggression e.g. 'I told the teacher to FUCK OFF and I jumped out

of the window... (Drew)'. Additionally physical violence was often suggested e.g. 'I kicked a teacher in the nuts! At my old school Mr XXXXX who is a fat tosser. I kicked a teacher in the nuts.... he was peeing me off, so I swore at him called him a fat wanker kicked him in the nuts and then ran... (Dave)'. The pupils have a clear story that appears well rehearsed that they presented to me and no doubt forms their 'reality' or their 'interpretation of their story' as to the reasons for their exclusion. The general consensus from the pupils was that they were responsible themselves for being excluded and arriving at the Explorer PRU.

4.3.5. Perceptions of Success

Table 16: Pupils perception of success at Explorer

<p>A little bit... so long as there are not too many people or that kind of thing because I never used to be handle a lesson because there's about 30 pupils all in one class (Chris) FACTOR 2 & 3</p> <p>[Are you able to be successful here at Explorer?] Yeah... [What are you successful at?] Mountain biking (Bruce)</p> <p>[Does this include returning to a regular mainstream school?] Yes I'm going XXXXX next week... (Bruce)</p> <p>Yeah... if I leave here and go to TXXXXXX.... I don't want to leave yet... I'd rather wait until the end of term, then go to TXXXXXX (Dave)</p> <p>Yeah... helluva a lot... when I was 12 I used to be a right little bastard I used to go around punching everyone, smashing stuff up... but now I've stopped it.... (Dave)</p> <p>Getting good REACH scores... and the teachers say so (Kirk)</p> <p>Helped me to control my anger... I go out and calm down... don't fight... (Kirk)</p> <p>Yeah... because it's not a proper school here... and you're not allowed to stay here til year 10 and 11. I want to go to a mainstream school. (Kirk)</p> <p>It depends on whether you want to... [be successful] (Matt)</p> <p>Is that a sign of success then, getting a gold? Yeah... Gold's like a really good day... (Matt)</p> <p>I don't want to go onto a proper school... when I leave I want to go onto a school like this ... when I leave go and work with my dad... (Nathan)</p> <p>Sometimes... I'm supposed to be going back to a school... I've only got 2 or 3 weeks left here as a school so I'm going to IXXXXXX... (Nathan)</p>
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Helping me to get my education back up... so I can get into a school... it has helped with my behaviour, because I know that my temper at my last school got me into trouble... whereas here if you got problems you can just leave the room and go and calm down... (Nathan)

Everybody is... (Scott)

[returning to a regular school?] Yeah... yeah I am going back to KXXXXXX next term (Scott)

I know how to control my anger more and deal with situations (Scott)

Yeah... I am going back to one [mainstream school] soon... (Stuart)

I used to be a pratt in my other place... I've learnt how to behave here and I've learnt how to control myself when people are winding me up... (Stuart)

Pupils generally perceived Explorer as a place where they could and had been successful in a number of different ways. For some it was a realisation that they had changed their behaviour and responses to situations 'I used to be a pratt in my other place... I've learnt how to behave here and I've learnt how to control myself when people are winding me up...' (Stuart) and 'Helped me to control my anger... I go out and calm down... don't fight...' (Kirk). For others it was about learning something new or developing an existing skill '[Are you able to be successful here at Explorer?] Yeah... [What are you successful at?] Mountain biking...' (Bruce). When asked about the PRUs definition of success, returning to a regular mainstream school, then this was perceived by pupils as a measure of their success e.g. 'Yes I'm going XXXXX next week...' (Bruce). 'Yeah... yeah I am going back to KXXXXXX next term...' (Scott). For some getting through the day without incident and receiving a gold REACH score was a sign of their personal success e.g. 'Is that a sign of success then, getting a gold? Yeah... Gold's like a really good day...' (Matt). Perhaps one of the most perceptive answers to the question about success was 'It depends on whether you want to... [be successful]' (Matt).

4.3.6. Explicit Targets

Table 17: Pupils Views on Explicit Targets at Explorer

	Positive Aspects	Negative Aspects
Explicit Targets	<p>[daily REACH scores] They help... because if you have been bad you get bad scores... if you've been good then you get good... (Chris) FACTOR 4</p> <p>[feeling positive targets] Yeah... it's something that I just really go along with... I don't really feel positive about much stuff... I don't know why (Chris) FACTOR 4</p> <p>Yeah.... if you weren't here [doing REACH] then you were still at your normal school then you'd just be a little shit... but with here like last year when I come here I was a right little shit but now I've changed my behaviour a hell of a lot... (Dave)</p> <p>[Feeling positive targets] It's alright [Do they help you feel more positive?] Yeah... (Dave)</p> <p>REACH scores... I think they help me... but I don't know how... (Kirk)</p> <p>[Do they help you feel more positive?] Yeah... [What does feeling positive mean to you?] It's about me... I like feeling positive about myself (Kirk)</p> <p>getting a gold [REACH reward] for meeting your target a good thing? Yeah... (Matt)</p> <p>[when you get a gold REACH]... Good inside... but I don't enjoy doing them... only when I am in a good mood and I get a good score... but I don't like doing them when I get a bad score... (Scott)</p> <p>[REACH targets and scores] Fine... alright... good... a good way to reflect (Stuart)</p> <p>if you've had a bad day then you can see</p>	<p>No... yes Rich, no Rich, can't be arsed Rich (Bruce)</p> <p>REACH targets? Boring... you've got to do it every morning and every afternoon... it's crap... can't see why we do it... I reckon we should just go home... just do it once a day, then it'd be easier (Dave)</p> <p>REACH scores...They're rubbish... because you have to do them everyday... I don't enjoy doing them... (Kirk)</p> <p>[Positive targets] Well I don't like praise... I don't know I really hate praise so I don't like them... I hate feeling positive... I prefer to feel negative, down all the time (Matt)</p> <p>REACH scores? Rubbish... I always walk out at the end... what's the point of them? I didn't have them in my last school... so what's the point? It's only to see how well we've done during the day... I don't like doing them... and I don't think they help... they're pointless... I don't listen to the staff when they are talking about them... (Nathan)</p> <p>I don't really care about them... they don't really help me.... they just make me angry whenever I get a red [REACH] (Scott)</p> <p>I don't like doing them when I get a bad score... (Scott)</p> <p>if you've had a good day then there's not much point in doing it [REACH] (Stuart)</p>

	<p>what you have done wrong and how you can improve it... (Stuart)</p> <p>It helps you feel more positive... [feeling positive target] [feeling positive means] Happy! Not stressed out (Stuart)</p>	
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The interviews discussed with the pupils the twice daily REACH behaviour targets as well as the 'feeling positive' targets that were used by Rich for outdoor learning days. The pupil response to the explicit targets was mixed. There was a generally positive perception of their value to the individual. 'if you've had a bad day then you can see what you have done wrong and how you can improve it...' (Stuart). 'REACH scores... I think they help me... but I don't know how...' (Kirk). There was also a sense of irritation and annoyance of having to do something and not liking it e.g. 'I don't really care about them... they don't really help me.... they just make me angry whenever I get a red [REACH]' (Scott). 'REACH targets? Boring... you've got to do it every morning and every afternoon... it's crap... can't see why we do it... I reckon we should just go home... just do it once a day, then it'd be easier...' (Dave).

4.4. Leadership Interviews

There were two interviews with leadership staff. Both were seen by me as the key players in the development of the Explorer ethos and approach to running a pupil referral unit. These were with Brett the headteacher and Rich the director of outdoor learning. From these interviews some common themes emerged and were explored. From this research one of the key factors in the success stories of the Explorer PRU is a clear vision, based upon a clear philosophy and one that is well articulated by the individuals as well as through the policies, procedures and systems that operationalise the vision. Full transcripts are available in appendix J for the headteacher and appendix K for the director of outdoor learning.

4.4.1. Leadership and Vision

Table 18: Brett, Headteacher – Leadership and Vision

<p>... I became a teacher because I wanted to make a difference.</p> <p>The reason I applied for the job really was it looked like an opportunity on paper to actually put forward a vision of how things could be.</p> <p>One of my senior managers in my last school when I applied for the job actually said to me “it will be a real waste if you go to a place like that you should be teaching in a school.” I remember thinking why would it be a waste? Why are these children less deserving? They need teachers, decent teachers and the right environment.</p> <p>No real consideration is given to what might be going on in their lives for some of our kids school is like really kind of irrelevant it really doesn't figure on the scale with the other problems they've got and a lot of teachers don't recognize that. I come from a very socialist kind of background; I was brought up in that kind of household.</p> <p>... you should strive to make a difference.</p> <p>We've created a really cohesive staff unit with a really genuine shared vision and we have a genuinely shared ethos.</p> <p>Our leadership I would say is very distributive everyone is responsible for what goes on and it's in a process of constant evolution. Change is the only constant.</p> <p>... we should always be evolving [and] learning ourselves and changing our practice to make it better and better and better. I believe you can always improve.</p> <p>Totally shared staff ethos [makes Explorer unique] ... our key purpose is shared by all the staff ... and it's not what's been dictated to us from above ... we are doing what we know to be the right thing ...</p> <p>I've created an atmosphere here where I allow my teachers to do the right thing, the thing they knew they wanted to do.</p> <p>I was brought up with respect for everyone and rights and responsibilities in a citizenship kind of environment, so to me there are certain things that aren't negotiable and those rights have responsibilities with them and we should all be working to improve and make that happen.</p> <p>Are you able to help pupils be successful here? Yes! Without question? Yes! ... I guess that's a bit more optimism coming through. Yes I do believe that we can help our pupils to become more successful.</p> <p>I guess my beliefs are you can't change yourself unless you are able to reflect on yourself and what you have done.</p>
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I'm a firm believer that if you are positive enough you will eventually become positive.

I like making a difference. I enjoy working in this environment. I like being in charge. I like being able to drive this vision forward. What I do, is what I'm best at doing, in this school, I'm good at having a vision, driving it forward and taking people with me.

[Describe Brett, the headteacher] Passionate, fair, approachable, strongly held beliefs, positive, successful ...

Table 19: Rich, Director of outdoor learning – Leadership and Vision

I think that I can provide for some of the needs of some of the young people. I can help.

I think that Explorer as a whole puts the needs of the pupils first and does the very best that it can to help the pupils cope with "the system".

the main thing that Brett brought was the concept of rights and responsibilities, choices and consequences, the BODORs [blatantly obvious description of reality].

I decided we had to make sure that what happens indoors, is the same as what happens outdoors.

the Explorer ethos... is staff and pupils how you interact with the young persons face-to-face

Brett is basically an outstanding leader, people will follow him. So the best way to change things is to influence Brett ... if you can't influence Brett then don't fight it, it won't change.

... I support Brett 100%

[The ethos] is really dictated from the Head[teacher] ...Dictated suggests a strong leader, and that's just what Explorer needed.

A lot of the staff don't understand [the ethos]. I think there is a number of staff that don't understand Brett.

Brett is definitely pupil centred, he definitely has empathy ... he is purposeful yes ... he will listen to the staff and their ideas, and make up his own mind ... he needs to be the centre of attention, and anybody who knows him knows what he's strengths are, he goes out there and fights for what the staff need ... he is a fighter. There are issues that he consults the staff upon and finds a consensus ... he will go out there and fight for what we think the pupils need what the unit needs.

The vision of how a PRU should be run is based very much upon a strong sense of social justice. 'We have that [mutual respect] on our rights and responsibilities ... our fair class rules ... part of our way we operate, our fair class rules are built on mutual respect... on mutual respect. The

Explorer ethos is a child centred approach in the context of conforming to and being successful in "the system". 'No real consideration is given to what might be going on in their lives for some of our kids school is like really kind of irrelevant it really doesn't figure on the scale with the other problems they've got and a lot of teachers don't recognize that. I come from a very socialist kind of background; I was brought up in that kind of household' (Brett). 'I was brought up with respect for everyone and rights and responsibilities in a citizenship kind of environment, so to me there are certain things that aren't negotiable and those rights have responsibilities with them and we should all be working to improve and make that happen' (Brett). 'the Explorer ethos... is staff and pupils how you interact with the young persons face-to-face' (Rich). 'I think that Explorer as a whole puts the needs of the pupils first and does the very best that it can to help the pupils cope with "the system"' (Rich). 'Brett is definitely pupil centred, he definitely has empathy ...' (Rich).

These two key staff members are both characterised by being passionate about the work and methods of Explorer and a belief that they can and should make a difference to the lives of the pupils arriving at the PRU. To what extent these beliefs and this corporate ethos were shared with the whole staff was an area I explored in the staff focus group, see below. They appear to see the pupils as victims of their life's experience and the education system so far. This is not in a sense of pity, but a sense of unfairness and that these pupils need a little extra help in order to become more successful. They made statements such as 'I became a teacher because I wanted to make a difference ... you should strive to make a difference' and 'I like making a difference. I enjoy working in this environment (Brett). 'I think that I can provide for some of the needs of some of the young people. I can help' (Rich).

Brett has a very strong sense of self-belief, both in himself as a leader as well as his personal educational philosophy. 'I like being in charge. I like being able to drive this vision forward. What I do, is what I'm best at doing, in this school, I'm good at having a vision, driving it forward and taking people with me' (Brett). When asked to describe himself in five simple bullet points he replied 'passionate, fair, approachable, strongly held beliefs, positive, successful ...' (Brett) which is six! This strong sense of self, ethos, successful and positive appears to have a real positive influence on the staff 'Brett is basically an outstanding leader, people will follow him. So the best way [for me] to change things is to influence Brett ... if you can't influence Brett then don't fight it, it won't change (Rich). Additionally, at the time of Brett's appointment and the formation of Explorer into a PRU, it clearly needed some strong leadership '[The ethos] is really dictated from

the Head[teacher] ...dictated suggests a strong leader, and that's just what Explorer needed' (Rich). Whilst suggesting that Brett is strong minded, it is clear that he is not simply autocratic, but does consult the staff as well 'he (Brett) is purposeful yes ... he will listen to the staff and their ideas, and make up his own mind ... he needs to be the centre of attention, and anybody who knows him knows what he's strengths are, he goes out there and fights for what the staff need ... he is a fighter. There are issues that he consults the staff upon and finds a consensus ... he will go out there and fight for what we think the pupils need what the unit needs' (Rich).

4.4.2. Relationships

Table 20: Brett, Headteacher – Relationships

<p>I am able to relate to those kinds of pupils [kids that are from difficult rough estates] very well.</p> <p>We've created a really cohesive staff unit with a really genuine shared vision and we have a genuinely shared ethos.</p> <p>I had a relationship with my class built on mutual respect.</p> <p>"a relationship built on mutual respect" would you say that's the kind of tag-line, the catchphrase to what it's [Explorer] about?</p> <p>Yes! We have that on our rights and responsibilities ... our fair class rules ... part of our way we operate, our fair class rules are built on mutual respect... on mutual respect.</p> <p>I think that it's [PASS factor 5, the attitudes to teachers] quite important as it's all about relationships and the key thing for any people to succeed anywhere has got to be able to do relationships...</p> <p>...we try not to build things between us and the kids and us and the parents in a lot of respects. Dress code is very important, first names, it's about... we are here for them, we are here to help them succeed, and they can't shock us, we want them to be honest...</p> <p>staff have to be caring ... it's an absolute. Staff have to care about them [pupils] as human beings. They've got to think they can change these kids. They've got to think they can progress these kids, they have got to want to do it, want to value them, so we come back to that mutual respect line ... if they don't share that ethos of mutual respect, it is time to move on.</p> <p>First names; because most of my friends call me Brett, most of the people I work with call me Brett, Brett is my name and I don't need to build a barrier, I don't need to be "Mr", because I am Brett!</p> <p>Differences between staff and pupils; I have more rights, because I am a teacher and you will respect me, but you are a pupil you need to earn my respect which is not okay it's just not okay as far as I'm</p>

concerned.

I guess our aim is to try and become a significant other, to these kids, so that they want to do things.

the characteristics of a good member of Explorer staff

Able to build a relationship

Willing to listen

Positive – able to transmit that positivity and enthusiasm

Willing to start again – so they don't take it home with them, so don't hold a grudge – every day is a new day, they mustn't take it personally

Understand that the kids can change – you can make a difference to them

Be part of a team, a team player, but also be able to innovate and just react instantly

we make it very clear to them that they didn't go kayaking to learn how to kayak, they went kayaking, so they could build a relationship with Rich, build a relationship up with an adult, actually not all adults are bastards.

Table 21: Rich, Director of outdoor learning – Relationships

[staff pupil relationships] it's really complex ... it's not a one to one ... there are times when you are a teacher in the traditional sense of the word ... to take it to an extreme, there are definitely times when you are a friend, there are times when you are the instructor, when you tell them what to do for safety ... there are times when you are, the uncle, the facilitator, there is a time when you are a youth worker and there is the balance between being a friend and a leader, you're more than a social worker just making them feel good and sometimes you are a parent figure to them ... saying the things that their father cannot

I think that everybody who works here is attempting to do their best for the pupils that we are working with.

all I am attempting to do [with the pupils] is to create an environment in which they can interact and help them be successful and develop relationships with staff.

The [outdoor] environment doesn't have the history for them ... it's a great environment for the staff and pupils to develop their relationships

You have to care! If you didn't care, you wouldn't get up and come in you have to care.

There are days that I know, it will vary across the day or at the end of the day, there are times when the young people think I'm great, and there are times when they will hate me...

I absolutely loved working with Lloyd [recent outdoor colleague] so the staff relationship of the

person you are working with [is one of the best aspects]

I would make sure that the two staff working with the pupils had the resources to stay with the group all the time for continuity of relationships, and to give them the resources to do whatever they want to, so if they felt that being indoors was appropriate, if they felt that going outdoors was needed then they could go outdoors ...which was the original Explorer model.

As a key factor in the success of Explorer, it is clear that the leadership and vision is based upon an ethos of building caring relationships that are founded on a mutual respect. Iresom & Hallam (2005) suggest that there may be connections between the organization and culture, or ethos of school and pupils' relationships with school. 'The characteristics of a good member of Explorer staff; they are able to build a relationship' (Brett). 'You have to care! If you didn't care, you wouldn't get up and come in... you have to care' (Rich). Indeed the caring aspect of building relationships is seen as essential. 'Staff have to be caring ... it's an absolute. Staff have to care about them [pupils] as human beings. They've got to think they can change these kids. They've got to think they can progress these kids, they have got to want to do it, want to value them, so we come back to that mutual respect line ... if they don't share that ethos of mutual respect, it is time to move on' (Brett). I also saw this as a continual theme within the Explorer daily interaction between staff and pupils (see appendix S, research diary 12/6/2008 and pupil Dave comment 13/6/2008).

The multi-faceted nature of teacher-pupil relationships is appreciated. '...it's really complex... it's not a one to one ... there are times when you are a teacher in the traditional sense of the word ... to take it to an extreme, there are definitely times when you are a friend, there are times when you are the instructor, when you tell them what to do for safety ... there are times when you are, the uncle, the facilitator, there is a time when you are a youth worker and there is the balance between being a friend and a leader, you're more than a social worker just making them feel good and sometimes you are a parent figure to them ... saying the things that their father cannot' (Rich). Rich was certainly a thoughtful and caring man as my research diary notes (see appendix S, 2/7/2008).

At times the complexities of relationships are reduced into simpler expressions of meaning. e.g. 'I guess our aim is to try and become a significant other, to these kids, so that they want to do things' (Brett). 'All I am attempting to do [with the pupils] is to create an environment in which

they can interact and help them be successful and develop relationships with staff... and the [outdoor] environment doesn't have the history for them ... it's a great environment for the staff and pupils to develop their relationships' (Rich).

On a different level, Rich expressed a view on the importance of good peer relationships for the staff 'I absolutely loved working with Lloyd [recent outdoor colleague] so the staff relationship of the person you are working with [is one of the best aspects]' (Rich).

One of the constraints on developing better relationships was addressed with a suggestion for improvement. 'I would make sure that the two staff working with the pupils had the resources to stay with the group all the time for continuity of relationships, and to give them the resources to do whatever they want to, so if they felt that being indoors was appropriate, if they felt that going outdoors was needed then they could go outdoors ...which was the original Explorer model' (Rich).

4.4.3. Successful Pupils

Table 22: Brett, Headteacher – Successful Pupils

<p>Yes I do believe that we can help our pupils to become more successful.</p> <p>Being successful means ... being more in control of their own emotional intelligence, being able to understand how to socially integrate with other people, to be aware of the rights and responsibilities that that come with them with regards to themselves and other people.</p> <p>[Are you able to help pupils be successful here?] Yes! Without question? Yes! ... I guess that's a bit more optimism coming through. Yes I do believe that we can help our pupils to become more successful.</p> <p>For us kids moving into an appropriate provision and being successful is a fairly key indicator. Of course we have an issue with that in that they don't always get the appropriate provision ... that's beyond our control unfortunately ... but then hopefully how they deal with it is better because of what they have learned here.</p> <p>The ones that are least successful are the ones that have far too many other issues and problems that aren't just related to school because you're only dealing with a small proportion of what the issue is.</p> <p>So how do you measure success?</p> <p>... we devised REACH really. We wanted to devise a tracking scheme that will show things that mattered: respect, effort, achievement, choices, honesty, things that pupils were doing.</p>
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REACH and then PASS etc was quite a good tool for us.

[REACH] helps to track a pupil's progress and it's a useful motivational and reflective tool ... that tool is essentially teaching them to reflect ... and if they reflect, and keep on reflecting, they can change.

Table 23: Rich, Director of outdoor learning – Successful Pupils

As yet, I haven't met anyone who's come to Explorer who hasn't engaged [successfully] in some way.

For every pupil, it is different. Some of the pupils, being back at school, they reach a point where being back at school is important for them, so success for them is only really when they go back to school.

There is successful in the eyes of the local authorities. The local authority has to provide education, so there is the viewpoint that so long as they are attending and they are doing something, they are in education...

we thought the purpose of our job was to keep them for two terms and then move them on... If we have pupils that we are set up for, i.e. pupils who are here for a short-term intervention, then yes we can help them for a short period and then move them on.

some of them are happy to go onto another pupil referral unit, I think a success really for them is really to enjoy life really.

First, the honeymoon stage, which may be an hour a day or a week, where they're really figuring out what it is that is going on here. Then there is the acknowledgement that they need to change their behaviour that is the next stage. And when they are really using the REACH scores, they are really taking things on board.

all I am attempting to do [with the pupils] is to create an environment in which they can interact and help them be successful...

yes, definitely [outdoor learning lessons] helps them to be more successful.

In terms of what we get them to do is to find something that they can hook into. The outdoor environment is often one where they have not experienced failure before, so it can be a positive thing.

[outdoor learning is] easier to set them a target at which I know they are going to be successful.

The meanings of success for pupils and the Explorer PRU are multi-faceted. There is the individual success of the pupils and there is the success of the PRU at keeping the pupils in the education system. On an individual level, successful pupils are perceived as 'being more in control of their own emotional intelligence, being able to understand how to socially integrate with other people, to be aware of the rights and responsibilities that that come with them with regards to themselves and other people' (Brett). The different layers of success are described by Rich 'for every pupil, it is different. Some of the pupils, being back at school, they reach a point where being back at school is important for them, so success for them is only really when they go back to school... some of them are happy to go onto another pupil referral unit, I think a success really for them is really to enjoy life really. As yet, I haven't met anyone who's come to Explorer who hasn't engaged [successfully] in some way (Rich).

As a pupil referral unit as part of the local education authority Explorer can be argued to be successful 'There is successful in the eyes of the local authorities. The local authority has to provide education, so there is the viewpoint that so long as they are attending and they are doing something, they are in education...' (Rich). One of the factors is the next stage, the integration back into the mainstream or a Key stage 4 PRU. This is perceived as a constraint to the success of Explorer 'for us, kids moving into an appropriate provision and being successful is a fairly key indicator. Of course we have an issue with that in that they don't always get the appropriate provision ... that's beyond our control unfortunately ... but then hopefully how they deal with it is better because of what they have learned here' (Brett).

The leadership of Explorer are absolutely certain that they are successful, to the varying degrees discussed above. 'Yes! Without question? Yes! ... I guess that's a bit more optimism coming through. Yes I do believe that we can help our pupils to become more successful' (Brett).

Whereas Rich was more circumspect 'all I am attempting to do [with the pupils] is to create an environment in which they can interact and help them be successful... yes, definitely outdoor learning lessons help them to be more successful.'

There are constraints for the ability of Explorer to be successful with all pupils. As Brett states, 'The ones that are least successful are the ones that have far too many other issues and problems that aren't just related to school because you're only dealing with a small proportion of what the issue is...' and as such there is a sense of reality that whilst Explorer can be successful for the majority of pupils, it is not a panacea for all the problems of all the problem pupils.

4.4.4. Behaviour Management

Table 24: Brett, Headteacher – Behaviour Management

<p>The behaviour management approach is almost entirely based on the work of Bill Rodgers. And that was probably a huge influence from me in that when I was an NQT I was mentored by Bill Rodgers.</p> <p>... actually this was an amazing sort of process and I took it, it was right, the whole purpose of being respectful, and recognizing rights and equality just resonated with me, so I was determined to see if it worked ...</p> <p>I had a relationship with my class built on mutual respect</p> <p>["a relationship built on mutual respect" would you say that's the kind of tag-line, the catchphrase to what it's [Explorer] about?] Yes! We have that on our rights and responsibilities ... our fair class rules ... part of our way we operate, our fair class rules are built on mutual respect... on mutual respect.</p> <p>the whole purpose of doing REACH on admission was part of learning to learn, part of the five Rs, it's the reflection ...</p> <p>by teaching the children how to reflect on their behaviour, so to really look at is it okay to do that ... it is non-judgemental it's not saying it's awful you're a bad child, its reflect on what you did, what could you do differently?</p> <p>we have positive quotes, positive phrases, positive images everywhere and we'd drip feed positivity into our kids as a matter of course, that's what we do and because it's almost like NLP [Neuro Linguistic Programming] I'm a firm believer that if you are positive enough you will eventually become positive.</p> <p>I believe that people can change their mindset as it were ...</p> <p>Well, we don't accept swearing ... and that's very important ... I would say that the kids have a lot less freedom and flexibility here in some respects than they do in school. For example, here we have a no smoking policy, same as a school does, but everyone in any school, any teacher can tell you where the kids go and smoke. They can't do that here; they are never out of sight of an adult, so there's a lot less flexibility.</p> <p>As far as I am concerned, uniform simply creates conflict. Let us start the morning by having a massive conflict and confrontation about this situation.</p>

Table 25: Rich, Director of outdoor learning – Behaviour Management

<p>you're taking them into an environment where if they do get frustrated, it's physically very easy for them to move away to walk away from the frustration.</p> <p>... there are some very definite consequences to their actions for example, if they don't put a helmet</p>

on then they are not doing climbing because they might get a rock on them that could kill them, whereas indoors, consequences are not necessarily always as direct and obvious for them.

they don't always have fun and enjoy the [outdoor learning] sessions, because they are challenged about their behaviour.

I think we have higher expectations. We actually know them better, and know what they can do and how they can behave and they are constantly with staff. There's no escaping from us [staff] and we constantly remind them of how they are expected to behave.

I think REACH is something great. I definitely use it as a reflective tool. I really don't care whether they get a red, green or gold, I don't really care at the end of the day what they get, it's not about the points, strictly speaking. I use it as a reflective tool to get them to think about their behaviour.

I like to use it [REACH] to get the young people to think about how they behaved in those categories, to see where they have been successful. I use it as a reflective thing to get young people thinking. I use it as a refined tool, not a dogmatic approach to behaviour.

I think that the self esteem is much much more significant than any of us really understand ... by having a feelings target, I directly link it to the behaviour target.

Do I believe that self-esteem is changeable trait? I have to! Yes yes definitely. From personal experience, my self-esteem through outdoor learning has been greatly improved. So yes, definitely no doubt.

The approach to behaviour management has a clear basis, a sound rationale and is operationalised through a structure, the REACH targets (appendix T), that allows it to be consistently and constantly addressed. 'The behaviour management approach is almost entirely based on the work of Bill Rodgers' (Brett). Rodgers (1991, 1998) work 'You know the Fair Rule' is a comprehensive approach to discipline in schools, based on a clear, well thought through approach, grounded in experience. The framework of his behaviour policy (see Figure VII) is apparent in the Explorer approach as shown in Figure VIII below. The three strands of discipline, rights, responsibilities and rules 'should work together to create a caring community atmosphere and are linked together by relationships within the school (Rodgers, 1998: 133).

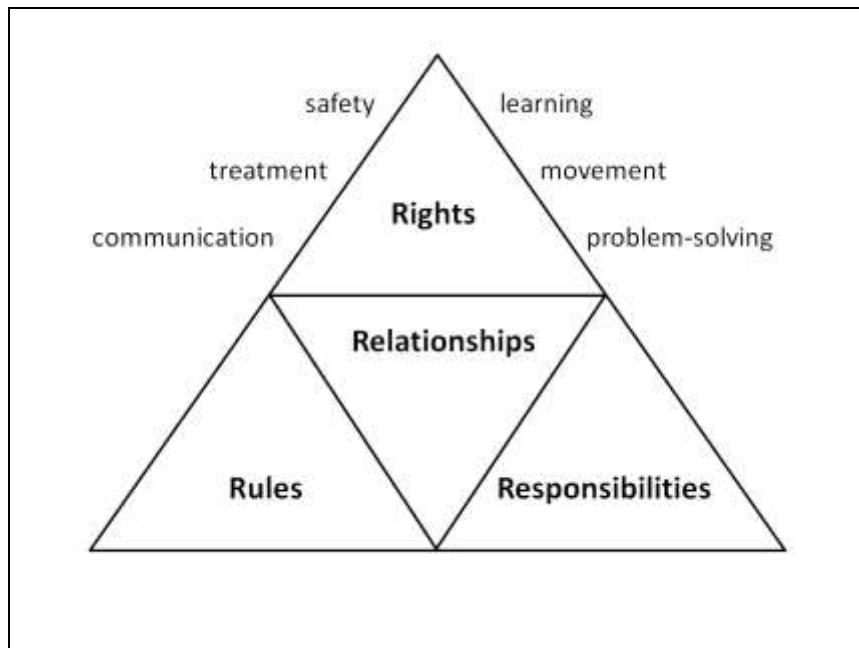


Figure VII - Rights Rules Responsibilities from Rogers (1998)

This has been adapted and by the Explorer staff and is shown below in Figure VIII

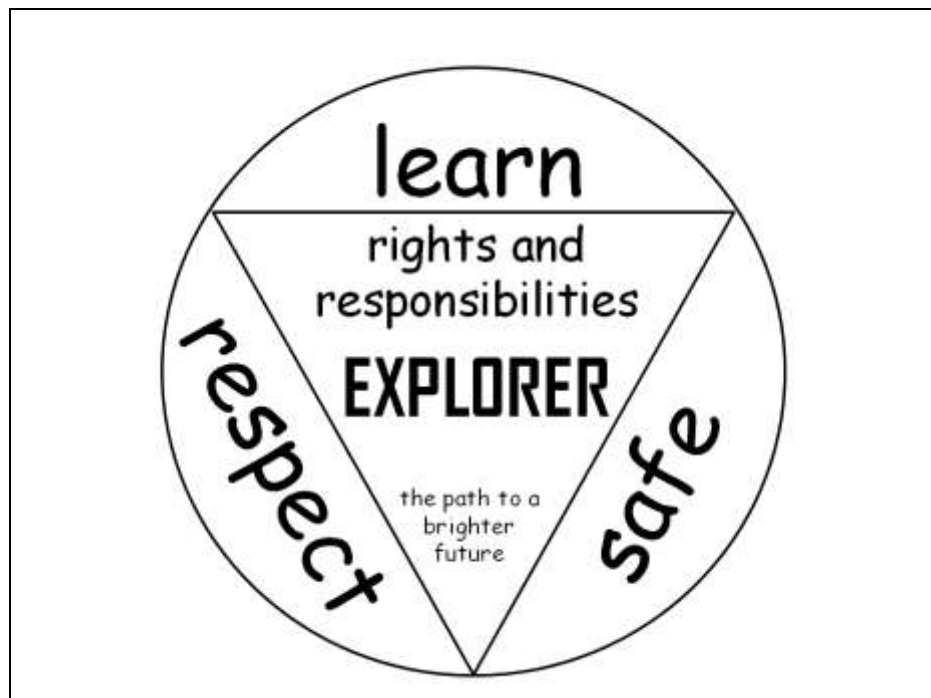


Figure VIII - Explorer Behaviour Model

The use of the REACH targets (appendix T) twice daily as an assessment tool for the students is a definite and defined process for the staff. This helps them address the 'rights and responsibilities' that the pupils have and how they are behaving. Rich was instrumental in developing this method 'I think REACH is something great. I definitely use it as a reflective tool. I really don't care whether they get a red, green or gold, I don't really care at the end of the day what they get, it's not about the points, strictly speaking. I use it as a reflective tool to get them to think about their behaviour'. How the REACH scores system is used has clearly been reflected upon 'I like to use it [REACH] to get the young people to think about how they behaved in those categories, to see where they have been successful. I use it as a reflective thing to get young people thinking. I use it as a refined tool, not a dogmatic approach to behaviour' (Rich). My research diary (appendix S, 27/11/2007) certainly recognised the interesting nature of this tool.

In terms of pupils' self esteem, Rich addresses this explicitly in his outdoor learning sessions with the setting of a feeling positive target. 'I think that the self esteem is much much more significant than any of us really understand ... by having a feelings target, I directly link it to the behaviour target' (Rich). Dweck (2006) argues that self-esteem is a developable, changeable trait, and that the power of language helps affect the mind set of an individual. This is whole heartedly shared by Rich along with his conviction that outdoor learning can assist in this development. He states 'Do I believe that self-esteem is changeable trait? I have to! Yes yes definitely. From personal experience, my self-esteem through outdoor learning has been greatly improved. So yes, definitely no doubt'.

However, Brett's approach to this appears to be more implicit within the construct of the Explorer environment. He still agrees with the Dweckian concept of self-esteem 'I believe that people can change their mindset as it were...' and describes how it is part of the Explorer approach 'we have positive quotes, positive phrases, positive images everywhere and we'd drip feed positivity into our kids as a matter of course, that's what we do and because it's almost like NLP [Neuro Linguistic Programming] I'm a firm believer that if you are positive enough you will eventually become positive'. My many visits, informal classroom and outdoor lesson observations certainly confirmed this. The staff certainly have a positive outlook, a positive regard and a positive vocabulary that they consistently use with the pupils.

4.4.5. Teaching and Staff

Table 26: Brett, Headteacher – Teaching and Staff

<p>Key to any PRU is [the] staff</p> <p>the characteristics of a good member of Explorer staff</p> <p>Able to build a relationship</p> <p>Willing to listen</p> <p>Positive – able to transmit that positivity and enthusiasm</p> <p>Willing to start again – so they don't take it home with them, so don't hold a grudge – every day is a new day, they mustn't take it personally</p> <p>Understand that the kids can change – you can make a difference to them</p> <p>Be part of a team, a team player, but also be able to innovate and just react instantly</p> <p>[REACH] helps to track a pupil's progress and it's a useful motivational and reflective tool ... that tool is essentially teaching them to reflect ... and if they reflect, and keep on reflecting, they can change.</p> <p>... our kids shouldn't be here for very long ... everything we do is designed for short term turn around to help focus them on school learning ... the new curriculum in schools is all aimed at them.</p> <p>the whole purpose of doing REACH on admission was part of learning to learn, part of the five Rs, it's the reflection ...</p> <p>we are trying to learn how to be positive we are trying to learn how to socially interact.</p> <p>... most of the staff give the kids a target a day from our core scheme of work and some of those targets are about attitudes towards yourself and others, being positive and some of them are to do with the environment or something to do with interactions ...</p> <p>we have a whole picture here and the whole holistic approach is so much more powerful and it's just not recognized ... [by other stakeholders in education].</p>

Table 27: Rich, Director of outdoor learning – Teaching and Staff

<p>the language that the staff use with the pupils is as consistent as it possibly can[be]. So it's around rights and responsibilities, choice and consequence, using REACH.</p> <p>the values was going to be what we teach, and we can teach that both indoors and outdoors, combining the methodology of behaviour management ... and we came up with what eventually became REACH ... I decided we had to make sure that what happens indoors, is the same as what</p>
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happens outdoors.

If [outdoor learning lessons] was a reward, the pupils would choose ... but it is set in the programme ... that's what we are doing ... if people see it as a reward, then they really need to experience it and see how we get the pupils to reflect upon their experience and their behaviour, it's the language we use on the sessions that counts, so they don't always have fun and enjoy the sessions, because they are challenged about their behaviour

outdoor learning sessions are a key integral feature of the successes of pupils here, because they provide an environment, in its broadest sense, a social and physical environment in which pupils can be challenged physically and mentally and still be successful, and raise their confidence and have their behaviours addressed. Yes with somebody with whom they have a respectful relationship with.

one of the things I'm trying to do is change their view of authority figures ... and that comes back to the values. I want them to value young people. I want them to value society and concepts of society such as authority.

[What are the five top qualities of a good member of Explorer staff?] Empathy and calm, those are the two main ones. Individually they all need to be leaders, they need to be calm, and they need to be strong-willed.

Every single member of staff in here is working in a higher challenge environment, we support each other as best we can, but you know, get realistic these are the most challenging young people in this county, and we're with them, how many hours a week? We are being asked to challenge behaviour, where the behaviour is really challenging, it's unbelievably stressful

we were going canoeing, we had a battle to get them to put the canoes on the trailer, we had a battle to get them down to the water, battle to get them into their buoyancy aids battle to get them into their waterproofs, got them out on the water and they were still squabbling, paddled across the estuary, got to the other side, still battling, got the tarp up, lit a fire ... and we were all sat down by the fire and one of them turned to us and said "this is the best day of my life!" At that moment there was nothing happening, they were just sitting there looking out across the estuary and the outdoor environment just connected with them and they felt good. Their esteem at that point was great. That's what makes it ... those are the best moments.

I suggest that the use of the word teaching and teacher can be used pejoratively to suggest an autocratic, didactic approach. Since the advent of the National Curriculum the term 'deliver' is often found in the staffroom as well as in the wider educational discourse. As Biesta (2005) argues it is time to 'reclaim' the language, I am using the heading of teaching to represent what it is the teachers at Explorer do and how they do it, which is more than the traditional didactic approach. I have already considered the detail of the staff-pupil relationships. 'Key to any PRU is [the] staff' (Brett). One of the clear issues for the pupils has been their ability to cope with "the system" and in particular teachers as a symbol of authority within "the system". Rich considers this and its

relationship to the bigger picture 'one of the things I'm trying to do is change their view of authority figures ... and that comes back to the values. I want them to value young people. I want them to value society and concepts of society such as authority'. He is also clear as to the use of the outdoors and the relevance of the REACH approach 'the values was going to be what we teach, and we can teach that both indoors and outdoors, combining the methodology of behaviour management ... and we came up with what eventually became REACH ... I decided we had to make sure that what happens indoors, is the same as what happens outdoors'.

Iresom & Hallam (2005) research highlights that for pupils, it is the teacher's ability to provide support and help for learning that is of importance. Characteristics of a good Explorer staff member, according to Brett, appear to have these features.

4.4.6. The Curriculum

Table 28: Brett, Headteacher – The Curriculum

<p>we make it very clear to them that they didn't go kayaking to learn how to kayak, they went kayaking, so they could build a relationship with Rich, build a relationship up with an adult, actually not all adults are bastards.</p> <p>[Outdoor Learning lessons] are a core key part of our curriculum and that was always my intention to maintain that outdoor educational element ... mostly because it gives pupils an opportunity to succeed in a learning situation that they don't necessarily consider to be a school, a classroom or a learning environment so that's why we try and make everything we do language wise and approach wise the same in and out ...</p> <p>Outdoor learning allows them to learn how to take risks in a controlled environment, it allows them to build a relationship with someone that is an authority figure... they are learning how to learn, how to approach things in a different manner.</p> <p>[Outdoor Learning] it's a really good hook, and we tend to have a very positive uptake on outdoor-learning, we don't have very many kids who don't want to do the outdoor thing, which is obviously quite good.</p> <p>I think we have tried to make it very clear that it [outdoor lessons] isn't a reward ... I always think that's true. [So you don't use it as a reward?] Certainly not! It is essential that it's not a reward. It's part of the curriculum so it's not something we can opt in and out of.</p>

Table 29: Rich, Director of outdoor learning – The Curriculum

The national curriculum statement of values... that's it! That is the link! ...my job is actually to help these young people to value themselves, value others and value society in general.

...one of the things that makes Explorer special is the way that it has attempted and continues to attempt to bring together outdoor learning and classroom-based or indoor learning

working with challenging pupils in an educational setting using the outdoors which for me is what pure outdoor learning is all about ... it's what it's meant to be ... it's all about personal development, self esteem, stuff like that, and I thought that's really putting it into practice

as a general thing they like doing the outdoor lessons, most of them. So it is a hook, generally, they want to go and do these activities. That is its strength.

[outdoor learning is] easier to set them a target at which I know they are going to be successful.

Is outdoor learning a key, fundamental attribute of Explorer's unique approach to the curriculum?
Yes! I wouldn't say it is more important than the indoor learning, but it's definitely a key part.

The curriculum approach at Explorer has two significant features. Firstly it works at Level 1 or the 'What Are We Trying to Achieve?' level of the National Curriculum (QCA, 2008, see appendix L). Essentially this states that: 'the curriculum aims to enable all young people to become successful learners, confident individuals, and responsible citizens'. For Rich this structure and articulation by QCA provided the affirmation of the Explorer approach 'The national curriculum statement of values... that's it! That is the link! ...my job is actually to help these young people to value themselves, value others and value society in general' (Rich). The use of the outdoors and the teaching indoors uses activities to engage the pupils in taking responsibility for themselves. This includes their behaviour and their own learning. As such, traditional lessons are not apparent on a regular time table. However, the activities undertaken, cooking, computers or kayaking clearly serve a two-fold purpose. First they are the vehicle for addressing attitudes and behaviours. Secondly, they are the vehicle for addressing numeracy, literacy and thinking skills. This was evident in my visits and observations of cooking, classroom based activities or on an outdoor session (see appendix M for copies of my field notes).

Secondly, outdoor learning lessons are an integral part of the curriculum for all pupils on a regular weekly basis. 'Outdoor Learning lessons are a core key part of our curriculum and that was always my intention to maintain that outdoor educational element...' (Brett). This is not designed as an

add-on, an extra, but as integral to the whole Explorer experience. 'One of the things that makes Explorer special is the way that it has attempted and continues to attempt to bring together outdoor learning and classroom-based or indoor learning' (Rich). Outdoor learning provides a useful vehicle for engagement with the pupils, particularly regarding their behaviour. The value of outdoor learning is recognised by Ofsted (2008b: 5) who state that 'When planned and implemented well, learning outside the classroom contributed significantly to raising standards and improving pupils' personal, social and emotional development'.

One of the criticisms of outdoor learning lessons is that it can be perceived as a reward for poor behaviour. However, this is not supported by the staff view of outdoor learning 'I think we have tried to make it very clear that it [outdoor lessons] isn't a reward ... I always think that's true. (So you don't use it as a reward?) Certainly not! It is essential that it's not a reward. It's part of the curriculum so it's not something we can opt in and out of' (Brett). As Rich explains '...if people see it as a reward, then they really need to experience it and see how we get the pupils to reflect upon their experience and their behaviour, it's the language we use on the sessions that counts, so they don't always have fun and enjoy the sessions, because they are challenged about their behaviour.'

4.4.7. Constraints and Challenges

Table 30: Brett, Headteacher – Constraints and Challenges

<p>For us kids moving into an appropriate provision and being successful is a fairly key indicator. Of course we have an issue with that in that they don't always get the appropriate provision ... that's beyond our control unfortunately ... but then hopefully how they deal with it is better because of what they have learned here.</p> <p>I think recently in the last year we have had a lot more pupils that have a lot more serious problems who actually shouldn't be at a mainstream school who we shouldn't even be entertaining returning to mainstream school unless there is a massive amount of provision for them.</p> <p>I guess the experience of being in the PRU and how some of the schools or agencies how they view us as professionals for example a big issue for staff in the PRU is that it is perceived as a dead-end job.</p> <p>we have a whole picture here and the whole holistic approach is so much more powerful and it's just not recognized [by other stakeholders in education [by other stakeholders in education]].</p> <p>the main issue we've really got to do with is staff. Key to any PRU is staff. So a lot of staff don't even want to come to a PRU because they are concerned where do you go next?</p>
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Table 31: Rich, Director of outdoor learning – Constraints and Challenges

The staff really, I mean at the end of the day it's the staff that really make or break ... we create Explorer and it's how we adapt to the constraints of the outside ... so if we are not connecting with the young people, then it's me, it has to be me!

this year there have been a number of things that have happened whereby the pupils have been coming to us without an exit strategy... we were then ending up with pupils that didn't have any reason for being here and our whole curriculum was geared around helping young people over a short period of time

the staff are one of the biggest challenges and constraints? Yes without a doubt. At the end of the day, Explorer is a bunch of people ... so they make it successful but are also the biggest constraint? Absolutely!

at the moment there is no constant among staff in how we use feeling positive [targets].

Ratios I think that is a 'biggy' for me. When Explorer was first set up, the ratios were three staff to four pupils. And now it is two staff to five pupils.

The types of pupils arriving at Explorer are clearly an issue. From my interviews with pupil Chris, it was clear that he would not be returned to the mainstream due to his varied learning and behavioural difficulties. None the less, Explorer clearly had a positive influence on him and was a positive educational experience for him, namely that he attended. 'I think recently in the last year we have had a lot more pupils that have a lot more serious problems who actually shouldn't be at a mainstream school who we shouldn't even be entertaining returning to mainstream school unless there is a massive amount of provision for them...' (Brett).

Rich acknowledged the difficulties and how the Explorer curriculum was not appropriate to all arriving pupils 'we were then ending up with pupils that didn't have any reason for being here and our whole curriculum was geared around helping young people over a short period of time...' (Rich).

Rich acknowledges that he and the members of staff are the biggest challenges at Explorer. 'The staff really, I mean at the end of the day it's the staff that really make or break ... we create Explorer and it's how we adapt to the constraints of the outside ... so if we are not connecting with the young people, then it's me, it has to be me!. 'the staff are one of the biggest challenges and

constraints? Yes without a doubt. At the end of the day, Explorer is a bunch of people ... so they make it successful but are also the biggest constraint? Absolutely!' (Rich). This was more I sense a level of frustration on Rich's part over the desire to introduce feeling positive targets to all pupils in all classes for all lessons, as he had done for outdoor learning during the course of my research. Rich is definitely a deep thinking, analytical, reflective and critical professional educator. His vision and ideas are not always shared with the same certainty by other members of staff. Brett also recognises that the staff are major factors in the successes of Explorer, 'the main issue we've really got to do with is staff. Key to any PRU is staff. So a lot of staff don't even want to come to a PRU because they are concerned where do you go next?' (Brett). Brett suggests that the perception by some other educators is a negative one with regard to the skills and experience of PRU staff, and that teachers are fearful of becoming stuck in a PRU.

4.5. Staff Focus Group

The staff focus group was carried out on one day in the summer term and lasted approximately 90 minutes. As such not all issues were explored as fully as may have been desirable or beneficial. I was aware of this, as my research diary suggests (see appendix S, 30/6/2008) and attempted to be creative as possible in engaging the staff. The issues discussed were raised by me the researcher and as such the reader is advised to consider my positionality as discussed earlier in this thesis.

4.5.1. Leadership

These adjectives were used by staff on 'post-it' notes to describe the leadership of Explorer. They have been arranged alphabetically. For the original arrangement of the notes please refer to the photograph in appendix N.

Table 32: Focus Group Adjectives - Leadership

approachable	friendly	productive
approachable	friendly	responsive
caring	human	responsive
collaborative	innovative	risk-taking
courageous	involved	sharing
creative	listening	successful
different	open	supportive

dynamic	open	supportive
empowering	patient	supportive
enthusiastic	personally-enhancing	trusting
ever-changing	positive	
fair		

The staff characterised the leadership of Explorer in personal terms with the adjectives such as supportive, approachable, open, friendly and responsive used more than once. Whilst Brett's personal style is one of great confidence and positive speaking combined with a deep seated self-belief in what Explorer is doing, it is clear that this leadership is consultative from a staff perspective. The term supportive was the most frequent in the list. My sense is that there were staff with ideas, initiatives and approaches they wanted to use with the pupils and that this initiative and creative approach to working was well supported.

4.5.2. Relationships

Table 33: Focus Group comment - Relationships

<p>Sophie: They can look back and say yeah, I got on really well with that guy and that might be the first time, they have had a positive relationship with an adult.</p> <p>Liam: There is a big theme about relationships ... and in amongst that there are things like humour, caring, trusting, things like that... and supportive, caring, friendly.... personal.... supportive ethos...</p> <p>Sophie: well, it is a completely different relationship to school; you know there is no uniform, so we are not down on them like a ton of bricks about what they are wearing ... erm and they call us by our first names ... there is only a small group of them, so that immediately puts on a whole different perspective to a mainstream secondary school, where you may only see a pupil once or twice a week ... as opposed to five hours a day</p> <p>Liam: for me, we are somewhere between a responsible parent or and a teacher, somewhere between that ... but we are neither ... there is a number of times when we get called dad or mum ... and a number of times that members of the public assume that we are a family, a somewhat dysfunctional one, but a family nonetheless.</p> <p>Doug: you have to understand that there is a timeframe for building this ... unique relationship, that is built on trust, respect for each other, and it's built on the knowledge that there's no harm, no prejudice ... it is without ... it's non-judgemental. ... there is a clean slate for them every day ... we are not going to hold a grudge and they can come back in and be themselves again.</p> <p>Chloe: when the kids come to us, almost 90% of them when you start chatting with them getting to</p>
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know them better, you start talking about where the problems were in school and almost always it will be the teachers they didn't get on with, then you can probe deeper.... I am not saying it's all the teachers, the whole respect thing... they didn't listen to me when I did so and so ... there is a massive amount of the labelling and often it's not the other pupils it's the relationship with that teacher.

The act of engaging in conversation and finding out what it is that makes pupils 'tick' and spending some time listening to them appears crucial. For example, Chloe: 'when the kids come to us, almost 90% of them when you start chatting with them getting to know them better, you start talking about where the problems were in school and almost always it will be the teachers they didn't get on with'. This supports the notion that was revealed in the pupil interviews. Sophie suggests that this Explorer teacher-pupil relationship may be a first for these pupils when she states 'They can look back and say "yeah, I got on really well with that guy" and that might be the first time, they have had a positive relationship with an adult'.

Doug points out that the relationships have many aspects, take time and effort to build and they essentially require forgiveness by staff whilst pupils learn to behave and act appropriately. He states 'you have to understand that there is a timeframe for building this ... unique relationship, that is built on trust, respect for each other, and it's built on the knowledge that there's no harm, no prejudice ... it is without ... it's non-judgemental. ... there is a clean slate for them every day ... we are not going to hold a grudge and they can come back in and be themselves again'.

The caring attitude that characterises the teacher-pupil relationships is described by Liam in terms of family relationships. He states, 'for me, we are somewhere between a responsible parent or and a teacher, somewhere between that ... but we are neither ... there is a number of times when we get called dad or mum ... and a number of times that members of the public assume that we are a family, a somewhat dysfunctional one, but a family nonetheless'. The intensity of this relationship is highlighted by Sophie when she contrasts the Explorer experience with that of mainstream education. She states, 'there is only a small group of them, so that immediately puts on a whole different perspective to a mainstream secondary school, where you may only see a pupil once or twice a week ... as opposed to five hours a day'. Iresom & Hallam (2005: 308) argue that a caring ethos is not enough, and 'teachers must also provide effective support for pupils' learning. Students feel supported when their teachers listen to them and help them to learn and understand'. This was clearly evident at Explorer.

4.5.3. Success

The adjectives seen in table 34 were used by staff on post it notes to answer the question ‘why is Explorer successful?’ They have been arranged alphabetically. For the original arrangement please refer to the photograph in appendix O

Table 34: Focus Group Adjectives - Successful

active and out/in	focus on behaviour	rebellious
adventurous	friendly	relationship
autonomy	help kids achieve	relationship based
behaviour based	humour	responsive
caring	individual	responsive
creative	innovative	rigorous
different	not like school	skilled staff
dynamic	open-minded	small
ethos	open-minded	staff teamwork
ethos	personal	supportive
ever-changing	positive	trusting
fair	pupils	trusting
flexible		

Table 35: Focus Group comment - Success

<p>Liam: ... I think we make a difference for most of our kids ... a positive difference for the vast majority of our kids</p> <p>Sophie: my definition is making independent and responsible young people.</p> <p>Liam: I think we have heard more back positive things, and I qualify that, heard back more positive outcomes for kids... as they have grown and left school, than we have negative, there’s an awful lot of kids who had settled down, got good jobs, they are not taking drugs any more, they are more successful than they were than I can think of negative</p>

Doug: They are more successful by coming to Explorer than staying where they were...

Liam: There is a big theme about relationships ... and in amongst that there are things like humour, caring, trusting, things like that... and supportive, caring, friendly.... personal.... supportive ... ethos...

Doug: The values ... the values which are taught, and the values which they hear, and listen and understand, I think, I believe sits in them as a seed and matures once they are ready to hear it for themselves.

Sophie: It depends on the school when they return ... they can make immense progress with us and then go back to school, and it can all go wrong. And in some cases it is definitely the school's fault.

Doug: There is a part of this, which is the main key to Explorer, which is to enable our young people to change to become more responsible citizens, but not now, we do it, and they probably become more responsible citizens in 10 years time ...what we do is we create a society of respect for us in 10 years time.... or whatever that timespan is...

There was a great deal of discussion about what was meant by success. It was clear that concepts of success are multi-dimensional, individually and collectively for the pupils, the staff and the PRU. The staff characterised the success of Explorer with the terms open-minded, trusting, responsive, ethos and relationships featuring more than once. Tatar (1998) suggests that teachers' success in satisfying their pupils' needs and the extent to which pupils estimate that their teachers care about them and respect them are related to positive changes in pupils' behaviours in the classroom and in their academic achievements. Moreover, supportive behaviour by teachers has been identified as an important factor in preventing secondary school pupils from dropping out of school.

Liam highlights that 'There is a big theme about relationships ... and in amongst that there are things like humour, caring, trusting, things like that... and supportive, caring, friendly.... personal.... supportive ... ethos...' which supports the notion of relationships as a key factor in Explorer's success. The staff appear to have a belief that the work they do helps the majority of their pupils be successful. For example, Liam states 'I think we make a difference for most of our kids... a positive difference for the vast majority of our kids.' For Sophie, 'my definition is making independent and responsible young people'. For Doug it seems straightforward 'They are more successful by coming to Explorer than staying where they were...'

The key dilemma for the staff, as well as the PRU within a contemporary educational context, is the difference between knowing that you make a difference and is successful with these pupils

and being able to show this against a performance measure. Clearly, the exit routes are documented and discussed above. What is uncertain is the success the Explorer pupils experience once they have moved to the next stage of their educational provision. Whilst I attempted to access pupils post-Explorer, as discussed in the methodology, this is something that is currently unknowable for this thesis. I am aware that there is doctoral research taking place into the re-integration aspect of Explorers work (Simons, 2009).

However, staff at Explorer take a much longer term view about how they may impact the young people who pass through their doors. Doug states 'There is a part of this, which is the main key to Explorer, which is to enable our young people to change to become more responsible citizens, but not now, we do it, and they probably become more responsible citizens in 10 years time ...what we do is we create a society of respect for us in 10 years time.... or whatever that timespan is...'. This long term view is not one that is measured through education based performance measures, and would require a longitudinal study of Explorer pupils, which is beyond the scope of this thesis. None the less, this belief in the success of their work appears to be firmly held and perhaps quite important in order to continue working with challenging pupils. The notion of what is learned as 'deep seeded' struck a chord of acknowledgement and agreement amongst the staff. Doug describes it thus, 'the values which are taught, and the values which they hear, and listen and understand, I think, I believe sits in them as a seed and matures once they are ready to hear it for themselves'. This is supported by the findings of Neill & Richards (1998: 4) who suggest a possible 'sleeper effect' for enhancing self concept.

4.5.4. Behaviour Management

Table 36: Focus Group comment – Behaviour Management

<p>Sam: I think we are actually being judgemental ... in fact, every single day, we are judgemental, we are judging their behaviour. We are setting targets ... we are judging that their behaviour is correct.</p> <p>Liam: it's useful to show that there is a consequence of their behaviour, there is a positive consequence that they review their day and they may feel good and get a slip home. But there is also a negative consequence in that they are made to face it and ultimately they make themselves sometimes feel incredibly bad because they kick-off about it and that ends up with some very strong emotions ... very strong negative emotions, which will hopefully be a consequence of their action ... you see what I mean?</p>
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Doug: ... REACH the questions ... I see it as a reviewing tool ... so it is part of a reflective process, and the REACH gives us a vocabulary...

Chloe: the kids enjoy doing it when they know they have had a good day

Megan: as a tool you can use it in lots of different ways ... I think it's quite a flexible tool.

Sophie: it is a useful tool, but one of the most surprising things about it is how it embeds the language [of appropriate behaviour] for example. One kid might be walking along and knock another on the head, not hard you know, and the other pupils will say "hands, feet and objects" (group join in and laugh) or a new kid might say something and the others respond "that's a putdown" and they might be shocked because it never been told by their peers that something that they've said is a put down. I think that that is better than anything.

The formal REACH system was positively regarded. The term 'tool' was frequently used to describe it and to discuss its flexibility of use. e.g. Doug described it as 'REACH the questions ... I see it as a reviewing tool ... so it is part of a reflective process, and the REACH gives us a vocabulary...'. The concept of reflection with the pupils is a recurring theme. The idea of REACH providing for a common vocabulary for behaviour is further explored by Sophie. She describes REACH as 'a useful tool, but one of the most surprising things about it is how it embeds the language [of appropriate behaviour] for example. One kid might be walking along and knock another on the head, not hard you know, and the other pupils will say "hands, feet and objects" (group join in and laugh) or a new kid might say something and the others respond "that's a putdown" and they might be shocked because it never been told by their peers that something that they've said is a put down. I think that that is better than anything'.

This common vocabulary, the regular use of REACH as a reflective tool for pupils to take responsibility for their own behaviour and having this built on a clear 'rights and responsibilities' philosophy clearly provides a coherent and consistent approach to behaviour management. It occurs to me that much of the academic literature discusses behaviour management, and as such that is why I have termed it such throughout this thesis. However, I suggest that a more appropriate term to use in the Explorer context could be 'behaviour management and modification'; since this is one of the key aspects of the Explorer approach.

4.5.5. Staff Qualities

The adjectives seen in table 37 were used by staff on post it notes when asked to describe the qualities of the staff. They have been arranged alphabetically. For the original arrangement please refer to the photograph in appendix P.

Table 37: Focus Group Adjectives – Staff Qualities

adaptable	enthusiastic	patience
adventurous	fair	patient
caring	friendly	reflective
caring	friendly	resilient
caring	good	respectful
caring	honest	respectful
consistent	humorous	responsible
consistent	interested	sympathetic
consistent	level	trustworthy
creative	listener	understanding
determined	listeners	
energetic	open-minded	

Table 38: Focus Group comment – Staff Qualities

<p>[Would you say as a member of staff that you have to actually care about these pupils?]</p> <p>Sarah: I think so. And if you didn't, you wouldn't be doing your job properly</p> <p>Sam: I care more about their mental health, there are lots of our kids risk takers they will jump off bridges, joyride cars ... and maybe they can handle that, but it is more about their mental health that I am interested ...</p> <p>Chloe: I care about them as individuals, and that is what is so frustrating at times ... in terms of the relationship you go so far and then you can go further backwards than when you began ... and that's frustrating because you do care about them. Of the course a lot of them might have difficult backgrounds, and with that chucked it is well...</p> <p>Sophie: ... you care about them ... so you have to be there for them when you are there and then you have to go home and forget all about it and not think about them ... and that is quite hard.</p> <p>Chloe: what I meant by determined was to make Explorer successful. So we are determined, we believe that educating kids at Explorer is great ... because like we said earlier, some of these don't fit</p>

into school ... we are determined as a cause to give them an education ... sometimes it is just to keep going that's part of it.

[So what are the core values?]

Sophie: I think respect probably...

Liam: you can almost come up with the ethos of Explorer, core values using REACH: Respect Enjoyment Achievements Choices Honesty... you could almost, it doesn't quite fit...

Sophie: well, certainly respect and choices I think...

So the core values are about respect and choices? (Nods of agreement)

Doug: we are fortunate in that our ethos is based on going outdoors for an activity and challenging things, themselves and each other, and doing adventurous exciting things mind boggling stuff ... like making tea on a Trangia

According to Tatar (1998: 223), to be perceived as a significant other, teachers' behaviours must reflect at least some of the characteristics that pupils value most.

The participants in our study indicated that significant teachers are those who provide emotional support (i.e., persons on whom one can rely and those providing a sense of security and self-value), or facilitate their cognitive growth (i.e., by challenging pupils, enabling them to develop and succeed, encouraging them, and enhancing their interest in learning).

All these characteristics reflect a more personal involvement on the part of the teachers in their interactions with their pupils. This personal involvement was evident amongst the Explorer staff. They perceived the qualities necessary as caring, friendly, patient and consistent. The results from the post-it note activity show many other adjectives, but these four were repeated. The theme of caring was one that featured four times, and as it was an observation that I had already made.

The staff were in agreement that they had to be caring about the pupils at Explorer. This was considered to be important in different ways. Sarah suggested that 'if you didn't, you wouldn't be doing your job properly'. Chloe described 'I care about them as individuals, and that is what is so frustrating at times... in terms of the relationship you go so far and then you can go further backwards than when you began ... and that's frustrating because you do care about them'. Sophie alluded to the tiring and stressful nature of this type of work 'you care about them ... so

you have to be there for them when you are there and then you have to go home and forget all about it and not think about them ... and that is quite hard'.

Once again, the deeply held beliefs of the staff surfaced when Chloe stated 'we believe that educating kids at Explorer is great ... we are determined as a cause to give them an education...' It appears that the Explorer staff are 'significant others'. Tatar (1998) discusses how significant others fulfil very important tasks in adolescents' lives by providing them with social support. 'Significant others attitudes shape adolescents' self-perception within the social conditions that influence their 'conferred identity', and their differential responses affect adolescents' psychological functioning' (Tatar, 1998: 223). It is clear that the Explorer staff shape the pupils self-perception and work on changing the identity of pupils into successful school pupils by getting them to think and act more positively.

Once again the REACH format was returned to when Liam stated 'you can almost come up with the ethos of Explorer, core values using REACH: Respect Enjoyment Achievements Choices Honesty... you could almost, it doesn't quite fit...'. Sophie more specifically agreed 'well, certainly respect and choices I think... and when asked 'So the core values are about respect and choices?' There were nods of agreement from around the table.

4.5.6. The Explorer Curriculum

Table 39: Focus Group comment – Curriculum

Liam: I think it [outdoor learning] is a fundamental part of what we do. Because of its difference, the ability to do something other than what we normally do in the classroom, and it's definitely not a reward because sometimes they don't want to go out in the rain and cold, they don't want to go out and face a fear, they are scared that they are not going to be able to do something, again, it is an opportunity to teach resilience but in a completely different setting, they are not comparing themselves against 99% of their colleagues in a mainstream school.

Sam:[outdoor learning] definitely not a reward!

Chloe: no, it [outdoor learning] is not a reward.

Megan: it's [outdoor learning] bringing lots of things together, working as a group and the whole team work thing, leadership and safety and the environment, and adventure and fact that it is so flexible ... people assume, as I assumed before I started here, that you are going outdoors to do an activity, and it's not like that at all, your whole day, every sort of minute almost, is flexible, it changes

all the time depending on the group and other factors. You are not abseiling down 200 ft cliffs; you may just be wandering around for half an hour and making a cup of tea on a Trangia.

Chloe: I think it's like one of those things you said today it is like the seeds; they will remember and value it in 5 or 10 years time.

Liam: so it [outdoor learning] is part of what we do, a big part... I'd like to see more integration... I'm not sure that it is as well integrated to what we do as it could be and at times, it is separate, not just physically separate, but emotionally separate as well for the kids.

The staff consider outdoor learning to be an intrinsic and fundamental part of the Explorer curriculum. Liam states 'I think it [outdoor learning] is a fundamental part of what we do. Because of its difference, the ability to do something other than what we normally do in the classroom...'. It is definitely not considered as a reward for poor behaviour. For example Liam states 'it's definitely not a reward because sometimes they don't want to go out in the rain and cold, they don't want to go out and face a fear'.

Megan raised point about how others perceptions of what outdoor learning is and does is probably misunderstood. She states 'people assume, as I assumed before I started here, that you are going outdoors to do an activity, and it's not like that at all, your whole day, every sort of minute almost, is flexible, it changes all the time depending on the group and other factors. You are not abseiling down 200 ft cliffs; you may just be wandering around for half an hour and making a cup of tea on a Trangia'. This supports the points made by Rich as well as my own field note observations. I noted that 'The outdoor learning activities provide a vehicle for a process of constant and ongoing engagement between staff and pupils. There is a constant dialogue around; general socialisation issues and ideas as reflected in the twice daily REACH scores. The outdoor activities are definitely the vehicle for learning how to behave in complex social interactions'.

The unique aspect of the outdoor learning sessions, by engaging more wholly with a pupil cognitively, physically and emotionally, again raised the idea of a much longer term impact on the pupils helping them to be successful. Iresom & Hallam (2005) consider that it is the affective aspects of learning that may have a longer-term impact on the willingness and enthusiasm of young people to participate in learning. Chloe 'I think it's like one of those things you said today it is like the seeds; they will remember and value it in 5 or 10 years time'. However, there was an acknowledgement that greater integration was needed between the indoor and outdoor lessons

and staff Liam describes 'I'm not sure that it is as well integrated to what we do as it could be and at times, it is separate, not just physically separate, but emotionally separate as well for the kids'. This was another example, along with the PASS testing, of how perhaps the teaching was not as coherent in practice as Brett and Rich designed the Explorer approach to be in theory.

4.5.7. Constraints and Challenges

Table 40: Focus Group comment – Constraints and Challenges

<p>Sophie: There are not enough suitable professional educational settings for them to move on to and probably 50% of the kids that we get would do really well, they would thrive in a residential or weekly special school</p> <p>[Could the PASS software and the data it produces be used more consistently in Explorer?] Multiple responses of yes, and laughter and 'sounds like it yes!'</p> <p>Doug: I think that's the biggest challenge for Explorer is our bases.</p> <p>Liam: The physical accommodation and the budget behind it, because it will change. The physical restraints of the buildings is just criminal ... the fact that only one has access to an outdoor space ... the other two bases have no outdoor space and we are a school and we don't have any outdoor space, and I think it's just criminal. The volatile 14 year olds should not have a chance to just run off steam is crazy...</p> <p>Sam: other people's attitudes...</p> <p>Liam: also county policy is a huge barrier filling us with unsuitable pupils for the type of provision we offer here, pupils who should be in a special school, they have statements and shouldn't be with us... pupils with Asperger's or ADHD or medical conditions who just shouldn't be with us that just prevent us completely from doing our core work</p> <p>Sophie: It depends on the school when they return ... they can make immense progress with us and then go back to school, and it can all go wrong. And in some cases it is definitely the school's fault.</p>
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The staff identified constraints and challenges in a couple of ways; both internal and external to Explorer. Firstly, Liam addressed the issue of the classrooms, teaching spaces and recreational areas. He states 'The physical accommodation and the budget behind it... the physical restraints of the buildings is just criminal...we are a school and we don't have any outdoor space, and I think it's just criminal. [That] the volatile 14 year olds should not have a chance to just run off steam is crazy... '. The PRU main base had no secure outside space for the pupils to be outside. There were

teaching sessions run in the car park that I observed, but this was a shared area for other users of the same building. It was also adjacent to a main road on the edge of the main local town. Secondly, the consistency of approach between indoor and outdoor teaching staff was acknowledged. When the question was raised 'could the PASS software and the data it produces be used more consistently in Explorer?' There were multiple responses of yes, and laughter and 'sounds like it yes!'.

The external challenges were simply summed up by Sam when he said 'other people's attitudes...'. Liam was more specific and critical 'county policy is a huge barrier filling us with unsuitable pupils for the type of provision we offer here'. Additionally, county and national educational policy was also perceived as constraining the success of pupils. Sophie 'There are not enough suitable professional educational settings for them to move on to and probably 50% of the kids that we get would do really well, they would thrive in a residential or weekly special school'.

4.6. Observation and field notes summary from my research diary

The outdoor learning activities provide a vehicle for a process of constant and ongoing engagement between staff and pupils. There is a constant dialogue around; general socialisation issues and ideas as reflected in the twice daily REACH scores. The outdoor activities are definitely a useful vehicle for learning how to behave in complex social interactions.

Table 41: Observations and field notes

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Staff Characteristics<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ patience – even when there are constant multi-pupil demands being made○ persistence - a relentless engagement with the pupils○ a sense of place in the outdoors, calm manner○ awareness of and a constant monitoring of pupil action, inter-action or lack of such• Pupil Characteristics<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ responsive to staff,○ engaged (long term pupils) needing little support or supervision○ some pupils in need of attention and the seeking of approval and recognition from

the teacher

- frustration between pupils - clearly a lack of understanding or empathy between them, intolerant, showing extreme ego-centric behaviour
- competitive to gain attention
- pupils seem to enjoy the opportunities for physical aggression e.g. breaking or chopping wood when outdoors
- General
 - A non-stop, continual engagement between pupils and staff
 - A good rapport between pupils and staff is evident

These general observations that I noted informally (see appendix S), have helped me to try and make sense of the complexities of the processes involved at Explorer.

4.7. Findings in Relation to the Literature Review

The Explorer pupils clearly fall into the category of EBD. The reasons for their exclusion as described in their video diaries highlight this. Additionally, their behaviour during Explorer lessons shows that they continue to have emotional or behavioural difficulties which substantially and regularly interfere with their own learning or that of the class group, despite having individual behavioural management programmes. This matches the definition of EBD detailed by DfES (2001). The leadership and the staff acknowledge both *medical* and *social* causes of EBD. They generally tend to view the social causes as ones that they can help the pupils learn to manage. For example the lessons in 'school survival skills' starts to address the issue highlighted by Meo & Parker (2004) who found that the pedagogic practices adopted by some teachers actually contributed to problems of disaffection. As such the leadership team tends to view the pupils as victims of circumstance and social constructed injustice. None the less, the Explorer approach is designed to help the pupils deal with society and take control and responsibility for their actions and behaviours. The cumulative interactive effects of the different parts of children's lives which give rise to challenging behaviour, as detailed by Ofsted (2003), are acknowledged by the staff and the relatively limited time and influence of Explorer reduces the opportunities and size of changes

to pupils attitudes and behaviour. This is seen as barrier to greater improvement and there is a sense of frustration by the staff about this issue.

Furthermore, the values and attitudes of the adult world in which these young people develop is reflected in the ways in which they think, feel and behave towards adults and teachers as well as each other and this is evident in the behaviour modification that Explorer achieves. This appears possible because of the open channels of communication with the young people, and there is evidence that the staff genuinely listen to their perspectives and opinions. This approach is supported by the work of Cooper & Cefai (2009). These genuine opportunities for ongoing dialogue appear to be made possible by the curriculum approach at Explorer. This alternative curriculum provides opportunities for the development of *deep relationships* (discussed in section 5.2) and seems to reflect the work of Macleod (2007) who highlights the importance placed on relationships by pupils. Macleod (2007) considers that as much attention as possible should be focused on teachers being able, and supported, to form mutually respectful and trusting relationships with their pupils and at Explorer this is clearly the case. This is illustrated in Figure VIII *The Explorer Behaviour Model* that is evident on the walls of the classrooms and in the language used by staff and pupils. This high quality dialogue that is facilitated allows the staff and pupils to interact as Cooper (2003: 172) describes as 'inter-generational'. He argues that it is vital between participants in human institutions. In a similar vein, Riley *et al* (2004) also stress the importance of listening to disaffected young people and hearing the pupil voice in order to achieve a culture of *mutual respect*, rather than one that just adheres to rules of conduct. This appears to be clearly perceived by both staff and pupils at Explorer and my exploration of 'caring relationships' in data collection highlighted this issue. Cooper & Whitebread (2007) describe this as a nurturing approach, whereby close, supportive and caring relationships between staff and pupils are enabled which allows young people to value themselves through their experience of being valued and cared for by others. These nurturing relationships are clearly evident from the data and I developed this concept that I found at Explorer in section 5.2. *Deep Relationships* in the following conclusions chapter.

The importance of relationships and the fact that they matter is summed up in two words by Field (2008: 1) as the central thesis of social capital theory as 'relationships matter'. They are evidently important at Explorer and their development is at the core of the Explorer approach. Munn (2000) describes social capital is a helpful analytical tool for considering the underachievement of

disadvantaged children, in promoting social control, and in examining school practices in personal and social development. Explorers do not overtly theorise about the concept of social capital, but they clearly understand the usefulness of helping pupils to develop positive social networks within an educational context. This includes developing and maintaining positive relationships for pupils between their peers as well as teachers and other adult authority figures. Field (2008) confidently argues that there is a close relationship between people's social networks and their educational performance. Helping disaffected pupils re-integrate and re-engage with their own education is a core function at Explorer, and building their social capital is one aspect of their 'success'.

The alternative curriculum approach incorporating outdoor learning is a clear and consistent theme within the data I collected, and it is clearly used as a vehicle for developing relationships, promoting communication and confronting emotional challenges. In terms of The Outdoor Education Model of Higgins (2005) seen above in Figure I, the Explorer approach to outdoor learning is firmly rooted in the personal and social development sphere. Clearly outdoor activities are undertaken and enjoyed by most pupils. Whilst they may perceive they are learning interesting skills, it is clear that the educational objective is to assist in their personal and social development. With respect to Figure III, The Model of Outdoor Learning adapted from Leather & Porter (2006), I suggest that the pupils at Explorer are provided with outdoor experiences that are definitely physical and emotional, for purposes of therapy and education, learning formally and informally, for the development of personal relationships with self and others. As such they are not experiencing traditional character building outdoor education experiences, the neo-Hahnian approach articulated by Brookes (2003). The outdoor tutors at Explorer appeared to work in the alternative outdoor paradigm as detailed by Davis-Berman & Berman (2002). This is where the pupils have safety and feelings of security and personal challenge reinforced and carefully balanced. Pupils' basic needs are met and challenge is provided working within comfort zones. Explorer outdoor tutors are skilful at assessing and intervening when anxiety develops. Davis-Berman & Berman (2002) suggest that it is essential to build a *therapeutic* relationship. This combination of a therapeutic and educational approach is also supported by Cooper (1999) to develop social competence for those with challenging behaviours. The Explorer approach to outdoor learning is designed to increase social development and enhance self esteem and confidence, which are key positive impacts of outdoor learning according to Rickinson *et al*, (2004). Riley *et al* (2006) have little doubt that a structured outdoor education experience with clear learning goals is a powerful tool for re-engaging students. Explorer's structured weekly

outdoor learning sessions for all students certainly appears to be a positive aspect of the Explorer curriculum.

The regular and progressive feature of the Explorer outdoor learning sessions is more philosophically aligned with the Forest School approach. Although not purely a Forest School, Explorer outdoor learning uses a Forest School experience as one of the range of outdoor activities. O'Brien & Murray (2007) found how Forest Schools directly impacted on pupils confidence and social skills. Confidence was characterised by self-confidence and self-belief that came from the children having the freedom, time and space, to learn, grow and demonstrate independence. My research data shows that there were opportunities for increased self-confidence. O'Brien & Murray (2007) suggest that the improvement of social skills was shown by the children demonstrating an increased awareness of the consequences of their actions on other people, peers and adults, and acquiring a better ability to work co-operatively with others as a result of their Forest School experience. The Forest School activities were incorporated into outdoor learning when their value has been recognised.

The data suggests that outdoor learning sessions were important to the pupils at Explorer, as well as the staff. However, the activities in isolation are not the whole picture at Explorer, it is also the relationship with the member of staff and positive recognition by that staff member that appears important. Harter (1985) argues that self-esteem is a direct function of competence in domains of importance as well as the approval of significant others. The staff appear to be those *significant others* once the relationship has been developed. Additionally attending Explorer and being successful within its curriculum and behaviour system also appears to be of importance to the pupils. As such it could be argued that the pupils' self-esteem is enhanced by Explorer. However, it was not directly measured. The PASS data which is focussed on attitudes to self and school seems to be a more focussed and perhaps relevant measure for disaffected pupils in a PRU. As such it appears that Explorer is able to have a significant impact for most pupils. My concerns about the PASS instrument are detailed above in section 3.9.

The concerns and common misconceptions about self-esteem, and whether the Explorer approach works or not, are perhaps addressed by Dweck (1999). She argues that self-esteem is not something we give to people by telling them about their high intelligence or how good they are. It is something we equip them to get for themselves by teaching them; to value learning over the appearance of cleverness, to enjoy challenge and effort, and to use mistakes as routes to mastery.

If the pupils' self-esteem is improved and enhanced through their time at Explorer, then it is this Dweckian approach and belief, as evidenced in the leadership interviews, that pupils are able to change, value the learning process and embrace their mistakes and problems along the way. This ethos was very clear and strong and well articulated by the headteacher.

I will now use these findings in order to draw some conclusions from these data.

5. Conclusions

In this final section, I discuss the key findings and characteristics that contribute to Explorer's success. This includes ideas about: 1) Transformative Learning; 2) deep educational relationships; 3) the development of social and emotional capital; 4) an innovative approach to the curriculum in powerful learning environments and 5) strong leadership with a clear and well articulated ethos. These factors do not stand alone, since the Explorer experience is I argue holistic in nature. Explorer works because of all these distinct aspects operate in an inter-connected complex weave for each person. The self-belief of leadership and their underpinning philosophy, the caring nurturing staff, the relationships, the behaviour management and transformation of pupils and the distinctive, innovative curriculum all contribute to the Explorer educational experience.

This thesis clearly links with other studies in this area. For example, Solomon & Rogers (2001) suggest the need for caution in implementing curriculum focused strategies for reducing disaffection. At Explorer, the *Innovative Curriculum*, as discussed in section 5.4 below, is based on the Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning and is part of the holistic approach to pupils which is underpinned by the clear 'rights and responsibilities' behavioural framework and ethos. This supports the research of Solomon & Rogers (2001: 344) who found that a number of practitioners commented on the need to raise *general* self-esteem and increase *general* motivation, and they perceived this as a major task of PRUs. However, they also suggested that this 'should be aimed at raising self-efficacy in specific curriculum areas rather than at a general raising of self-esteem'. The focus at Explorer is more general such as *Learning to Learn* or *School Survival Skills* – see appendix Q for the Explorer Curriculum Policy.

The use of outdoor learning as part of the curriculum at Explorer has been thoroughly investigated, and is concluded, in section 5.4.2. below, with a positive viewpoint. This supports the findings of Fox & Avramidis (2003) who suggested that an outdoor education programme was successful in promoting positive behaviour and academic gains for most pupils. Fox & Avramidis (2003: 267) conclude that 'it represents a powerful, albeit underused, tool for reducing disaffection'.

The study by Didaskalou & Millward (2007) considers managing behaviour and reducing disaffection by emphasising the development of a number of generic 'life skills'. This is part of the Explorer success and is considered in section 5.4. *Innovative Curriculum* below. Didaskalou &

Millward (2007: 202) argue that this approach can be successful because it permits 'more time to be spent on developing relationships, building consensual values and the other attributes... important in building successful schools and communities'. The development of relationships is the key finding within this thesis.

The fundamental importance of relationships is described by Cooper (2003: 172) as 'inter-generational' and he highlights that the quality of communication between participants in human institutions is vital. Cooper (2003:172) argues that 'the development of intra- and inter-personal communication skills feature strongly in approaches to intervention for children and with emotional and behavioural difficulties'. The quality of the relationships at Explorer is considered in section 5.2 below on *Deep Relationships*. Linked to this is the work of Geddes (2003) who provides a really useful consideration of attachment theory. Whilst this was not an avenue directly explored in this thesis, the description provided by Geddes supports my own observations, as evidenced in appendix M, field notes on an outdoor learning lesson. She states (2003: 241)

it is possible for the teacher to recognize need and anxiety in response to the task rather than demand and dependency... [this] can bring about long-term change in the pupil's internal working model of the self and ultimately enhance the possibilities in the learning situation and of engagement in the outside world.

And from my observations this describes the pedagogic approach taken at Explorer. The successes of this approach are in contrast to those found by Meo & Parker (2004). They found that the pedagogic practices adopted by teachers served to contribute to an amplification, rather than moderation of pupil disaffection and misbehaviour. Meo & Parker (2004: 109) also found that 'the individualistic approach to behaviour that underpinned teachers' practices also hampered staff strategies'. This is in contrast to the shared ethos and consistent approach employed at Explorer, as evidenced in appendices J, K and N. Additionally, Meo & Parker (2004:112) found that the 'majority of pupils... failed to access any kind of trusting or meaningful relationships with teachers...'. This is not so at Explorer as evidenced in appendix H, question 26 in Dave's video diary transcript. The *Deep Relationships* are considered in 5.2 below.

In the study by Riley *et al* (2004) the importance of listening to disaffected young people and hearing the pupil voice is discussed. They conclude that if schools are to improve student motivation for learning and to reduce behaviour problems and exclusions, there needs to be an

effective *dialogue* between staff and students about how to achieve a culture of *mutual respect*, not just one that adheres to rules of conduct (2004: 178). The culture of *mutual respect* was an underpinning philosophy of the whole Explorer PRU set up, as evidenced in appendix J, the Headteacher interview, and this appears to be of fundamental importance to the success of Explorer.

The concept of 'Nurture Groups' is explored by Cooper & Tiknaz (2005) and Cooper & Whitebread (2007). The Nurture Group is a form of educational provision, implemented for young children (primary 1 & 2) with social, emotional, behavioural and educational difficulties. Whilst the Explorer pupils are physically older, it could be argued that their social development shows many aspects of childlike responses and as such they remain undeveloped. The nurturing approach explored in section 5.2 *Deep Relationships* below would seem to add weight to the argument for its appropriateness in developing nurturing educational experiences and settings. According to Cooper & Whitebread (2007: 172) the underlying principle is to enable close, supportive and caring relationships between staff and pupils which is mainly achieved by enabling children to value themselves through their experience of being valued and cared for by others and 'central to a psychological understanding of and justification for nurture groups is a socio-cultural theory of learning' and this is explored in section 5.3. below.

The ways in which children think, feel and behave towards us and each other reflect the values and attitudes of the adult world in which children develop according to Cooper & Cefai (2009) and they argue that there is a need for greater awareness of these contemporary values and the shared social context. The work by Cooper & Cefai (2009) suggests that schools need to pay even more attention to promoting the positive emotional and social wellbeing of children than they do to trying to control their behaviour. 'The more that adults open up the channels of communication with children and young people, and listen to their perspectives and opinions, the more opportunity there will be for dialogue' (Cooper & Cefai, 2009: 99). The *Leadership and Vision* discussed in 5.5. below suggests that my findings of the Explorer PRU support this view.

The optimistic and aspirational view that: 'Out of dialogue will come the sharing of perspectives and the possibility of a better present and future world for everyone. Furthermore, adults who live by these values will be the role models for future generations' (Cooper & Cefai, 2009: 99-100) is shared by the Leadership at Explorer, as evidenced in appendix J & K, the interviews with the PRU leaders. I now consider some areas for more specific and detailed consideration.

5.1. Transformative Learning

There are clear indications that the pupils at Explorer experience success, to a greater or lesser extent. I could term this the 'success spectrum' or 'success continuum' and at a point in time the pupils would be present somewhere along this, as indeed collectively so would the class and the PRU as a complete entity. From my direct experience it is apparent that success is in a constant state of flux for all participants and players within the Explorer PRU. However, for the individual pupils, it is apparent that to experience success they have undergone some form of personal transformation in their attitudes, behaviours and values regarding school and their education. To understand these transformations, it may be useful to consider the theory of Transformative Learning (Mezirow, 1991, 2000).

At its heart, Transformative Learning theory is uncomplicated. Through some event, which could be highly traumatic as or as ordinary as an unexpected problem, an individual becomes aware of holding a restrictive or distorted view. If the individual critically examines this view, opens himself up to alternatives, and consequently changes the way he sees things, he has transformed some part of how he makes meaning out of the world (Mezirow, 1991, 2000). Habits of mind are established; they may have to do with our sense of self, our interpretation of social systems and issues, our moral beliefs, and our knowledge. It may take a significant or dramatic event to lead us to question our assumptions and beliefs. Alternatively it may be an incremental process in which we gradually change bits of how we see things, not even realising a transformation has taken place until afterwards. Whether the Explorer approach to education is experienced as a single traumatic experience or a collection of incremental transformations was not investigated in this research. Critical reflection is one means by which we work through beliefs and assumptions. It helps to talk to others, not only exchanging opinions and ideas or receiving support and encouragement, but also engaging in discussions where alternatives are seriously considered. Central to Transformative Learning theory, is the process of 'perspective transformation'. Essentially there are three dimensions to a perspective transformation; psychological, changes in understanding of the self, convictional, revision of belief systems, and behavioural, changes in lifestyle (Mezirow, 2000).

Transformation theory's focus is on how we learn to negotiate and act on our own purposes, values, feelings, and meanings rather than those we have uncritically assimilated from others, to

gain greater control over our lives as socially responsible, clear thinking decision makers.

Transformative learning refers to transforming a problematic frame of reference to make it more reliable, by generating opinions and interactions that are more justified. We become critically reflective of those beliefs that are problematic. The behaviour management system at Explorer, embodied in REACH, is founded upon forcing the pupils to reflect upon their behaviours and beliefs. Whether the Explorer experience is viewed as a single traumatic experience or a collection of incremental transformations is an area for future discussion, research and analysis.

Historically, Transformative Learning has been concerned with adult learning theory. However there are several reasons to consider transformative learning theory and practice for pupils at Explorer since Mezirow (2000) argues that the capacity for Transformative Learning emerges in late adolescents. At Explorer, the students are required to develop critical and reflective thinking skills. The REACH system was a fundamental part of this process. Additionally, the constant challenge by staff evident in the staff-pupil interactions encouraged them to care about the world around them and their place within it. In order for this to happen, it appeared that some degree of personal or social transformation was required.

Whilst Transformative Learning is normally considered to be a feature of adult education, I suggest that it is appropriate to help explain the experience of pupils at Explorer. Firstly, this is because these young boys and girls are in the transitional phase between childhood and adulthood. Secondly, for them to remain at Explorer they have to modify their behaviour from their previous school experiences and continue to do so in order to be re-integrated into mainstream provision. Thirdly, the PASS data results suggest that there may have been attitudinal changes both towards themselves and to school. Notably, the application of aspects of Transformative Learning to adolescent educational contexts is gaining greater acceptance. For example, Bernhardt (2009) discusses how incorporating autobiography into the classroom has the potential to facilitate reflective and interpretative practices, through which self-understanding and transformative learning may emerge.

5.2. Deep Relationships

The high quality and nature of pupil teacher relationships appears to be at the very heart of Explorer's success. I propose that a useful term to describe these is 'deep educational relationships'. In this section I develop the concepts that underpin this term, considering trust, caring and love.

During the research process I investigated the notion of 'caring' with the pupils and the staff, having first observed their interactions in and out of lessons. I propose that this caring relationship, and the passion with which the staff discuss the needs of the pupils, has elements of a 'loving relationship' that may be found between a parent and a child. From my own teaching experience I had never sensed this caring, loving relationship to the same level of intensity as that which came across from the staff, particularly Brett and Rich. Morentin *et al* (2008) discuss loving relationships for people and outline how the theoretical model of love includes three key factors. These are: 1) commitment, stability and idealisation; 2) passion and physiological arousal; and 3) intimacy and romanticism. I suggest that some of these adjectives could be applicable to help describe, explain and understand the multi-faceted nature of the relationships at Explorer.

The work of Morentin *et al* (2008) is informed by the theoretical models of love as discussed by Sternberg & Grajek (1984). They suggest that in terms of a structural model of love, it may be conceptualised in terms of 'a set of affects, cognitions, and motivations that, when sampled together, yield the composite emotion that we label love' (1984: 315). However, Sternberg & Grajek(1984: 315) stress that this composite conceptualisation of love 'is not an undifferentiated unity, rather, it can be decomposed into a large number of underlying bonds that tend to co-occur in certain close relationships and that in combination result in the global feeling that we view as love'. The affects, cognitions, and motivations provide a useful framework to understand and explore the relationships at Explorer. Whilst I explored the idea of 'caring', the detailed concept of loving relationships is an area worthy of a future research focus.

I feel certain that to research the teacher-pupil relationship in terms of 'love' and 'relationship' would create many barriers. The difficulties of using the word love and loving relationship in an educational context is that these terms can be loaded with potentially negative and pejorative connotations. It has only been a result of my research and data analysis that I have had time to critically reflect upon the observations I made. I have come to the conclusion that it appears there

are loving relationships at the heart of Explorer's success. A sense of loving humanity in general, regardless of behaviour, came through from the staff. This detailed exploration of what is meant by a loving relationship can perhaps help understand the nature of the relationships at Explorer, whilst putting aside any inappropriate sexual connotations.

Yela (2006) details a line of research that aims to distinguish which are the principal dimensions of the loving phenomenon. He outlines the most frequently cited principal dimensions to be; passion, intimacy, caring and attachment. Yela's work concentrates on intimate interpersonal relationships and includes 'erotic passion' (2006: 22). I suggest that it is important to highlight the broader, i.e. non-erotic and non-sexual application of the term intimacy. According to Yela (2006) intimacy covers the special affective bond of understanding, communication, trust and support, between both parties.

The concept of trust in relationships is explored by Macfarlane (2009) in a research context. He adopts the work of McKnight & Chervany (2001) on the trust found in commercial relationships and applies it to an educational context. McKnight & Chervany (2001: 42) produce a useful 'Typology of Trust' see Figure X below, and consider that interpersonal trust can be explained by 'trusting beliefs and intentions reflect the idea that interactions between people and cognitive-emotional reactions to such interactions determine behaviour'. Whilst they suggest that trust related behaviours fall outside their 'Typology of Trust' this is perhaps a useful tool to help consider Explorer pupils, since one of the key aims of the Explorer programme is to help pupils to modify their behaviour.

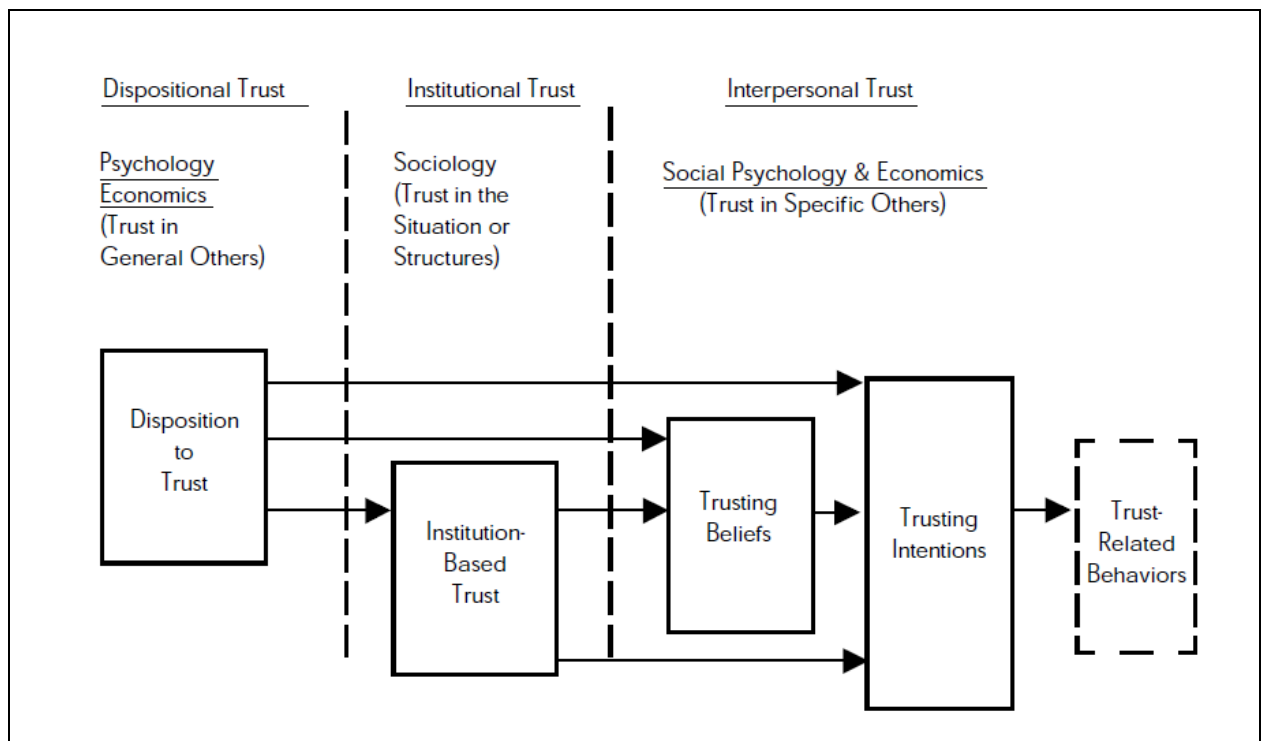


Figure IX - Typology of Trust (McKnight & Chervany, 2001)

Considering McKnight & Chervany's (2001) typology the arrows of influence are drawn from left to right, dispositionally, then institutionally then interpersonally. Perhaps the success of Explorer pupils can be considered to work in the other direction, starting with the building of interpersonal trust. Pupils experience and develop trust in a relationship with their teacher and teachers. This develops into a trust for the institution that is the Explorer PRU. This perhaps then develops the pupil's dispositional trust, and they are then more able to trust other educational institutions and other educational individuals. This model could be useful to evaluate more precisely aspects of the operation of Explorer, and provide a theoretical conceptual framework upon which further research could be undertaken.

It seems reasonable to suggest that the structures of low ratio pupil to staff in classes and lessons means that it is possible for staff to invest an enormous amount of emotional energy and time in one pupil and that this structure facilitates the development of these 'loving relationships'. Additionally, it appears that the nature of the Explorer curriculum, especially the outdoor learning sessions allows for the intensity of these relationships to develop. I propose that a more useful term is '**deep educational relationships**'. This is in contrast to the more usual 'shallow

relationships' that are experienced by many pupils and teachers as a feature of mainstream secondary education.

5.3. Sociocultural Theory

What impact do these deep educational relationships have? I believe that the answer to this question can be informed by some of the ideas of Sociocultural Theory and Vygotsky. At the heart of Vygotsky's theory is the understanding of human cognition and learning as social and cultural rather than individual phenomena (Kozulin *et al*, 2003). As such, I suggest that the concepts of social and emotional capital are useful in order to help explain the Explorer PRU. Although some authors (Johnston & Percy-Smith, 2003) suggest there is little agreement on what social capital is, where it comes from, how it can be measured and, if it is a 'good thing', how we can get more of it? I find that some of the concepts within social capital can help explain the social development; of pupils, the class and the whole PRU, and how this allows them to be more successful at Explorer.

Common to most definitions of social capital are the concepts of reciprocity and a generalised trust (Johnston & Percy-Smith, 2003). In other words, individuals behave towards each other with the expectation that they share certain norms and values; they engage in actions which are of benefit to others in the expectation that those actions will be reciprocated at some point in the future and membership of such social networks gives rise to benefits to those with access to them (Johnston & Percy-Smith, 2003; Beames & Atencio, 2008) and the work of Bourdieu suggests that social cultural capital can be found in the embodied state namely in the form of long-lasting dispositions of the mind and body. As previously stated, the work of Simons (2009) is looking at the effects of re-integration of Explorer pupils but in addition I suggest that the long lasting dispositions of Explorer pupils would be an area worthy of further research.

Beames & Atencio (2008) specifically consider the building of social capital through outdoor education. They illustrate how historically, outdoor education programmes have been 'inward-looking', focused predominantly on building 'bonding social capital'. The Explorer curriculum is in part outdoor education and certainly appears to work on the 'bonding capital' aspect that Beames and Atencio explore in their paper. They propose that there are problems of this inward looking

approach that could be alleviated by an 'outward looking' approach in order to build 'bridging capital'. Those who do not consider the potential benefits of 'developing bridging social capital are ignoring the socio-cultural backdrop in which their courses take place'. From my research there was no evidence of Explorer engaging with the local community, particularly during outdoor learning sessions. Beames & Atencio (2008: 109) argue that an overemphasis on bonding 'may limit individual autonomy and indirectly restrict the long term levels of health, wealth, educational attainment, and law abidingness of those in the community (participants and residents)'.

None the less, it could be seen that the pupils at Explorer are so deficient in their levels of social capital, particularly with regard to 'trusting'- pupils, staff and schooling, that they need to start building from somewhere, and as such to build their 'bonding capital' would be a good place to start. Indeed it appears that the main bonds that are developed are those between the pupils and the teachers. Bonding takes place as part of the Explorer family which is reflected in Liam's comment from the focus group (see appendix R).

For me, we are somewhere between a responsible parent or and a teacher, somewhere between that ... but we are neither ... there is a number of times when we get called dad or mum ... and a number of times that members of the public assume that we are a family, a somewhat dysfunctional one, but a family nonetheless.

Successful Explorer pupils appear to have a sense of belonging and perhaps this is for the first time during their secondary education. As a secondary school teacher, I observed year 7 pupils in transition from primary to secondary school. I was painfully aware that I did not know or care for all of my pupils that I taught, and once calculated that this was in excess of 300 pupils per week (10 classes of approximately 30 pupils). I engaged in conversation with a year 7 class one spring term, fully aware that I did not know these children particularly well. What became clear was that they had come from a variety of nurturing rural primary schools with one or two key teaching adults whom they developed a relationship with over the course of their final year (6). In their secondary education they were experiencing 11 National Curriculum subjects with between 11 and 14 different teachers in a rural comprehensive school of at least 900 pupils. It is reasonable to suggest that this is perhaps not an uncommon picture and as such it has helped lead me to the 'shallow relationship' concept that informed the 'deep relationship' notion discussed above.

However, importantly it is apparent that this contributes to some pupils not having a sense of belonging. As a consequence they may not develop deep educational relationships with teachers because they may not have the time and opportunities to develop caring, trusting relationships. There is little or no investment in building social capital. This lack of apparent care in a previous school was certainly evident from the Explorer pupil interviews which contrasted with the sense of belonging to Explorer and the notion of being cared for by the staff. Warnock (2005: 15) states how the concept of inclusion 'must embrace the feeling of belonging, since such a feeling appears to be necessary for successful learning and for more general wellbeing.' And at the very core of Explorer's work is the concept of inclusion.

I suggest that this sense of belonging can be usefully explored using Zembylas (2007) consideration of 'emotional capital'. He argues that an important component of emotional capital is its successful management, and controlling of undesirable emotions and acquiring the desirable ones. This is done through learning appropriate emotional competencies. The Explorer approach to behaviour management and modification attempts to do just that.

Emotional capital is useful as a concept since emotions are a crucial resource in relations among social groups. According to Zembylas (2007) emotional capital is built over time within classrooms and schools and contributes to the formation of particular emotion norms and 'affective economies'. In this context, emotional capital, expressed through the exchange of emotional resources among teachers and students, is systematically transformed into social and cultural capital. This can be seen as stronger relations in the classroom and empowered feelings in the school community. However, these possibilities for change are not infinite as Zembylas (2007: 454) states,

...emotional capital reflects particular historical, cultural and social manifestations. Yet, it is important to acknowledge that the exchange and circulation of emotional resources take place within particular affective economies; the possibilities of change, in other words, are not limitless.

The affective economy at Explorer seems to be a positive and enriching one, in which challenging children can grow and develop. However, there are limits and progress can be slow and non-linear. The 'deep relationships' that are evident contribute to this. The nature of the affective economy at Explorer is an area that I believe warrants further research at Explorer.

5.4. Innovative Curriculum

One of the key factors in Explorer's success is what Ofsted (2008a) describe as their 'innovative curriculum'. The Explorer curriculum policy can be seen in appendix Q. Explorer has created a curriculum based on the 'Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning' with 'Learning-to-Learn' approaches that also includes regular and progressive 'Outdoor Learning' sessions. Philosophically, the school leadership has decided to approach pupil learning at the level of the 'Curriculum Aims' as stated in the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) Big Picture Curriculum (see appendix L). As such, a variety of activities are planned. These include: Learning to Learn; Outdoor Learning; School Survival Skills; SuccessMaker; MTa-Pass; PSHCE; Speed Stacks; Games; Art & Design; Projects and ICT. These activities seem to ensure that 'experiences' are central to pupils learning. The Explorer curriculum also suggests that some National Curriculum subject areas are integrated into many of these different activity sessions.

The Explorer leadership clearly believe that working through the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's (QCA) Curriculum Aims allows a personalised learning programme for each pupil and results in a scheme of work that teaches pupils how to choose to behave in an appropriate manner and accept responsibility for their own actions. There are educators who would criticise this non-subject based approach to secondary education. However, according to Ofsted (2008a) 'the curriculum strikes an excellent balance between meeting students' emotional needs and raising their academic achievement'. How well the curriculum meets the range of needs and interests of the pupils is, according to the most recent Ofsted inspection (2008a) 'exceptionally and consistently high' with a Grade 1.

5.4.1. Experiential Learning

It appears that the Explorer approach to the curriculum can be explained by theories of experiential learning. Authors in the field of experiential learning have tended to use the term in two distinct ways according to Brookfield (1983). Firstly, the term is used to describe the sort of learning undertaken by students who are given a chance to acquire and apply knowledge, skills and feelings in an immediate and relevant setting. Experiential learning therefore entails a direct encounter with the phenomena being studied rather than merely thinking about the encounter, or

only considering the possibility of doing something about it (Brookfield 1983). Secondly, experiential learning is education that occurs as a direct participation in the events of life. Here learning is not sponsored by some formal educational institution but by people themselves. It is learning that is achieved through reflection upon everyday experience and is the way that most of us do our learning (Houle, 1980 cited in Smith, 2001). It appears that the Explorer approach to learning encompasses both approaches. Perhaps uniquely for educational settings, the participation in the 'events of life' is something that is planned for, as is the enforced reflection upon experience aspect of the Explorer REACH reflection scheme.

Much of the work on experiential learning is attributed to Kolb (1984). Kolb's interest lay in investigating the processes associated with making sense of concrete experiences and the different styles of learning that may be involved. In this he makes explicit use of the work of the notable educational theorists Piaget, Dewey and Lewin. According to Ord (2009: 493) experiential learning has explicitly been a cornerstone of particularly youth work practice in the UK since the publication of the Kolb 'treatise'. He argues that what is required is a return to the formulation of experiential education conceived of by Dewey which locates 'lived experience' at the heart of the educational process. As such, it appears that this 'lived experience' is at the core of Explorer's 'innovative curriculum'. For a fuller consideration and critical exploration of experiential learning see Smith (2001) and Ord (2009).

From my research it was apparent that pupils at Explorer favoured lessons that could be termed predominantly kinaesthetic; cooking, swimming and outdoor learning. They were less inclined towards Success Maker and more passive activities. This is perhaps reflected in the Ofsted (2008a) report that states the academic achievement and standards is a 'grade 3 - broadly average to below average' – see appendix A. The theories of experiential learning, and the associated learning styles, help to make sense of how and where Explorer pupils can be successful. This is perhaps where it is worth offering a note of caution, particularly regarding learning styles. I have used the term kinaesthetic to describe the preferred lessons of Explorer pupils. I suggest that this provides a useful vocabulary or lexicon with which to help understand the pupils learning in a PRU. For a full critique of 'Learning Styles' see the extensive report by Coffield et.al. (2004). A recurrent criticism they made was that too much is being expected of relatively simple, self-report tests. The respondents are highly constrained by the predetermined format of any particular questionnaire and this means that they are unable to calibrate their understanding of the individual items

against the meanings that were intended by the person who originally devised the questionnaire or by the person who actually administers it to them. I am not aware of the measurement of learning styles at Explorer, except in the form of a vocabulary in order to help the pupils understand how they prefer to approach learning.

5.4.2. Outdoor Learning

According to Ofsted (2008a) the outdoor curriculum at Explorer is 'excellent'. The outdoor curriculum enables students to develop good self-esteem and to accrue the values required to access the national curriculum (Ofsted, 2008a). There are authors from the field of outdoor education who consider the reasons behind the utility of the outdoor learning medium. For example, Barnes (1997: 9) states that 'the reason why the outdoors is used as a learning medium for personal and team development is because, as well as being fun, it is so powerful'. Andrews (1997) suggests that outdoor activities demands varying levels of psychological, physiological and technical expertise. He suggests that cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains are often addressed simultaneously and holistically by learners in the outdoors. As a consequence the learning is powerful. The three distinct domains, cognitive, affective and psychomotor, are clearly outlined within the framework of Bloom's (1956) Taxonomy of Educational Objectives. Whilst they are not unique to outdoor educational objectives, it is argued by outdoor education authors (e.g. Higgins *et al* 1997; Barnes, 1997), that the intensity and co-occurrence of all three domains can make the outdoors distinctive as an educational setting.

Barnes (1997) suggests that there are a number of related principles that can begin to explain the power of the outdoors. Csíkszentmihályi's (1990) concept of 'Flow' describes a state which exists in a person when performing in an activity at a level which perfectly matches their physical and mental ability and where the performer is totally identified with that activity to the exclusion of outside stimulation. To achieve a flow state, a balance must be struck between the challenge of the task and the skill of the performer. If the task is too easy or too difficult, flow cannot occur. Both skill level and challenge level must be matched and high; if skill and challenge are low and matched, then apathy results (Csíkszentmihályi, 1997). Striking this balance between challenge and skill tests the quality of the teaching staff at Explorer.

Barnes (1997) describes 'Magic Moments' which tend to have a more spiritual and emotional connotation than Flow and are attributed to Maslow (1954). They are often exemplified by feelings of 'quietness' and 'being at one' or 'connection' with nature or a deity or sharing with other people. Some describe this as 'transcendence'. Maslow's (1970) work also includes the idea of Peak Experiences. These are allied to Flow because performance is an important part of the experience. However, emotion, largely detached from Flow, plays a stronger role here. Peak Experiences can be thought of as a combination of Flow and Magic Moments and therefore producing a more all-round feeling. Peak experiences can be explained as mystic experiences, moments of great awe, moments of the most intense happiness, or even rapture, ecstasy or bliss; these are moments of pure positive happiness when all doubts, all fears, all inhibitions, all tensions and all weaknesses are left behind (Wilson, 2004).

Brendtro & Strother (2007: 2) argue that challenge and adventure activities create what they describe as 'powerful learning environments' which to fully engage youth and foster the development of courage, resilience, and responsibility. The outdoors as a powerful learning environment, especially for Explorer pupils, is one that appears aptly described. The powerful learning environment is an area of research addressed by, amongst others, De Corte et.al. (2003) who seek to combine the three inter-related areas of instructional psychology, instructional technology, and instructional design. In their view on learning, constructivism has a central position and is regarded as an active process of interpreting and constructing individual knowledge representations. Students need to process information actively and construct knowledge through experience. Active knowledge construction, in context, contributes to advanced thinking and learning activities, resulting in high quality knowledge acquisition. In their view de Corte *et al* (2003: 646) propose that 'Instruction should provide tools and environments for helping students to achieve this'. The concept of outdoor learning as a powerful learning environment is I suggest a useful one, but also needs to be explored more fully in further research.

None the less, in a nationwide report into Learning Outside the Classroom, Ofsted, (2008b: 5) are certain that 'When planned and implemented well, learning outside the classroom contributed significantly to raising standards and improving pupils' personal, social and emotional development'. This was most successful when it was 'an integral element of long-term curriculum planning and closely linked to classroom activities' (Ofsted, 2008c: 5) as is this the case at Explorer.

The reasons for outdoor learning to be a fundamental part of the Explorer curriculum appear to have some substance.

5.4.3. Informal Learning

I suggest that one of the aspects of creating a powerful learning environment, particularly using experienced based activities, is that it provides many opportunities for informal learning alongside the formalised and explicitly planned parts of the pupils' day. I believe that this informal learning is as useful as the formal aspects and directly contributes to the successes of Explorer pupils.

Eraut (2000: 26) states that 'There is good evidence of many types of learning occurring... simultaneously in the archetypal context for formal learning, the school'. There is a large body of work on Informal Learning and Informal Education and for this thesis I wish to consider a couple of significant authors, Frank Coffield and Michael Eraut. Coffield (2000: 8) states: 'Informal learning should no longer be regarded as an inferior form of learning whose main purpose is to act as the precursor of formal learning; it needs to be seen as fundamental, necessary and valuable in its own right...'.

Eraut (2000) suggests the idea that 'non-formal learning' might be a more helpful description due to the connotations associated with the term informal. He looks at the level of intention in learning and suggests a learning continuum. At one end is 'implicit learning'. That is 'the acquisition of knowledge independently of conscious attempts to learn and the absence of explicit knowledge about what was learned' (Eraut 2000: 12) on one extreme. On the other end of the continuum is 'deliberative learning' where time is specifically set-aside for learning. Between the two is 'reactive learning'. Here learning is explicit but almost takes place spontaneously and in response to recent, current or imminent situations but without any time being set aside for it.

Time of stimulus	Implicit learning	Reactive learning	Deliberative learning
Past episode(s)	Implicit linkage of past memories with current experience	Brief near-spontaneous reflection on past episodes, communications, events, experiences.	Review of past actions, communications, events' experiences. More systematic reflection.
Current experience	A selection from experience enters the memory.	Incidental noting of facts, opinions, impressions, ideas. Recognition of learning opportunities.	Engagement in decision making, problem solving, planned informal learning.
Future behaviour	Unconscious effect of previous experiences.	Being prepared for emergent learning opportunities.	Planned learning goals. Planned learning opportunities.

Figure X - Typology of non-formal learning (Eraut, 2000) – [author's original emphasis]

This typology and learning continuum provides a useful framework to help explain some of the learning processes occurring at Explorer. Eraut (2000) declares that a multitude of processes and outcomes also occur in formal settings such as lessons in schools. Therefore it may be more useful to look at learning as implicit, reactive and deliberative, i.e. along the continuum, and to explore interaction with the context. In effect, this means going beyond the simple separation of the context into informal and formal.

However, at times this simple separation can be useful to try and unpick the processes that are present. To unpick the picture, I particularly find useful the Model of Informal Learning found in Braund & Reiss (2004: 7) as seen in Figure XII where the concept of engagement is seen as central. Whilst they developed and adapted this model for teaching science outside the classroom, I believe that it is highly applicable to the Explorer PRU context. Engagement in the activity, with other people and within a setting allows Explorer pupils to address their behaviours and attitudes. I need to add a word of caution. As with all '3-ring models' it is important I believe to see this as a simplification of some highly complex and inter-connected processes, which have almost infinite

permutations and are in a state of continual change, rather than a precise mathematical predictive tool suggested by a Venn diagram.

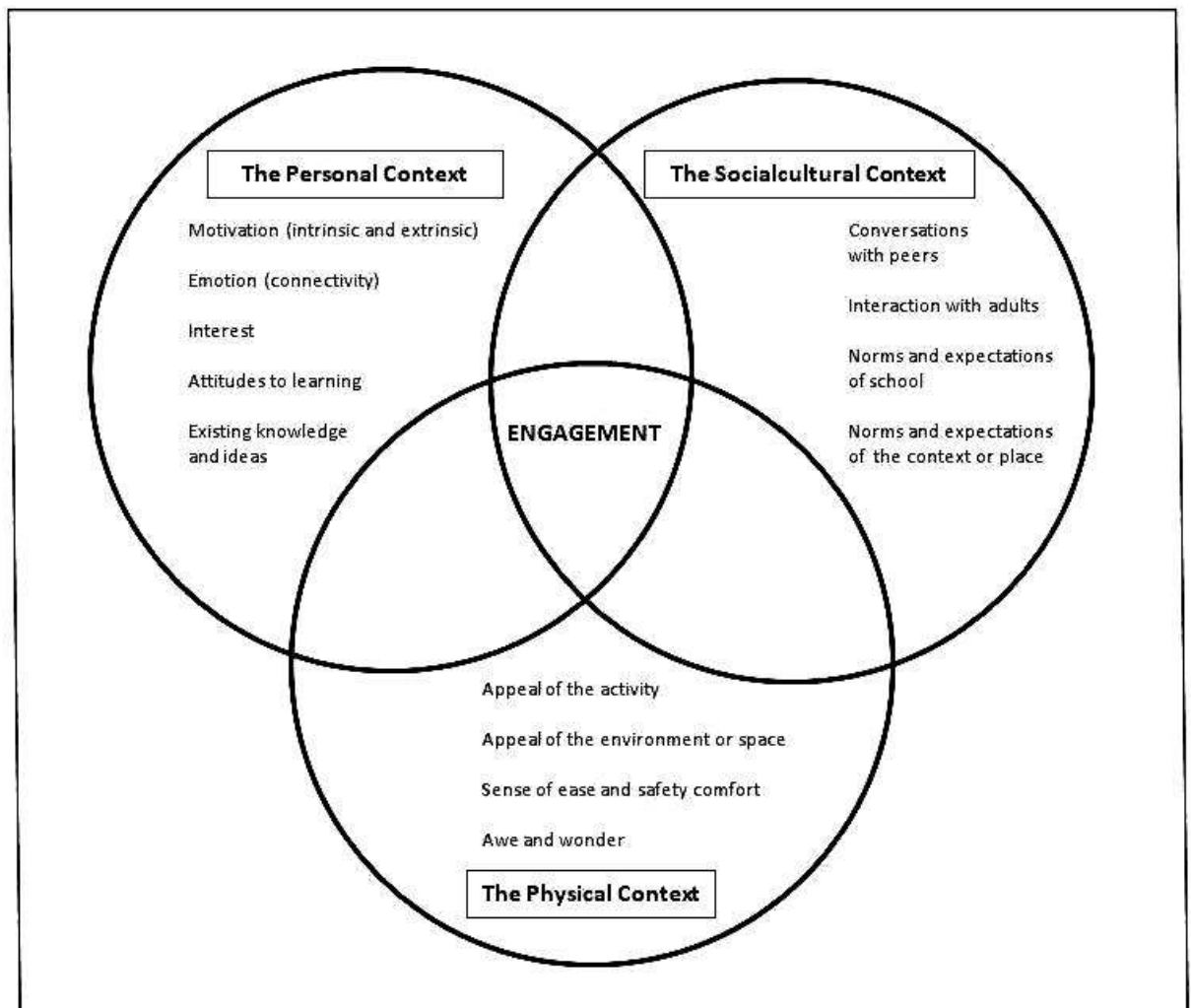


Figure XI - Informal Learning Model (Braund & Reiss, 2004)

5.4.4. Situated Learning

The theory of Situated Learning (Lave & Wenger, 1991) can, I suggest, also help explain the successful processes of informal learning taking place at Explorer. At its simplest, Situated Learning is learning that takes place in the same context in which it is applied. Lave and Wenger (1991) contest that learning should not be viewed as simply the transmission of abstract and de-contextualised knowledge from one individual to another, but a social process whereby

knowledge is co-constructed. They suggest that such learning is situated in a specific context and embedded within a particular social and physical environment.

It is often supposed that learning has a beginning and an end and that it is best removed from the rest of our activities and that it is the result of teaching (Wenger 1998 in Smith 2009). However, Situated Learning supposes that learning is social and comes mainly from our experience of participating in everyday life. This model of Situated Learning proposes that learning involved a process of engagement in a 'community of practice'. As such, I suggest that Explorer could be considered to be a community of practice, even if perhaps a rather loose community.

Communities of practice are formed by people who engage in a process of collective learning in a shared domain of human endeavour. Communities of practice are groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly. At Explorer the pupils are not necessarily voluntary members of this community of practice. However, they do interact regularly and for some curriculum activities they demonstrate a shared passion.

5.5. Leadership and Vision

The success of the Explorer PRU and the individual success stories for the pupils appears to be founded in the strong leadership and clear vision that was evident during this research. There was a firm conviction and sense of social justice that underpinned the values and ethos of the unit. These values, of 'mutual respect' and 'rights & responsibilities', run as clear coherent themes through all interactions and are well articulated and transmitted in a clear, logical and coherent approach to the curriculum.

The interviews I conducted with Brett the headteacher and Rich the director of outdoor learning were a culmination of my time spent at Explorer. Prior to this I had the opportunity to immerse myself in the unit as an informal observer and visitor. The personal characteristics of the two key leaders were evident from these visits, as well as the formal interviews. The Ofsted (2008a: 5) report pertinently explains it thus:

Leadership and management are outstanding. The passion shown by all staff and the highly skilled management committee lie at the heart of this very

successful centre. There is a steely determination, and a clear vision, to move heaven and earth to put vulnerable and damaged young people back on the rails and convince them that they can succeed in life. Overall, they succeed with this vision. They pioneer new initiatives and constantly look at ways to improve the quality of provision.

Within the scope of this thesis I did not explore the contribution made by the management committee, and suggest that this could be a useful dimension for further inquiry.

Passion is a shared characteristic of Explorer's leadership. The enthusiasm to help the 'damaged young people' is clear. They have a shared belief about the pupils' right to have a decent education and their need to learn how to behave. Both Brett and Rich have a passion for learning and this, according to Tim Brighouse (online), is at the heart of successful leadership, especially when it is demonstrated in their actions and conversations. Brighouse also describes the qualities essential for successful leadership in a language that epitomises the leadership at Explorer. He suggests that leaders need an excellent sense of humour, particularly in a crisis, an enormous energy, and above all a belief in the children's capacity to achieve that tolerates no denial and sweeps all before it (Brighouse, online).

It is acknowledged that there is no single universal leadership experience but that there is a 'multiplicity of leadership experiences unique to each participant and setting' (Barrett-Baxendale & Burton 2009: 105). This is apparent at Explorer. Brett is a character who is charismatic and at times larger than life, whilst Rich appears to be a quieter, more measured character who none the less has the 'steely determination' that Ofsted (2008a: 5) describe. Indeed charisma often brings the danger of what Michael Fullan (1993: 72) describes as 'visions that blind', which has the effect of debilitating the leadership potential of others in the school community. This was not evident from my research data; however this was not an avenue that I explored in the staff focus group. The National College for School Leadership (NCSL, 2002) explore successful leadership in challenging circumstances and detail strategies for improving and energising schools. In particular they suggest that headteachers should provide a clear vision and high expectations, as well as generate positive relationships NCSL (2002). Working with people and developing quality relationships are at the heart of a school where people feel supported and want to work. According to NCSL (2002) to develop these relationships successful leaders need emotional intelligence and a wide range of interpersonal qualities, including courage, integrity, honesty, trust and openness. I suggest that these descriptions are resonant of those used by the staff focus

group to illustrate their perceptions of the Explorer leadership. In research that considers the question what makes a 'Twenty-first-century headteacher: pedagogue, visionary leader or both?' Barrett-Baxendale & Burton (2009: 105) advocate that an emphasis is placed on communication skills, drive, passion and the ability to recognise high-quality teaching in others, rather than any particular formal qualification.

Much has been written on school leadership, by authors and organisations such as Tim Brighouse, Michael Fullan and the National College for School Leadership. It is beyond the scope of this thesis to explore more fully this field of literature. It is apparent that the 'outstanding' leadership and management of Explorer is what I choose to describe as the 'keystone' of their success.

5.6. Constraints and Challenges

There are a number of constraints and challenges faced by Explorer. This is in terms of both the future success of pupils and the PRU, as well as to the levels or depth of success possible for individual pupils.

Following on from the last section on leadership, during the writing of this thesis I am aware that the headteacher Brett has moved on to another headship role, in a new school and local authority. It may well be that to judge the success of a school leader is by assessing how much of a legacy is left behind. A new headteacher will bring the 'multiplicity of leadership experiences' to Explorer. What appears certain is that Explorer will inevitably change and evolve.

This research suggested that one of the biggest constraints was the type of pupil that was sent to Explorer. This was evident from the staff discussions and interviews. The programme that is designed for a short term intervention before re-integrating pupils back into mainstream provision is not particularly suitable for those with extreme special educational needs. Similarly the long term success of pupils staying in mainstream provision may well be hampered by the 'moving on' of pupils who are most ready, rather than when the individual pupil is ready, as Explorer is part of a bigger local authority educational 'machine'. Local authority politics and structures are a challenge for Explorer. Alongside the movement of pupils in and out of Explorer, is the possibility of 're-structuring' and re-assessing of financing that could constrain the pedagogical power of Explorer. Outdoor learning is an area that is often perceived as expensive to run and questionable

over its efficacy in helping young people to conform and behave. My research has found that outdoor learning is a fundamental aspect of the Explorer approach to running a PRU, and a fundamental contributor to the success of the pupils. The curriculum experience would be seriously denigrated if it were removed.

There is an apparent divide between the indoor and outdoor staff and this constrains the levels of success. A good example of this was in the use of the PASS data generated as well as the consistency of use and application of the REACH target setting. It may well be that finding space for consistency and communication between staff is an area that could be addressed. It may be that the ideal approach to ensure maximum success would be to ensure the pupils receive the same two members of staff all week, and that the outdoor learning is more fully integrated into the curriculum and schemes of work that are followed.

One of the main physical constraints experienced at Explorer is the facilities. DfES (2007: 21) state 'Outdoor spaces should provide for physical education, social and recreational use. Some pupils may need access to a safe outdoor space for respite'. Additionally DfES (2007: 17) state that access to a separate protected and (partially covered) outdoor space for social and recreational use should be provided. About nine square metres per pupil is recommended for social and recreational use. Explorer has no outside space and as such the pupils are constrained by four walls, with no space to go and 'let off steam' or move away from issues they may find stressful. The exception to this is the days on which the pupils have outdoor learning. Ofsted (2008a: 5) state that Explorer do not allow these constraints to 'impede students' achievements'. Additionally they point out that 'there is capital funding for a new purpose-built regional PRU'. So perhaps the future looks positive in this respect for Explorer. Overall, Explorer 'overcomes its accommodation difficulties in a range of imaginative ways by delivering its curriculum through off-site settings' (Ofsted, 2008a: 5).

5.7. Summary of Conclusions

In conducting an exploratory case study into a 'successful' PRU, it seems reasonable to come to a conclusion about whether the Explorer PRU is successful, or not! For the reader of this thesis, I

suggest that you may wish to draw your own conclusions from my exploration and perspective as written in this work since conceptions of success are subjective.

From my perspective I was looking for aspects of Explorer that suggested 'success' and I believe there are success stories within my findings. It is important to acknowledge that 'success' is not an absolute or fixed entity and has multiple constructions for multiple individuals. It appears to exist for pupils, staff, leaders and the PRU as a whole in a state of flux, is multi-faceted and complex in its character. Success appears to be 'sensed' by the participants at Explorer, and from my perspective this is most evident from the **deep relationships** that are discussed above. From an educational judgemental perspective, Ofsted report Explorer to be one of the top 7% of PRUs within the country (Ofsted, 2008b), so in comparative terms it is successful.

Having arrived at this stage, I believe that best way for me to summarise the aspects of success that I have encountered on my exploration of the Explorer PRU is through a visual map. Presented below in Figure XII is a simplification of some of the areas that I have identified and explored above as constituent parts of the Explorer PRU. The lines of connection are not meant to represent absolute or unique connections, but are drawn representatively to suggest some order in how these parts interact.

The map is represented in this manner, although it could be drawn and conceptualised in a number of ways. The *Leadership* 'keystone' is drawn at the top as I suggest that this purposeful leadership holds the whole Explorer operation together. The people, their interactions and the curriculum, in its fullest sense, are I suggest the key features around which Explorer's success, in its multiple constructions, are founded.

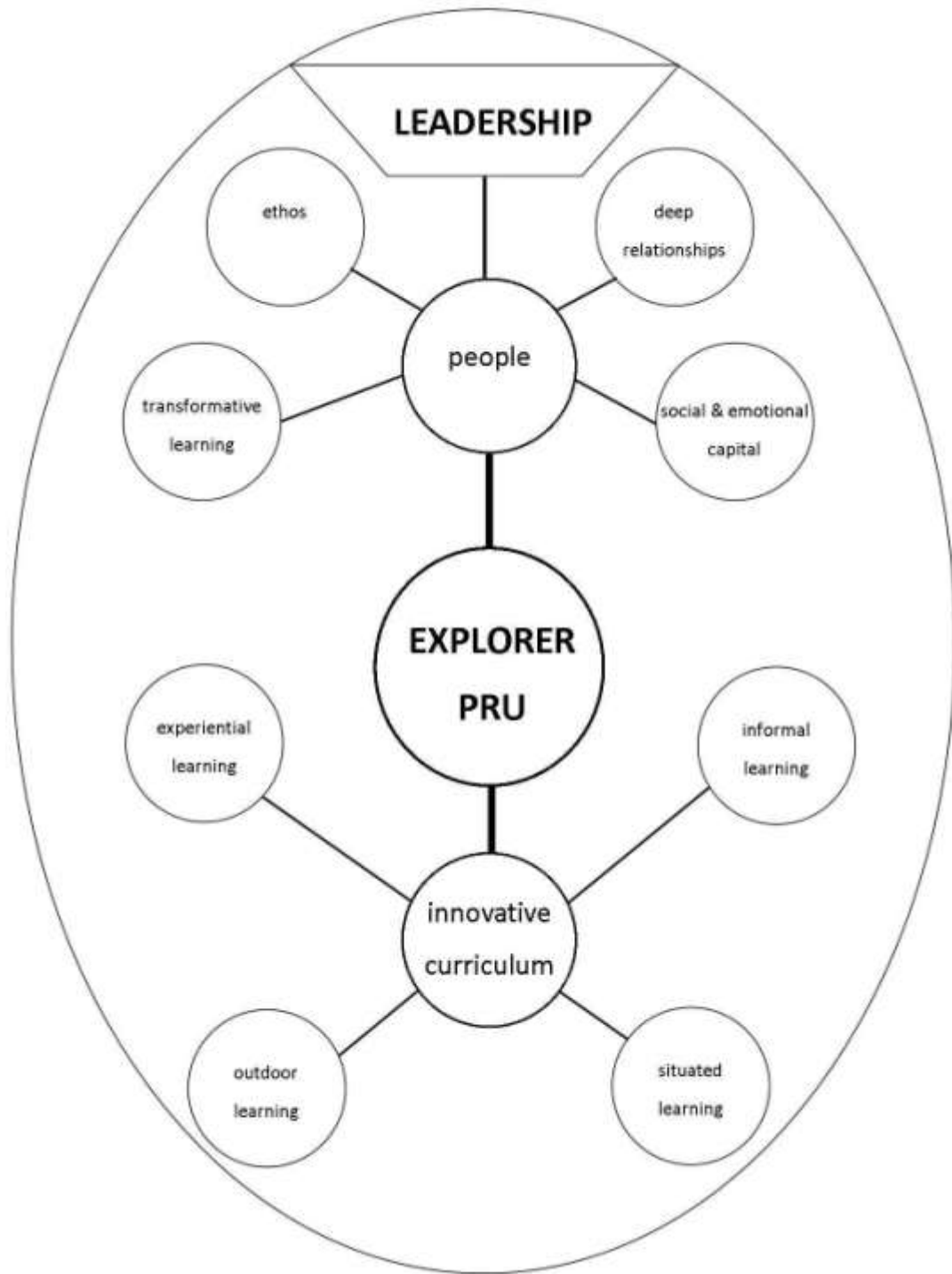


Figure XII – Conclusion Summary Visual Map

5.8. Personal Reflections

The research emerged and evolved over time. It was a continual process of both reflection on action and reflection in action as suggested by Schon (1983). The whole process has been a journey of discovery and at times it has been both exhausting and exhilarating (see research diary 20/6/2008, appendix S). It is a classic statement to say that if I was beginning again I wouldn't start from here! I have been fully engaged and intrigued by the people and processes I have encountered at Explorer, and would certainly wish to take that research journey again. I have made a number of suggestions of where further research could be considered.

5.8.1. Evaluation of Methods

The research process has been one of personal growth and development of skills, knowledge and understanding about research as well as my own capabilities. I never imagined that I would interview pupils in a PRU. Now I know I can help them be heard, I believe that pupil voice is important and I have the confidence to further develop the video diary as a means of doing this. I have learned from this process and now make some specific observations.

5.8.1.1. Pupil Video Diaries

The use of a laptop computer to simulate the video diary in a Big Brother style was an original and pragmatic solution to collecting this data, but how well did it actually serve to capture the pupil voice? My reality was removed from the outline that Noyes (2004: 197) offers, as in his research the children had access to the diary room on one day a week and were 'free to use it whenever they wanted to'. My research and access to the pupils was by negotiation with the headteacher. The physical structure of the Explorer PRU and the associated behaviours of children therein, meant that this was not a realistically manageable option, because of the available space and potential misuse of unsupervised equipment.

Another video approach I considered is detailed by Rich & Patashnick (2002). They use a qualitative research method that investigates health conditions from the patient's perspective. Their primary data consists of visual illness narratives, video diaries made by participants of their experiences living with and managing chronic medical conditions. This is based on the reasoned assumption that if clinicians are more aware of patients' daily experiences living with disease, they could provide medical care that was more responsive, sensitive, and effective. This would seem

reasonable to extrapolate to an educational context. The content of the audiovisual data is logged as text comprising 'objective descriptions' of information that is visible or audible and 'subjective accounts' of what is observed, relating the participant's perspective, emotional tone and psychosocial dynamics of a scene. A camera in the patient's daily living environment presents an opportunity for observation of disease in its 'real life' manifestations. This approach was not adopted in my research for two reasons. Firstly, how the ethical implications of this approach could be managed by the PRU as well as myself led to the headteacher not supporting this strategy. Secondly, I did not necessarily have the physical resource to provide in excess of fifteen cameras with the potential for damage and loss. This approach is used by Michael Rich in his role as associate professor at Harvard Medical School and I suggest that his resources for research are probably greater than mine for this doctoral study. None the less, I suggest that this approach could be useful and provide for a fuller and more complete understanding of the pupils life's experiences, and as a result be better informed and prepared in how to best educate them.

The reality of the Video Diary was that I became known as 'Big Brother' and featured on the class whiteboard in the timetable for the day. This approach gave me the opportunity to have a number of *semi-structured interviews* with the pupils, recording them using the video diary computer. The laptop computer and animated data recording prompts acted as a hook to engage the pupils and helped me develop my rapport with them. As such it was a useful and successful method. However, the limitations of 'hearing the pupil voice' became apparent during the video diary interview sessions, as well as their subsequent analysis. Pupils at Explorer were not necessarily the most articulate or eloquent about their thoughts and feelings, indeed there were limitations on their ability to analyse and explore who they were and how they felt even before any abstract conceptualisation about their place at and the purpose of Explorer. Upon reflection and further reading I would consider a number of additional approaches in future, especially if I was focussing upon the pupil voice. For example, Harper (2002) makes the case for photo elicitation. This is based on the simple idea of inserting a photograph into a research interview. The difference between interviews using images and text, and interviews using words alone lies in the ways we respond to these two forms of symbolic representation. Harper (2002) argues that photo elicitation produces a different kind of information and evokes information, feelings, and memories that are due to the photograph's particular form of representation. I suggest that this could be useful to help explore the pupils' experiences at Explorer.

Additionally, it occurred to me that these pupils had traits that were reminiscent of much younger children and I would consider the Mosaic approach developed by Clark & Moss (2001) for working with children in the Early Years. The Mosaic approach has been developed for listening to young children's perspectives on their daily lives. The Mosaic approach is a multi-method one in which children's own photographs, tours and maps can be combined with talking and observing to gain deeper understanding of children's perspectives on the places in their early childhood. Clark & Moss (2001) also acknowledge that it also has potential for use with older children, particularly those with communication difficulties. As such this ingenious approach could add depth to the creative use of video diaries that I employed.

5.8.1.2. Leadership Interviews

The semi-structured interviews were a useful research method. I interviewed the headteacher and the director of outdoor learning as key leaders of the Explorer PRU. There are two points I suggest are worth noting. Firstly, I did not have full access to all the leadership team at Explorer. One of the deputy headteachers, *Liam*, was also a class teacher with whom I worked quite extensively. He featured as a member of the staff focus group. The other deputy headteacher, *Charlie*, was not forthcoming in the research process, neither leadership interviews nor staff focus group. Clearly, an ethical approach to research entails a voluntary participation in the process. This was a limiting factor though for this study, particularly because of the pupils' explicit dislike of him as a teacher expressed in Table 10, section 4.3.1. and as such I was not able to fully explore this apparent dissonance. Whilst the interviews and their transcripts were 'member checked', more fully for one participant than the other, there are areas of interest and layers of meaning here that are not fully explored and perhaps Schwandt's (1994) Hermeneutic Circle could have been a method of more thoroughly researching the leaders of Explorer.

5.8.1.3. Staff Focus Group

This was a session that was limited by time and access. I was given approximately one and a half hours during one of the staff training days in the summer term. As I was aware that there was a broad spread of issues, we covered seven, to explore I approached this in a creative, active and

experiential manner. That my research was mutually beneficial was highlighted at the end of the session with positive comments and suggestions that 'it was like a training session' and 'it's good to sit and talk about our shared views'. This was particularly noticeable when reviewing constructions of "success" as featured in Table 34 section 4.5.3. There was consensus that Explorer was successful and this Focus Group allowed for an exploration of meanings, interpretations and assumptions to be shared.

5.8.1.4. Field Notes from Research diaries

These notes became an essential part of my research data. There was a lot of my time at the PRU waiting to engage in the formal data collection. As a result my informal observations and conversations that I recorded in my diary provided fuel for my thinking. In future I would invest greater resource into developing and detailing these notes. These 'memos' are supported in the literature. Corbin and Strauss (2008) define memos as written records of analysis related to the formulation of theory and a common theme is that they are ways of getting ideas down on paper and using this as a way to facilitate reflection and analytic insight.

According to Miles and Huberman (1994) memos are essential techniques for qualitative analysis. They do not just report data but tie together different pieces of data into a recognisable form. They consider memos to be a powerful 'sense-making' tool in the hands of a researcher (Miles & Huberman, 1994: 72). My notes undoubtedly helped me make sense of this research but for future research I shall endeavour to keep a fuller commentary on all the processes and actions involved in making sense of the data and exploring the research question.

5.8.2. Managing Chaos!

I have also gained a sense of certainty and reassurance from my course director Cheryl Hunt. I am unsure precisely when in the last four years, but the idea of 'research amidst the chaos' as a normal state came into my consciousness. Her paper (Hunt, 2001) discussed 'moving from chaos to concepts' and is certainly illuminating and empowering for me as a student. In addition to that I recall a group conversation where she once stated how she 'had come to regard chaos as a normal state and had learned to embrace it'. Adopting that as a mindset has been extremely positive for

me, as I have journeyed through the doctoral process. The chaos of births, deaths, marriages and moving house have all been part of my complex and chaotic family life of a working professional educator. For giving me the calming positive outlook on a chaotic lifestyle, I am most grateful.

5.9. Recommendations

As Stake (1995: 7) points out it appears that, 'case study seems a poor basis for generalisation'. However, 'people can learn much that is general for single cases' (Stake, 1995: 85). As such there are three areas of what I suggest are good practice detailed below for the reader to consider. The reader is then able to make their own 'naturalistic generalisation' (Stake, 1995: 85) about these areas. The naturalistic generalisation is influenced by the work of Parlett & Hamilton (1987) on illuminative evaluation who consider them to be about understandings that are private. I propose these three areas for the reader to (privately) consider and then to generalise to their own experience and circumstance.

5.9.1. Good Practice

- 5.9.1.1. Leadership: this is based on a clear educational philosophy, firmly held and espoused, which centres on social justice and is about 'fairness'. This is operationalised in a clear and simple 'rights and responsibilities' approach to (good) behaviour and learning which is embedded into the daily routines within the PRU. Those interested in good behaviour may find this worthy of consideration.
- 5.9.1.2. Deep Relationships: staff develop these emotionally intimate relationships based upon an altruistic sense of caring and a genuine empathy for the pupils. This intimacy covers the special affective bond of understanding, communication, trust and support, between both pupils and staff. These types of relationship may be useful when working with those pupils who are, or have the potential to be, disaffected.
- 5.9.1.3. Engaging Curriculum: the 'innovative' curriculum was centred on engaging the pupils through an approach that provided for rich and deep experiences in powerful learning environments to be experienced by the pupils, both formally and informally. The emphasis on a traditional academic approach was secondary to that of engaging the pupils so that they could value themselves, others and learning.

5.9.2. Further Research

I have suggested throughout this chapter areas that this exploratory case study has highlighted as possibilities for further investigation. These are summarised below. This is not suggested as an exhaustive list and the reader may well be curious about other aspects and issues pertinent to their own context.

5.9.2.1. Transformative Learning: Is the Explorer experience viewed as a single traumatic experience or a collection of incremental transformations? In other words, what is the nature of the Explorer experience to make it *transformative*?

5.9.2.2. Deep relationships: What is the nature of the loving relationship? Perhaps this could be explored or measured using Yela's (2006) concept of the affective bond; understanding, communication, trust and support. Or perhaps the Parental Bonding Instrument of Parker *et al* (1979) may provide a useful starting point to inform a research strategy.

5.9.2.3. What are the long lasting dispositions of Explorer pupils? A follow up study looking at the perceived effects of the time spent at Explorer. This could be an attitudinal study at the next stage of the pupils' education, or perhaps even longer term follow up. There are anecdotal accounts by staff of ex-pupils 'doing well'. It could certainly explore the belief that change is 'seeded' as expressed by Doug in the staff focus group (appendix R) when he states:

The values ... the values which are taught, and the values which they hear, and listen and understand, I think, I believe sits in them as a seed and matures once they are ready to hear it for themselves

5.9.2.4. What is the nature of the 'affective economy' at Explorer; how is it constructed and what does it contribute?

5.9.2.5. Powerful learning environments: what is it about the Explorer construction of outdoor learning that makes it a powerful environment?

5.9.2.6. What external factors, including people and policies, affect the leadership and management operation of Explorer?

Appendices

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Appendix A

Anonymised Copy of Ofsted (2008a) Report

At Explorer, all students are White British. The proportion of students eligible for a free school meal exceeds the national average. Boys very significantly outnumber girls. There are four students in public care. The centre has achieved the Healthy School Award, the National Leading Aspect Award, and accreditation with the Adventurous Activities Licensing Authority (Ofsted, 2008a). The overall effectiveness of the school receives an Ofsted 'Grade: 1' and it is described as an outstanding centre. For a copy of the Ofsted inspection judgements please see annex A below.

Students enter the PRU switched off from learning and feeling a deep sense of failure. Creative leadership, an innovative curriculum and teaching geared to students' emotional and social needs successfully engage them with learning. They are equipped with the survival skills required to go back to mainstream schools and be successful. The proportion of students reintegrated into mainstream schools is very high. The vast majority sustain their placements and succeed academically. Achievement is outstanding. Students who rarely attended their schools before taking up placements in the centre attend regularly, because they enjoy learning for the first time. Their behaviour improves very significantly as they learn to manage their anger and frustration. Overall, behaviour is good. The outdoor curriculum enables students to develop good self-esteem and to accrue the values required to access the National Curriculum. As students begin to believe in themselves, they take off with their learning. They make rapid gains in reading, writing and mathematics. They make faster progress than is typical of their peers in mainstream schools. However, standards are overall below those expected for students of their age, reflecting the gaps many experienced in their education prior to entering the centre.

Teaching and learning are outstanding. Relationships are excellent and a learning environment exists where students feel safe to take risks and not be embarrassed when they make mistakes. They overcome the denial they have about their weaknesses with literacy and numeracy and soak up learning like a sponge through challenging and fun activities. Staff take time to find out what went wrong for students in their previous schools. Students are then involved in shaping targets to improve their behaviour and attendance. Consequently, they have genuine ownership of their goals and, on the whole, respond very positively. They come to realise that their rights mean that they also have to take responsibility as citizens. Staff continually remind students about the

expectations of the real world. The majority of students respond to this challenge and attendance for a centre of this kind is outstanding. The curriculum strikes an excellent balance between meeting students' emotional needs and raising their academic achievement. Use of the outdoor environment enables students, many of whom enter the centre with a 'self-destruct button' mentality, to become very positive in their outlook on life. The care, guidance and support the PRU provides is outstanding, as is students' personal development. Parents and carers are delighted with what the centre achieves for their children. They are thrilled that their children's involvement in crime and substance misuse often ceases because the centre tackles their children's deep-rooted unhappiness.

Students say that they feel safe. The centre enables students to adopt safe practices in risky situations and meets their emotional and physical health needs exceptionally well. There is effective counselling and excellent support from a range of external agencies to support students with their emotional difficulties. The centre promotes students' physical health through a wide range of exciting outdoor pursuits such as canoeing and rock climbing. Students learn how to plan, shop for and cook nutritious meals on a tight budget. Induction procedures are excellent, because home visits prior to students' entry find out what really makes them tick and engage parents and carers in supporting their children to learn. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students is outstanding. Teachers challenge students' homophobic and racist attitudes and the majority of students re-think their views and change their attitudes. Leadership and management are also outstanding. The passion shown by all staff and the highly skilled management committee lie at the heart of this very successful centre.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	----------------

Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1
---	---

Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	1

¹Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 – Exceptionally low.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1

The attendance of learners	1
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1

The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Appendix B - Pupil Attitudes to Self and School – Factor Summary Descriptions

PASS FACTOR SUMMARY

FACTOR 1

Feelings about school. This measure samples a young person's feelings of inclusion in, or alienation from, the school community. It is what the Americans call 'School Connectedness'. A low score on F1 can indicate feelings of social exclusion and also potentially bullying.

FACTOR 2

Perceived Learning Capability. This measures the feelings of success (or lack of success) that a young person has. It is a recently introduced measure which seeks to capture the feelings experienced in the 'here and now'. It offers a snapshot of a learner's unfolding impressions of her 'self efficacy' and its value lies in the fact that it can provide early warning of demoralization and possibly, later, disaffection.

FACTOR 3

Self regard. This is a much more robust measure than F2 of the learner's sense of self worth measured in the long term. The generic equivalent is called 'self esteem' but is much more focussed on learning and consequently has a greater correlation with achievement than standard measures of self esteem commonly used in other environments, such as the workplace for example. In simple terms, it can be thought of as a cumulative account of the many F2 'snapshots' collected over a period of time. It would be feasible for a learner to feel uneasy about his current learning capabilities in the immediate short term while retaining a general impression of himself as likely to be successful in the long term.

FACTOR 4

Preparedness for learning. These questions prompt young people to stand back from their learning situation and ask themselves 'Do I have the tools to do the learning job?'. It is mainly about study skills, including attentiveness, powers of concentration and emotional responses to learning demands. It would be quite possible for a learner to score very low on this measure while retaining strong self regard. Of all the factors this one correlates most closely with behavioural difficulties in the classroom

FACTOR 5

Attitudes to teachers. This measures a young person's perceptions of the relationships they have with the adults they work with in school. Interestingly, of all the factors this one is the most positive in terms of maximum response nationally.

FACTOR 6

General work ethic. The first of two motivational measures. It is about motivation to succeed in life. It is about purpose and direction, not just at school but beyond.

FACTOR 7

Confidence in learning. This is a measure of perseverance in the face of challenge. Does a student see themselves as giving up at the first hurdle or do they see themselves as having 'stickability'? It differs from

F2 and F4 in its focus on specific learning situations. A student may agree with the prompt, 'I enjoy doing difficult work at school' while in the grip of a present anxiety about how well equipped she is to tackle it successfully or disaffection with many of the learning situations she is encountering currently..

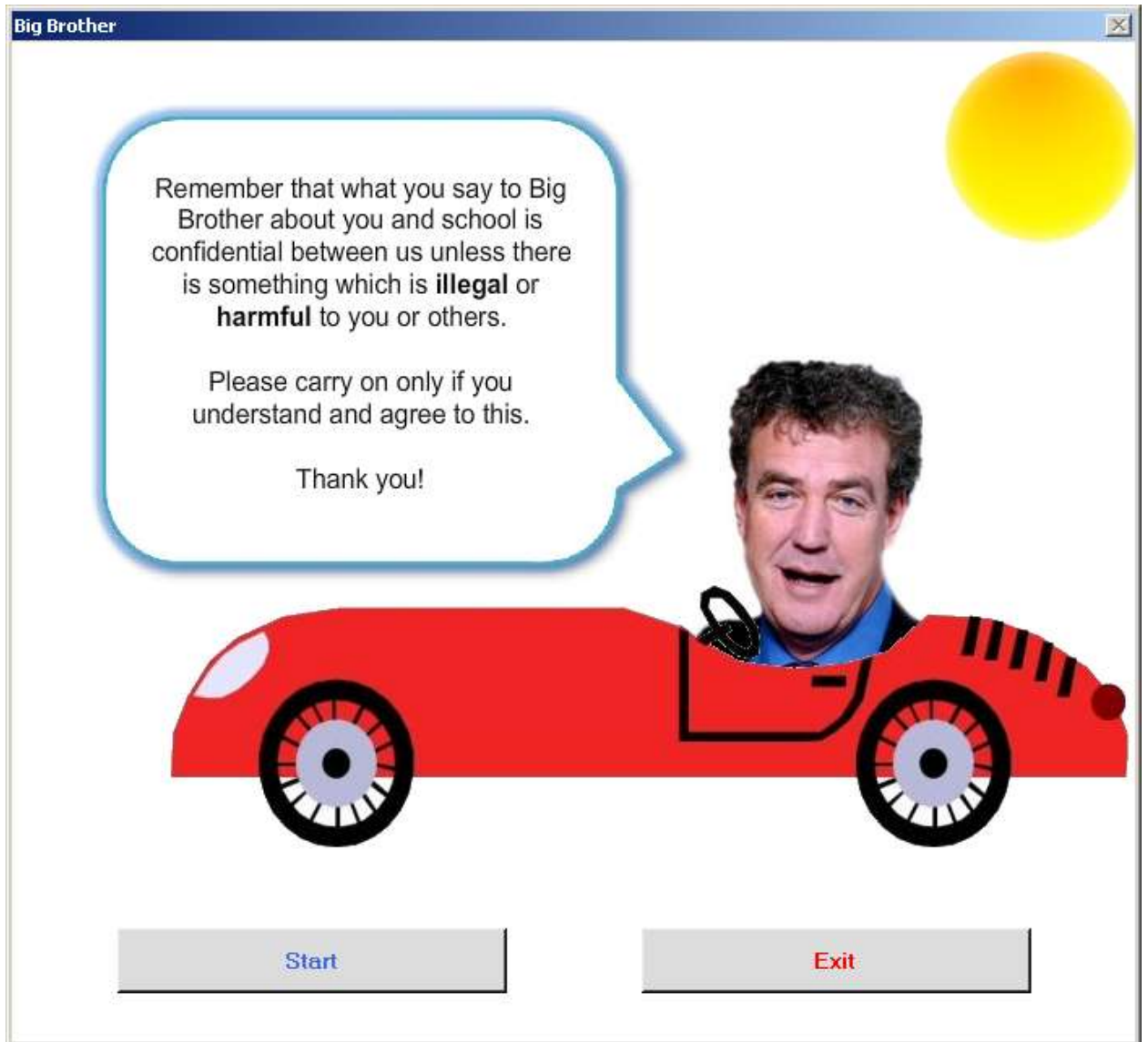
FACTOR 8

Attitudes to attendance. This factor is self explanatory. It is very highly correlated with an individual's actual attendance.

FACTOR 9

Response to curriculum demands. The second motivational measure. This time learners are asked to focus more narrowly on their motivation to undertake and complete tasks set within the school's curriculum.


Appendix C - Video Diary Consent Screen





Note: the face making the statement is the television presenter and journalist Jeremy Clarkson

Appendix D - Video Diary Question Screen – Week 1 Icebreakers

Big Brother Diary Room: Week 1



Welcome to the Big Brother diary room



Answer the following:

1. Please tell me your name.
2. What's your favourite football team?
3. What do you like to watch on TV?
4. What's your favourite food?
5. What do you like to do when you are not at school?
6. What music do you listen to?
7. Who would you like to be like when you leave school? Why is that?

When you're ready to answer the questions - click the start button. Once you've answered as many as possible, click the stop button and the Big Brother diary room will close!

Start Stop

Note: the face posing the questions is the television presenter and journalist Jeremy Clarkson

Appendix E – Leadership Interview Questions

LEADERSHIP QUESTIONS ~ INTERVIEW

1. Who are you and what is your position and how long have you been here?
2. Why are you at Explorer? How did you come to be here?
3. What do you think and feel about Explorer as a school?
4. What makes Explorer *unique*?
5. What is the curriculum and behaviour management based upon? **Where** did it come **from**? Theory, practice, reflection??
6. Are you able to help the pupils be **successful**?
 - a. What does *being successful* mean to you? Does this include returning to a regular mainstream school?
 - b. How do you do this?
7. Do you think that *certain pupils* do better than others at this type of school?
 - a. What type of pupils are they?
 - b. Why is that?
 - c. Which ones are NOT successful?
8. What does the *P.A.S.S. data* tell you?
 - a. What are the most important factors?
9. What do you think about the **REACH** scores.
 - a. How do they help you?
 - b. How do you feel about doing them?
 - c. Do you always enjoy doing them?
 - d. Why twice a day? Ever feel that this is too often?
10. How and why do you use *'feeling positive'* or *'self-esteem'*?
 - a. How does this help you?
 - b. How does this help pupils?
 - c. Do you believe that this is a changeable trait? (neo-Dweckian?)
11. What do you think about the *'feeling positive'* targets that Roger sets?
 - a. How does making this explicit affect things?
 - b. Do other staff do this?
 - c. Do you believe they help pupils feel more positive? How do you know?
12. The Explorer curriculum has **Outdoor Learning** lessons!
 - a. What do you think about these? esp in relation to the others
 - b. How do you justify them?
 - c. Could these objectives be achieved through other means?
 - d. Do they help pupils be successful at school? How?
 - e. Do they help with behaviour? How?

Factor 1 - Feelings about school
Factor 2 - Perceived Learning Capability
Factor 3 - Self-regard as a learner
Factor 4 - Preparedness for learning
Factor 5 - Attitudes to teachers
Factor 6 - General work ethic
Factor 7 - Confidence in learning
Factor 8 - Attitude to attendance
Factor 9 - Response to curriculum demands

- f. Do they help with self esteem? How?
13. How would you **describe** and **explain** the pupil/staff **relationships** at Explorer?
 - a. Do staff have to be caring?
 - b. Do staff have lower expectations of young people – e.g. swearing, first names
 - c. Is poor behaviour seen or treated as a disability?
 - d. How do you feel that the pupils view this relationship
 14. What are the characteristics of a good member of **Explorer staff** – TOP 5 rank order?
 15. What **motivates you?** To stay? To keep working with PRU pupils?
 16. What else about your experience do you think I should know about?

Appendix F – Adult Consent Form



SCHOOL OF EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING

PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH

The purpose of this research is to explore and evaluate the Explorer approach to operating a Pupil Referral Unit and illuminate the various aspects of the PRU. This process of '*illuminative evaluation*' means that how the staff understand Explorer (the processes, plans and interactions with pupils, in light of the underpinning philosophy, aims and curriculum ideals) is particularly important.

The aim of the **Focus Group/Interview** is that you can talk freely about yourself, your thoughts, your feelings and how you understand Explorer's operation. Thank you!

CONSENT FORM

I have been fully informed about the aims and purposes of the project.

I understand that:

- ✓ I do not have to play a part in this research project and, if I do choose to participate, I may at any stage withdraw from joining in
- ✓ I have the right to refuse permission for the publication of any information about me
- ✓ any information which I give will be used solely for the purposes of this research project, which may include academic publications. It will not be passed on.
- ✓ all information I give will be treated as **confidential**
- ✓ the researcher will make every effort to preserve my **anonymity**

.....

(Signature of participant)

.....

(Date)

.....

(Printed name of participant)

One copy of this form will be kept by the participant; a second copy will be kept by the researcher

Contact phone number of researcher 01752 636700 x5655

If you have any concerns about the project that you would like to discuss, please contact:

Mark Leather mleather@marjon.ac.uk

OR

Sue Chedzoy S.M.Chedzoy@exeter.ac.uk

Data Protection Act: The University of Exeter is a data collector and is registered with the Office of the Data Protection Commissioner as required to do under the Data Protection Act 1998. The information you provide will be used for research purposes and will be processed in accordance with the University's registration and current data protection legislation. Data will be confidential to the researcher(s) and will not be disclosed to any unauthorised third parties without further agreement by the participant. Reports based on the data will be in anonymised form.

Appendix G – Pupil Consent Form



SCHOOL OF EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING

PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH

The purpose of this research is to find out how ***you feel*** about ***yourself***, as a young person at this school called ***Explorer***. In particular, how what the staff do and say with you at ***Explorer*** makes you feel about yourself and school?

The aim of the **'Big Brother Video Diary'** is that ***you*** can talk **freely** about ***yourself*** and your ***feelings***, without being interrupted, overheard or stopped by anyone at school. BB wants to know what you have to say! If you disclose specific information about illegal or dangerous things happening to you in your life, BB has a duty of care to pass on concerns he may have as any of your teachers would. But please talk freely about ***you, yourself and your feelings*** and these will not be shared with others. Thank you!

CONSENT FORM

I have been fully informed about the aims and purposes of the project. I understand that:

- ✓ I do not have to play a part in this research project and, if I do choose to participate, I may at any stage withdraw from joining in
- ✓ I have the right to refuse permission for the publication of any information about me
- ✓ any information which I give will be used solely for the purposes of this research project, which may include academic publications. It will not be passed onto the school
- ✓ all information I give will be treated as confidential
- ✓ the researcher will make every effort to preserve my anonymity

.....
(Signature of participant)

.....
(Date)

.....
(Printed name of participant)

One copy of this form will be kept by the participant; a **second** copy will be kept by the researcher

If you have any concerns about the project that you would like to discuss, please contact:

Mark Leather mleather@marjon.ac.uk Contact phone number of researcher 01752 636700
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Appendix H - Transcript of Video Diary: Dave

1. Tell me your story of how and why you got to be at Explorer?

The reason I have to come to Explorer is because I kicked a teacher in the nuts! At my old school Mr XXXXX who is a fat tosser.

- a. How long have you been here at Explorer?

Nearly two years

- b. What was your old school like?

Crap! Because I've got a bunch of wankers for teachers

- c. Was there a uniform?

Yep, and that was crap because you've always got to put on a tie

- d. What lessons did you like?

NO, none at all

- e. Were there any you hated?

Yes, every single one ... except maths ... because the teacher was *class*

- f. Were there any teachers you liked?

Maths teacher ... because they always used to give me rewards for doing my work

- g. Were there any teachers you disliked?

Just the one

- h. Did you have friends there?

Yeah loads...

- i. Have you still got friends there?

Yes and I see them every day ... they live right next to me

- j. Did you feel safe there?

No ... because I always used to get beat up

- k. Did you enjoy yourself there?

I enjoyed football.... in lessons and at lunchtime

- l. What happened to bring you to Explorer?

I kicked a teacher in the nuts.... he was peeing me off, so I swore at him called him a fat wanker kicked him in the nuts and then ran... and had all the teachers chasing after me the teacher was calling me a prick and that lot

- m. Who was responsible for you ending up at Explorer?

Me... me and the teacher

- n. Who helped you?

No... nah... no-one

- o. What other things happened to you, outside of school that affected you?

I got into fights... people winding me up so I got into fights.... I got in trouble with the police.... I set a barn on fire because they pissed me off ... and it's my last warning from the police... and if I get in trouble again I go to prison... but I haven't been in trouble with the police for about 3 years now

p. Anything else you want to tell me?

Nope ...

1. What do you think about Explorer as a school?
Really good... especially the outdoor ed. ... because you go surfin and that lot... it's really class
2. What do you learn about yourself when you go outdoors?
You learn new stuff and that lot... learn how to surf, how to ride a mountain bike properly, how to canoe properly... how to capsize yourself... loads of stuff.
3. And you really enjoy that?
Yeah.
4. And does it help you with your REACH targets?
Yeah.... if you weren't here [doing REACH] then you were still at your normal school then you'd just be a little shit... but with here like last year when I come here I was a right little shit but now I've changed my behaviour a hell of a lot...
5. So why is that?
The staff here help me... they help me with misbehaving and that lot... it's like oh sorry miss and then just get back on with the lessons.
6. Have you learnt how to control yourself?
Yeah... a lot better...
7. Do you want to leave here and go to mainstream school?
I don't want to leave yet... I'd rather wait until the end of term, then go to TXXXXXX
8. Do you think you have been successful here?
Yeah... if I leave here and go to TXXXXXX
9. So if someone came along and said to Brett and Rich this going outdoors is just a bit of a treat and you're spoiling these kids and these kids shouldn't have this, it's not fair and it's too expensive, you can't do it anymore, what would you say to that person?
It's none of your business, if my school want to do it then they are allowed... they don't pay for it the government does so why don't you shut your big mouth?
Explorer should definitely keep going outdoors... YEP!
10. So what is it about the staff here at Explorer?
Some of them are nice and some are wankers. Sarah's nice... Liam's nice... Rosie and Chloe's nice... Lloyd and Rich are nice... Brett is nice and Charlie is a prick.

11. So only one member of staff you don't like? Why?
Yep... he's just been a little fucker... he gets me to do my lessons when I'm in a mood, he grabs me and tries to chuck me out the door... so I tried and legged it...
12. So was that just once he did that?
Yep... but I still don't like him...
13. Thinking about the other staff... do you think they care about you?
Yeah... they're interested in me... they help me
14. How does Explorer compare to your last school? Was there anyone there to help you?
No... my last school was a load of shit.
15. What do you think about the 'feeling positive' target that Rich sets you?
It's alright
16. Do they help you feel more positive?
Yeah...
17. Do your other teachers talk about 'feeling positive' or 'self-esteem'?
Nope... no, not at all... except for Liam [class teacher]... that's about it.
18. So have you got friends here?
Yeah... Stuart, Nathan... teachers. Rest of them are dicks...
19. So if you don't like people, how do you deal with them?
I stay away from them... that's the best way for me...
20. So in terms of Explorer, you reckon it's been good for you?
Yeah... I wouldn't mind going back to school next week just to have a look... yeah Explorer has really helped
21. What do you think about your daily REACH targets?
Boring... you've got to do it every morning and every afternoon... it's crap... can't see why we do it... I reckon we should just go home... just do it once a day, then it'd be easier
22. You have Outdoor Learning lessons! What do you think about these; compared to indoor lessons?
I like them... indoor lessons are shit...
23. So what is it about the outdoor lessons that you like?
Rich... he's class... he's funny... especially the way he rides [a mountain bike]... I laugh at him and he laughs at me especially when I fell off in the puddle.
24. So do you think Rich cares about you and wants you to do well?
Yeah... he wants me to get a good job and that lot
25. Do you think that other staff care about you?
Yeah... Liam does and Sarah does...
26. Do you think that it's important that staff care about you here?

Yeah, cos if they don't care about people... if the adults don't help you, how are the little ones going to learn? The staff here really help me.

27. So what do you think you have learnt about yourself here?

How I can get on with my work... and that lot...

28. How has Explorer helped you be more successful in life?

Yeah... helluva a lot... when I was 12 I used to be a right little bastard I used to go around punching everyone, smashing stuff up... but now I've stopped it.... last time I smashed something up was about 3 weeks ago and that weren't my fault, I dropped my TV and it kind of exploded...

29. So what do you reckon the best bit of Explorer is?

Outdoor ed. ... and swimming ... and if you don't misbehave you don't get 'scluded so you don't miss out...

30. Anything else you want to tell or ask me today?

You are the weakest link! GoodBYE!

Appendix I - Transcript of Video Diary: Stuart

PRE PRU Stuart

1. Tell me your story of how and why you got to be at Explorer?

Loads and loads and loads of reasons....

a. How long have you been here at Explorer?

Since last Christmas [18 months]

b. What was your old school like?

Boring... I never really did the work so I got myself kicked out... not do the work be stupid..

c. Was there a uniform?

Nope...

d. What lessons did you like?

Geography, music and PE I liked geography because I like surfing and climbing and you need to know what's going on around you... and I liked music cos I like music and PE because it wasn't writing...

e. Were there any you hated?

Yes... French, English, maths... because they were boring

f. Were there any teachers you liked?

A couple... because they like understand you more... unlike other teachers who didn't help out and had a go at me when I didn't understand

g. Were there any teachers you disliked?

Yes.... the ones who didn't help me.... the snooty and smug teachers

h. Did you have friends there?

Yes

i. Have you still got friends there?

Yes

j. Did you feel safe there?

Yes

k. Did you enjoy yourself there?

Yes

l. What happened to bring you to Explorer?

Loads of different things [such as] letting French bangers off next to teachers, fighting

m. Who was responsible for you ending up at Explorer?

Me! Because how I acted

n. Who helped you at your old school?

No not really, I was supposed to have a TA but I never did...

- o. How do you feel now about your last school?
Not a lot. I don't really have any feelings for it... I don't care about it
- p. What other things happened to you, outside of school that affected you?
Yeah a few things... got into a bit of trouble
- q. Anything else you want to tell me?
Nope.

1. What do you think about Explorer as a school?
I like it!
2. Are you able to be successful here?
Yeah
3. What does being successful mean to you? Does this include returning to a regular mainstream school?
Yeah... I am going back to one soon...
4. How does Explorer compare to your last school?
I used to be a pratt in my other place... I've learnt how to behave here and I've learnt how to control myself when people are winding me up...
5. So has Explorer helped you grow up?
Yeah...
6. Have you got friends here?
Not really... all the kids are too immature...
7. How do you feel about being here?
It's alright... I get on well with the teachers... the work's pretty easy
8. So what are the staff like here compared to your previous school?
Some are Ok, some I don't reckon really know how to be teachers...
9. So whose good and why are they good?
Liam's good, he understands what's going on quite a lot, Lloyd's good for the same reason and Rich... I don't really think that Charlie or Rosie understand what's wrong with people and what help they need... it's like you're wrong you can't do that you'll lose REACH points... it's just telling you off...
10. So generally do you think that the staff care about you here?
Yeah... they want you to do well... and they make an effort to help...
11. Did the staff do that at your last school?
No not really... and that was really annoying
12. Why do you think the staff at your last school didn't help you?
Too busy and they didn't like me...
13. What do you think about your daily REACH targets and scores?
Fine... alright... good... a good way to reflect

14. Do you get fed up with doing them?
Occasionally... depends on what you've been doing and what kind of day you've had... if you've had a good day then there's not much point in doing it, if you've had a bad day then you can see what you have done wrong and how you can improve it...
15. Do you like going on Outdoor learning lessons with Rich?
Yeah... quite a lot
16. What do you think that you learn about yourself going outdoors?
Not a lot... just enjoy it...
17. Do you think it helps you to behave?
Not really... it's just like you can forget about everything else...
18. So if someone came along to Brett and Rich and said 'this taking pupils outdoors it's too much of a treat, they don't deserve it, they don't learn anything we are going to stop this.' What would you say?
It would be a bad thing... but I dunno what I would say to them...
19. What do you think about the 'feeling positive' target that Rich sets you?
It helps you feel more positive...
20. What does feeling positive mean to you?
Happy! Not stressed out
21. So does talking and thinking about it help you, or not?
It helps me...
22. What do you think is the best bit of Explorer then?
I dunno really... I quite like it all
23. Do you think that some pupils do better than others here at Explorer?
Yeah... some pupils it makes it worse because they can't cope with people telling them what they have done wrong... they can't accept it and learn to just knock it on the head...
24. What has been your best day at Explorer?
The whole thing... all together

TRANSCRIPT ~ HEAD TEACHER INTERVIEW 1 JUNE 2008

Who are you and what is your position and how long have you been here?

My name is Brett Wilson and I am the headteacher of the Explorer pupil referral unit. I have been here four years. I started April 04. Explorer was a project not a pupil referral unit. It was a project set up by County Outdoors, the youth offending team for some out-of-school provision in a substantially different format to what it is now.

When did it become a PRU?

It actually became a PRU in September 04. I was taken on to turn it into a PRU. And that was to do with legislation, all out-of-school provision officially provided by authority needed to become registered recognize it as a pupil referral unit and the county proposed doing something with the Explorer project as it then was. They had this operation running, they had lots of useful staff, that could do useful things, but they lacked an educational focus, they were spending twice as much as they wanted to spend, and they advertised for someone who thought they could turn it into a viable PRU. I applied and got that job with my vision.

So how long had it been a project before you came along?

About a year ... may be slightly more than that, about a year and a half possibly.

So why are you at Explorer?

Well I guess corny answer ... I became a teacher because I wanted to make a difference. I have always worked in really challenging schools, all the schools I have worked in have been in special measures and serious weakness and they have all had kids that are from difficult rough estates, hard work, with the usual sort of stuff that goes with that territory and I am able to relate to those kinds of pupils very well, I guess it would be fair to say, so I have always worked with kids in a pastoral way I was initially a science teacher, I wasn't very interested in being a science teacher, I came into teaching for the pastoral side of things. During my first year I sidestepped and became a deputy head of house, then made my decision that was the side of things I

was going in to head of house head of year pastoral leader, so I have always been involved with helping kids that needed that sort of help I guess

So is this a culmination of that kind of journey? Is this like having your own ship to really influence and really make a difference?

Yes I think so! The reason I applied for the job really was it looked like an opportunity on paper to actually put forward a vision of how things could be. A lot of areas didn't necessarily have the right attitude, towards these sorts of kids. They put forward much more of a punishment attitude. One of my senior managers in my last school when I applied for the job actually said to me "it will be a real waste if you go to a place like that you should be teaching in a school." I remember thinking why would it be a waste? Why are these children less deserving? They need teachers, decent teachers and the right environment.

Would you say that this is the general ethos in mainstream schools that these pupils don't deserve good teaching or because they haven't behaved or because they don't conform they are less deserving?

I don't know if less deserving is the right term, but they certainly don't want them around the other kids they would much prefer them out of sight out of mind. Some schools are very inclusive and I think it is changed radically in the last few years. Some schools are still very punishment orientated, and they've got that very much, 'well they are naughty kids they don't deserve it, they should be punished, they just don't know how to behave'. No real consideration is given to what might be going on in their lives for some of our kids school is like really kind of irrelevant it really doesn't figure on the scale with the other problems they've got and a lot of teachers don't recognize that. I come from a very socialist kind of background; I was brought up in that kind of household.

So that's kind of quite normal for you?

Yes you should strive to make a difference.

What do you feel about Explorer as a school right now?

I think it's achieved a lot of the things we wanted it to achieve. We've created a really cohesive staff unit with a really genuine shared vision and we have a genuinely shared ethos. We go on various training courses quite regularly and we've had comments from people sometimes "Cor you must have brainwashed your staff! They all say the same sort of thing". I've said no we recruit staff that believe these things and we discover our ethos as a group. Our leadership I would say is very distributive everyone is responsible for what goes on and it's in a process of constant evolution. Change is the only constant. We have an ongoing laugh in Explorer that "oh it's Friday there must be something new happening" and the whole point is that is that we should always be evolving learning ourselves and changing our practice to make it better and better and better. I believe you can always improve.

What makes Explorer unique?

Totally shared staff ethos ... our key purpose is shared by all the staff ... and it's not what's been dictated to us from above ... we are doing what we know to be the right thing ... and I think more teachers in mainstream school want to do that sort of thing ... but they don't feel they can ... and I've created an atmosphere here where I allow my teachers to do the right thing, the thing they knew they wanted to do, and I deflected away anything that was going to say to them, no that is not okay you shouldn't do that, exam results matter, I said actually no we are here to do this job, this is our remit I'll make sure you can do that.

How do you know it's a shared vision then or a shared ethos?

From my perception it is shared ethos, I visit people and bases and teachers regularly, we have very regular meetings, and we are constantly reviewing what we do, I constantly asked them why are we here? What are we here for? What is our purpose? I feel we have a shared ethos.

So the curriculum that you teach and the behaviour management ... what's it based on? Where did it come from? Theory, practice, reflection? Where does it come from ... your personal experience, what you've read or what you've studied or ...?

The behaviour management approach is almost entirely based on the work of Bill Rodgers. And that was probably a huge influence from me in that when I was an NQT I was mentored by Bill Rodgers. As an NQT I went to a Bill Richs big presentation and he happened to come into our school during my first year and did three or four lessons

with the NQTs and funnily enough I've been through a B.Ed situation and had virtually no behaviour management input and this was a whole revelation actually this was an amazing sort of process and I took it, it was right, the whole purpose of being respectful, and recognizing rights and equality just resonated with me, so I was determined to see if it worked ... so rather than putting into effect as a lot of teachers did and then giving up if there was an issue, I carried on and carried on and at the end of a term of it my classes behaviour management was not an issue. I had all these difficult hard classes, but I didn't have these problems. I had a relationship with my class built on mutual respect

So that sentence you have “a relationship built on mutual respect” would you say that’s the kind of tag-line, the catchphrase to what it’s about?

Yes! We have that on our rights and responsibilities ... our fair class rules ... part of our way we operate, our fair class rules are built on mutual respect.

So would it be fair to say that Bill Rodgers is your role model? How would you describe him?

I would say a visionary who points out things that most people couldn't disagree with it ... it's obvious, it's common sense, and it is remembering to put it into practice all the time because you couldn't disagree with most of what he says. I was very much brought up, as I said earlier, in a socialist environment. I was brought up with respect for everyone and rights and responsibilities in a citizenship kind of environment, so to me there are certain things that aren't negotiable and those rights have responsibilities with them and we should all be working to improve and make that happen. That formed the basis of what I was doing and I found that by having good relationships with your kids, by finding out about them, by knowing what was going on, that they learned an awful lot more in my classroom, I could get more done in 45 minutes, than I could in an hour of another teacher who just came in sat down, sit there, that's yours I don't really care about what happened last night if you spend 15 minutes finding out about kids and chatting to them, being part of them, having fun in 45 minutes of proper work, as it were, you achieve twice as much.

Are you able to help pupils be successful here?

Yes!

Without question?

Yes! ... I guess that's a bit more optimism coming through. Yes I do believe that we can help our pupils to become more successful.

What does *being successful* mean to you?

Being successful means ... being more in control of their own emotional intelligence, being able to understand how to socially integrate with other people, to be aware of the rights and responsibilities that that come with them with regards to themselves and other people.

So how do you measure it?

We're in a measurement culture, I'm always reminded of the quote by Estelle Morris, when she left being education Minister, "we value what we can measure, but we also know that what you can't measure is more valuable" and therefore measuring this was something that when I took over Explorer was something that I really wanted to find a way of being able to say "I can show this, I can measure it" ... now there isn't a GCSE in being a nice person so how do you measure it? So that's how we devised REACH really. We wanted to devise a tracking scheme that will show things that mattered: respect, effort, achievement, choices, honesty, things that pupils were doing. They were self reflecting on them, that their peer group were agreeing or disagreeing, you know they came to mutual decisions on them, so they could look at, score themselves effectively so REACH and then PASS etc was quite a good tool for us.

So the REACH scores help you track a pupil's success?

It helps to track a pupil's progress and it's a useful motivational and reflective tool ... that tool is essentially teaching them to reflect ... and if they reflect, and keep on reflecting, they can change.

Does returning to a regular mainstream school count as success?

For quite a lot of our kids yes ... or moving on ... our kids shouldn't be here for very long ... everything we do is designed for short term turn around to help focus them on school learning ... the new curriculum in schools is all aimed at them. For us, kids moving into an appropriate provision and being successful is a fairly key indicator. Of course we have an issue with that in that they don't always get the appropriate provision ... that's beyond our control unfortunately ... but then hopefully how they deal with it is better because of what they have learned here.

Do you think that *certain pupils* do better than others here? and so what type of pupils are they, why is it? Or which ones are not successful?

The ones that are least successful are the ones that have far too many other issues and problems that aren't just related to school because you're only dealing with a small proportion of what the issue is. If the issue is well he always screams and shouts at teachers then you deal with that, if actually as soon as he is out of school he is then in a completely wrong group of people everything is going backwards and the value set is completely different to societal values and the family life is completely different then you're never going to be able to change the kid radically you might be up to teach him how to survive in a school setting but some of our kids are highly successful in their world and their world is not the same as our world ... so when you have a child sat in front of you and you say "well this child is a failure in school" they might be a failure in school but in his peer group and in his life, he is the alpha male, top dog, he knows exactly how to work to be a complete success ... you're not going to change him because he will not be a success any more ... all you can then do is teach him how to be a different person in-school, how to survive school ...

How would you say the balance is for the pupils here? Are they mainly pupils who you are teaching survival or mainly pupils who just have issues with school?

It's changed quite radically over the four years. Initially I think we had a lot of pupils that had scored survival problems that we could turn around that were just off of being in mainstream that he needed a short sharp input on actually this is what life is really about, these are all the things you need to do, young people this is all they need and I think recently in the last year we have had a lot more pupils that have a lot more serious problems who actually shouldn't be at a mainstream school who we shouldn't even be entertaining returning to mainstream school unless there is a massive amount of provision for them. So there are some pupils who are not going to get the same thing from us.

What does the P.A.S.S. data tell you?

The P.A.S.S. data is very useful because we do it straight away with them when they arrive here and it gives us a snapshot of what they currently think about education and themselves ... so you very often have very small scores ... because normally in order to be here they are pretty negative about school ... so normally one of the key factors is they hate teachers ... the score on that factor [factor 5 Attitude to Teachers] is astronomically low because that's the issue to them because a lot of our kids have what we would term a locus of control problem, so they don't ever think it's their fault, it's never their problem, they didn't get excluded for anything they did, they got

excluded because of someone else ... so our big deal, what we spend a lot of time doing, saying to them, it's actually what they did that got them excluded and that might have been a reaction to someone that they think is justified, and we can say we can see why you're angry, but here is what you should have done, we try and explain a different way of dealing with it, so the P.A.S.S. data is very useful because it tells you where they've come from.

Would you say that factor 5, the attitudes to teachers, is the most important factor in the P.A.S.S. data score? Or all the factors as significant to you when you use the data?

I guess that varies on an individual basis pupil to pupil I think that it's quite important as it's all about relationships and the key thing for any people to succeed anywhere has got to be able to do relationships ... if you can't do that you're knackered! There is another key indicator on that "response to curriculum demands" is a key indicator for the school for me that says your curriculum is inappropriate if this kid has got a 1% score it's not saying well he can't cope with doing maths, English, geography ... what it says is why are you teaching him maths English geography hello you have got completely the wrong curriculum. The new national curriculum is aimed at just doing that at personalised learning.

My next question was "What do you think about the REACH scores?" But I think we really already covered that!

Yes I think they are very very key indicators. They are a key part of the learning to learn the whole purpose of doing REACH on admission was part of learning to learn, part of the five Rs, it's the reflection ... because as an individual, as a person, I guess my beliefs are you can't change yourself unless you are able to reflect on yourself and what you have done. If you don't think you do anything wrong then you've got nothing to learn and you're not going to develop you're not going to change because what is to change? So by teaching the children how to reflect on their behaviour, so to really look at is it okay to do that ... it is non-judgemental it's not saying it's awful you're a bad child, its reflect on what you did, what could you do differently? Is it achieved your aims sort of thing.

Why [REACH scores] twice a day? Do you ever feel that that is too often?

We've had lots of the debate about that one. It could be that it's too much, could be that it's too little. Twice a day was really borne out of the fact that a lot of our kids are

what we would term “fetch list” children, so if there’s a slight problem if they write a page of writing out, and on the last line they make a mistake, then they screw it up and chuck it away because they’ve made a mistake. So for a lot of our kids it is all or nothing. So if in the morning they’ve had a bad morning, and have gone and sworn at someone, then a lot of them will say “there’s no point in being anything other than being a complete nightmare for the rest of the day, because I have already been bad.” So the reason we did it more than once was to give them a chance to start again. So it’s like yeah okay you had a bad morning let’s have a perfect afternoon. Here are the things we need to improve on let’s move on and do it. So I guess a key indicator for that, it gives them a chance to start again and be able to say, “well I didn’t have a bad day, I had a bad session.”

How do you think they view their REACH scores; either their REACH scores or the process of doing it?

Now that varies. A lot of them are not that keen on it, especially at first, because it’s making them look at themselves. So for a lot of them, for quite a long while they still find it very hard because they don’t like looking at themselves, they like to blame someone else for the way they behave, so actually trying to make them understand that it’s their choice, it’s up to them how they respond and what are they doing, they don’t actually want to be faced with the reality of “aah I shouldn’t have done that” they want it not to have happened and the only reason we use it is because it did happen, you’re here you’re not at school ... so I don’t think they like it very much but then again over the years some of them have and some of them have carried it on. We’ve had some kids when they have gone back to school have asked if they can have some kind of REACH system in their new classes, can they take it round with them, can they score themselves so they can see how they’re getting on. So, some of the kids love it, some of the kids hate it, some just do it

What do you think about the ‘feeling positive’ targets that Rich sets?

Well you’ve probably noticed from the decoration that we have positive quotes, positive phrases, positive images everywhere and we’d drip feed positivity into our kids as a matter of course, that’s what we do and because it’s almost like NLP I’m a firm believer that if you are positive enough you will eventually become positive. So they’re not just on the wall, they’re read, they’re looked at, they’re used and I think it’s great because again it focuses them on what you’re going to do.

So the making of it explicit?

It's essential ... if you speak to people who are a bog standard normal teacher, an English teacher or something, they will now tell you as a matter of course, you have a three-part lesson, you have an objective, you make it obvious what you are trying to learn, why would we not make it obvious what we are trying to learn we are trying to learn how to be positive we are trying to learn how to socially interact.

So do other staff do this; give the kids feeling positive targets or so-called self esteem targets?

Not all the time. At the moment most of the staff give the kids a target a day from our core scheme of work and some of those targets are about attitudes towards yourself and others, being positive and some of them are to do with the environment or something to do with interactions ... so they may have them at times but they don't every day have one ... but I think it's an explicit part of how we talk to them and what we do with them

REACH has been fundamental to the success here, do you see that the feeling positive targets may evolve, may not evolve or ...?

I think the whole thing that were doing at the moment is evolving quite rapidly we're looking at actually getting the kids to set their own targets. So at the moment it's very much we give them kind of suitable targets. Chris is experimenting with a different approach using the open minds approach, so he has five targets with his kids based on CLIPS ... citizenship, a learning target, information, situations and a pupil target. But he doesn't give them a target they are looking at an area, and the kids come up with a target. So my target today is to not swear. Then they reflect on how did I get on on that today? What could I do better at? So obviously within that you're going to have quite a range of targets. You're going to end up with positive targets, behaviour targets, I think that's possibly more powerful because it's less imposed and more from the child if they are saying I want to try and do this ... there is also no pass fail then because I wanna do this how did you get on doing that, what can you do differently ... so it could be quite a detailed next step.

So do you believe that self-esteem or feeling positive is a changeable trait?

Yes ... yes I believe that people can change their mindset as it were ... I believe you can, you can spiral down and you can spiral up, eventually you will have no choice but to be positive ... the problem I have as a professional looking at things like SATS is that all the SATS do is help spiral kids downwards, it teaches kids, how crap they are it doesn't teach them how good they are, it doesn't teach them what they can achieve, it teaches them the complete opposite, it teaches them what they can't achieve, which is

scary. And as professional educationalists, why are we teaching kids things they can't do, it's so scary.

The Explorer curriculum has *Outdoor Learning* lessons, outdoor days! What do you think about these?

They are a core key part of our curriculum and that was always my intention to maintain that outdoor educational element ... mostly because it gives pupils an opportunity to succeed in a learning situation that they don't necessarily consider to be a school, a classroom or a learning environment so that's why we try and make everything we do language wise and approach wise the same in and out ... so we can try and relate, when you got up that mountainside you overcame your fears ... next time you're in an English lesson, and you can't really understand what Shakespeare's talking about, you can dig in and find some reserves.

So where does that transfer happen then? Where is that articulation, is it in the end of the day review?

Part of reflection, part of reach, part of discussing in school survival explicit lessons what did you learn in the outdoors what does it mean, why did you go kayaking? Did you go kayaking to learn how to kayak? And we make it very clear to them that they didn't go kayaking to learn how to kayak, they went kayaking, so they could build a relationship with Rich, build a relationship up with an adult, actually not all adults are bastards.

Do you think they realised that? Or would you say, in terms of the justification for outdoor learning, to acknowledge that the pupils may not see the reasons for going outdoors?

Oh yes! A lot of them don't know what they're doing it for they just think they're going mountain biking, or surfing

But you would say, I'm just trying to paraphrase you, it gives them opportunities to develop relationships with people in authority?

Yes yes! It allows them to learn how to take risks in a controlled environment, it allows them to build a relationship with someone that is an authority figure ... it would allow them to learn competences, learned skills as opposed to knowledge, the skill of learning how to bike, is a different skill from being able to bike, so they are learning how to learn how to approach things in a different manner.

Could these objectives be achieved through other means?

Yes! Such as? It might be someone that the hook is really intensive art and craft work, it might be like hands-on gardening, whatever the hook is, for some it might be class-based work, it may be solving mathematical problems, whatever the hook is, we just happen to be here, we've got a lot of access to a lot of really good hooks, and because they are so divorced from the school environment, which they have all basically failed in, it's a really good hook, and we tend to have a very positive uptake on outdoor-learning, we don't have very many kids who don't want to do the outdoor thing, which is obviously quite good.

Do think they perceive it as a reward?

No! I think we have tried to make it very clear that it isn't a reward ... I always think that's true

So you don't use it as a reward?

Certainly not. It is essential that it's not a reward. It is the same as having a maths lesson. It's part of the curriculum so it's not something we can opt in and out of.

How would you describe and explain the pupil/staff relationships at Explorer?

Generally speaking, I would say that they are pretty good they have ups and downs, there are occasional times when the pupils decide that they hate someone and that is quite common, there are bound to be, it's part of their makeup, especially when they need someone else to blame except themselves, so if the teacher has an incident with somebody, especially early on, it could be that they have experienced this type of person before in my last school and I know what they're after, hence the very different kind of dress code ... we try not to build things between us and the kids and us and the parents in a lot of respects. Dress code is very important, first names, it's about... we are here for them, we are here to help them succeed, and they can't shock us, we want them to be honest, if they've had a really horrendous argument in the morning with their mum, we want them to come in and say. I'm really wound up and angry and pissed off because I've had a really horrendous argument this morning. So we'll sit them down make them a cuppa we are there to help them.

So would you say that the staff have to be caring?

Yes absolutely.

It's an absolute. Staff have to care about them as human beings?

They've got to think they can change these kids. They've got to think they can progress these kids, they have got to want to do it, want to value them, so we come back to that mutual respect line ... if they don't share that ethos of mutual respect, it is time to move on.

And I guess you couldn't work here, if you didn't own that?

Absolutely. You can't work in a PRU, you can't work in an environment like this if it's just a job because it would kill you ... you'll become upset, angry, fed up with the office stress all the time ... it is a nightmare scenario to work in ... if you look at what it is like to work in a PRU then you're having a laugh ... it takes a certain type of person

So how would you respond, if somebody said "you're just being trendy, and your staff have lower expectations of young people, because you accept swearing, you don't dress smartly and that they use your first names"

Well, we don't accept swearing ... and that's very important ... I would say that the kids have a lot less freedom and flexibility here in some respects than they do in school. For example, here we have a no smoking policy, same as a school does, but everyone in any school, any teacher can tell you where the kids go and smoke. They can't do that here; they are never out of sight of an adult, so there's a lot less flexibility. First names, because most of my friends call me Brett, most of the people I work with call me Brett, Brett is my name and I don't need to build a barrier, I don't need to be "Mr", because I am Brett. As far as I am concerned, uniform simply creates conflict. Let us start the morning by having a massive conflict and confrontation about this situation. Now as a head of year I spent most of the half of every morning every day of every school week, dealing with uniform issues. So let's start the day off really well.

What else would you say created conflict in mainstream school?

Differences between staff and pupils; we've worked with quite a few schools who have kind of got the right idea they've got a rights and responsibilities base behaviour model and page 1, all pupils have these rights, and these responsibilities, and page 2 it says all staff have these rights and on these responsibilities and I always say so how come you haven't got the same rights and responsibilities ... so there are many examples. You can have a stairway where pupils are only allowed to go down it, but staff are allowed to go up the stairs because it's more convenient. And you are immediately

saying ha ha I have more rights, because I am a teacher and you will respect me, but you are a pupil you need to earn my respect which is not okay it's just not okay as far as I'm concerned

How do you think pupils view this relationship then?

Generally speaking I would say positively. We have some that don't, they'll always be some that don't, there'll be some that take a long while to chip into, they've just been let down and have so many problems, they are just not prepared to let you in, I guess our aim is to try and become a significant other, to these kids, so that they want to do things.

How long do you think that takes?

Some kid it's three or four weeks, and some kids you don't manage it in two terms, because they are not prepared to take that risk, every time they risk every time they let someone in it's gone wrong, you know I've been in five foster homes this term sort of thing, so they are not prepared to do it a lot of them which is completely understandable, so you just have to maintain well I'm here for you, you don't blame them and do things that are inappropriate. Certainly kids will tell you a story while I got blamed for this piece of paper being thrown across the room, and the teacher kicked me out, and as head of year, I would often go to a timeout room, hear a child's version of events, I'd go and see the teacher and hear their version of events, we've had a couple of kids say, it really wasn't Johnny, and you sort of think yeah, you know, actually the version of events here that I've heard that is most likely is the child's but there is no way that the teachers wrong. Very few teachers will ever go to a timeout room, and say sorry Jonny I got the wrong kid, I shouldn't have sent you here it is my mistake, I hope we can make it up and get on, I hope you appreciate why I may have done it, that's all it takes! The teachers that do that get the best results.

Is poor behaviour seen or treated as a disability?

I don't think it's seen or treated as a disability, I think it's seen as bad behaviour, you know they're just nasty evil kids and that's why we want them out of our school and for some of the kids it is a disability it's a dysfunction. It's a problem that ... it's how they are presented to the world ... things have happened to them early on in their life which has meant they have got to do this. One of the things we do with our kids is avoidance. Most of our kids are excellent at avoidance and they have discovered, probably by accident, that actually when you go to your maths lesson, if you're five minutes late

and kicked the door when you get there, and the teacher says, why are you late and you swear at them they send you out and you've not got to do maths any more. And after the first couple of times they have done that they realise that actually I'm not very good at maths and if I just do that I won't have to do maths any more. It is a short-term win. It's totally learnt behaviour. We try and break that cycle of avoidance. As to how people treat and look at this as an illness, and for some kid it's a very serious illness it's a real social and behavioural difficulty, for some its poor role models, it is learned behaviour. Perhaps they have only ever seen things resolved by violence. I've done interviews with parents and kids whose solution is yeah, well last time I was in class, I strode across and beat Johnny up what should you do differently next time? Well I should wait till after school, and then beat him up. And the parents are saying yeah yeah. You shouldn't hit people during school time you wait till people leave school, and then beat them up. Their values are completely different to societies.

What are the characteristics of a good member of *Explorer staff* ? – give me the top five bullet points. The top five in rank order if you can.

- *Able to build a relationship*
- *Willing to listen*
- *Positive – able to transmit that positivity and enthusiasm*
- *Willing to start again – so they don't take it home with them, so don't hold a grudge – every day is a new day, they mustn't take it personally*
- *Understand that the kids can change – you can make a difference to them*
- *Be part of a team, a team player, but also be able to innovate and just react instantly*

What *motivates you then*? To stay? To keep working with PRU pupils? Do you not want to take this message to a wider audience?

Yes it is one I debate in my own head quite regularly. Do I want to go back to a mainstream school? Especially at the moment with the new curriculum, that is being put out it's an exciting time to be in a mainstream school, because schools are now finally been told to do what they know is right, they haven't just got to focus on an exam table league table because everyone knows that that has only damaged our children and I think that that is accepted now ... that has actually damaged education ... we have kids that are really good at taking exams ... but they can't create things, can't have a relationship, on paper, they have got quite good exam results. Industry is saying that doesn't matter, actually because when we hire these people they don't know how to bond, how to work, they don't know how to create how to innovate. So I

think the curriculum that is coming into schools in that respect is actually really exciting.

What motivates you to stay here?

*[sigh] ... I like making a difference. I enjoy working in this environment. I like being in charge. I like being able to drive this vision forward. What I do, is what I'm best at doing, in this school, I'm good at having a vision, driving it forward and taking people with me. So the question is, would I be tempted to be a head teacher in a mainstream school? The answer to that question is yes, I'm very much tempted and it is the obvious next step. Effectively, I took this job on and demonstrated that it was do-able and I would say it's even easier to do it in a mainstream school. **Mmm potentially!** No, I would say it is easier, because you've got more compliant kids, the issue, we have is actually the kids are not necessarily up for it and compliant, the majority of kids in a mainstream school are. I think the majority of teachers in a mainstream school would want it as well ... **would you have onsite parents?** Erm ... I don't think that's relevant ... every parent has been to school, but that doesn't mean they know anything about education ... and if you ask a parent, what do you want for your child in the future, do you want a happy child, a well adjusted child, someone who is able to cope with society be successful, be happy, if that's what you want, which are the key aims of the curriculum, we as professionals are telling you that this is the best way to make that happen. Now if you don't agree with that then you can home educate or take your kids somewhere else, but I think actually the professionals, the educationalists are the ones that should dictate how the curriculum works in school.*

What else about your experience do you think I should know about? What are the major challenges and constraints for Explorer?

I guess the experience of being in the PRU and how some of the schools or agencies how they view us as professionals for example a big issue for staff in the PRU is that it is perceived as a dead-end job ... if you are not a good teacher, you go to a PRU, if you want to see out the last few years until retirement, you go to a PRU, you haven't got lots of marking to do, or all the planning to do, no pressures of exams or league tables, so the perception is very different in a PRU ... it's different pressures you can't be a bad teacher and work in a PRU ... so if you're a teacher and your successful and working well in the PRU, that means you're a phenomenally good teacher. My staff here, my deputies, are so much better than most of the deputies for instance that I meet in mainstream schools, who are so narrowly focused on what they do, and we have a

whole picture here and the whole holistic approach is so much more powerful and it's just not recognized ... although it's changing slowly ... if I applied for the headship of a mainstream school, I would get a lot of well I guess you're a head teacher but it's only a PRU ... you're not head of a big school ... and actually in reality, there is no difference ... I've got a bigger budget than nearly every primary school in the whole of Devon ... no one there would question that headteachers are headteachers ... my remit is no different

So what you are suggesting is that you are viewed by other stakeholders in education somewhat disparagingly, somewhat negatively?

Negatively, yeah, they would say what we do is different; it's not the same as real education.

So how does that hinder, you then?

It hinders you if you want to move on, it hinders your staff development, our staff... if my deputies want to move back into mainstream education they should realistically go in at the same level ... however, they are currently paid less than their responsibility. Their ability to do the job, their understanding is far greater, it leaps and bounds, than someone paid the equivalent in mainstream.

Does it affect the functioning of the PRU? This cultural prejudice does it work in your favour? Are you able to pull in other funds?

Though the main issue we've really got to do with is staff. Key to any PRU is staff. So a lot of staff don't even want to come to a PRU because they are concerned where do you go next? So when I took a sideways step to being head of a PRU ... where do you go next from here? When I have my performance meeting with the authorities, where do I go next from here? I have an NPQH, a Master's, I am on a national consultation at DCSF I know more about regional and national strategy than most of head teachers in this region but they wouldn't consider me to be on the same level as them. I would consider myself to be more aware than them.

Describe Brett, the headteacher.

Passionate, fair, approachable, strongly held beliefs, positive, successful...

Okay. That's great, we've covered a lot. Thank you!

Appendix K - Transcript of Director of Outdoor Learning Interview

TRANSCRIPT ~ DIRECTOR OUTDOOR LEARNING INTERVIEW 1 JULY 2008

Who are you and what is your position and how long have you been here?

My name is Rich Tripp, I have been at Explorer for 5 years and my position is as director of outdoor learning.

Why are you here and how did you come to be here?

*I had a background in outdoor learning. I trained in engineering, but made a decision I wanted to work with people. I was head of an outdoor centre in Yorkshire, but wanted to move back closer to family in the southwest. I worked as an activities manager in a big centre in the southwest, and basically found that the responsibilities associated with the job were unreasonable, and reached the point where I realised I wasn't spending any time with my children. I saw an advert for outdoor instructors to work with the Explorer project, with a massive drop in salary ... and thought, if they are doing what it says they are doing, then in my mind that was pure outdoor learning ... **and what did it say?** It said working with challenging pupils in an educational setting using the outdoors which for me is what pure outdoor learning is all about ... it's what it's meant to be ... it's all about personal development, self esteem, stuff like that, and I thought that's really putting it into practice, as opposed to the normal primary school group residential ... so I decided to go for it, worry about the money later, and I got the job.*

What do you think and feel about Explorer then; as a school or PRU?

I think that everybody who works here, is attempting to do their best for the pupils that we are working with and there are definitely frustrations that we are working within a system, but despite that, I think that Explorer as a whole puts the needs of the pupils first and does the very best that it can to help the pupils cope with "the system". That's it in a nutshell.

So what makes Explorer *unique*? Is it unique?

I couldn't say that there aren't other PRUs out there using outdoor-learning...

Are you saying that it is the outdoor-learning makes it unique? Or what is it that makes Explorer special?

I like to think that one of the things that makes Explorer special is the way that it has attempted and continues to attempt to bring together outdoor learning and classroom-based or indoor learning. And the way that it has attempted to do that is to make sure that the language that the staff use with the pupils is as consistent as it possibly can. So it's around rights and responsibilities, choice and consequence, using REACH. At the end of the day it doesn't matter whether I am doing a kayaking session or doing something in doors, the language, the way we interact with the pupils, is consistent. I think, well I'm not aware of any other PRUs that have that kind of consistent approach and one of the reasons we decided to do that is because Explorer was set up with individual bases so we had to come up with something whereby we could get a unified approach across the bases that were 80-100 miles apart.

The curriculum and behaviour management, which is what you said is unique and special about Explorer, what's that based upon where did it come from? Was it experience, was it theory, and was there a role model? What formed it and what continues to form it?

When I started, in the first year, it was simply a case of there were three staff, four pupils, here's some kit, here is a building, get on with it ... Brett then started as head teacher, and the main thing that Brett brought was the concept of rights and responsibilities, choices and consequences, the BODORs, then at the same time I decided we had to make sure that what happens indoors, is the same as what happens outdoors. He pointed me to the national curriculum. I started to go through that to look at the geography, PE, the science, and so on in order to make links. I thought that this is just too bitty. And then I don't know how it came up, but he said have you looked at the national curriculum statement of values? So I looked at that and sat down and basically said that's it! That is the link! In other words, for us, it's not about teaching English history, maths to these young people, you know they do that in school really well. It's not my job, my job is actually to help these young people to value themselves, value others and value society in general. And by bringing those two things together so that the values was going to be what we teach, and we can teach that both indoors and outdoors, combining the methodology of behaviour management ... and we came up with what eventually became REACH, which we are still looking at and developing

So I understand that there is this constant reflective evolutionary process?

Yeah, definitely ... it can be very exciting, but it can also be unsettling, because you think you're doing the right thing and then something else pops up, and you go, we never thought of that

So do you think there is a right thing?

A perfect way? No! I think there are too many variables with young people, and that's the challenge to me in this job something new comes up every now and again and we will sit around in the staff room and go wow, we've never had that before.

Are you able to help the pupils be successful?

*Well there's two things we're trying to bring together there. One is, we need to unpick what we mean by being successful. There is successful in the eyes of the local authorities. The local authority has to provide education, so there is the viewpoint that so long as they are attending and they are doing something, they are in education ... **does it include returning to mainstream education?** ... there are only so many places in the PRU we can't just keep taking the ones that don't fit into mainstream education and keep them in the PRU service, we have to have an exit strategy for them and I think that Explorer has definitely changed along the way. When Explorer was first set up it did feel like we were having pupils and just keeping them, it is now clear, well we thought the purpose of our job was to keep them for two terms and then move them on. But, this year there have been a number of things that have happened whereby the pupils have been coming to us without an exit strategy. Now that was pretty confusing because we were saying what on earth is going on here. Some of these pupils were in care, some were effectively just moved from one school to here to keep the exclusion figures down so that was a success in terms of the local authority but we were then ending up with pupils that didn't have any reason for being here and our whole curriculum was geared around helping young people over a short period of time to help them change their behaviour and move them on, it's not about keeping them here, for a long period of time and educating them in terms of maths, English and science, that's not what we're geared up to do, but that seems to be what the local authority is wanting us to do*

So, are you able to be successful for the pupils?

If we have pupils that we are set up for, i.e. pupils who are here for a short-term intervention, then yes we can help them for a short period and then move them on. I'm not comfortable having pupils for a long period of time because our curriculum only focuses on behaviour.

How do you help the pupils be successful? What is them being successful in your mind? Aside from leaving here, what is them being successful?

For every pupil, it is different. Some of the pupils, being back at school, they reach a point where being back at school is important for them, so success for them is only really when they go back to school. Initially, when they first come here, they think that we are a permanent alternative provision for them. When they realise that we are not, success for them I think is to actually go back to school. There are others who they never reach that point and maybe can't see that and actually only want success on a daily basis, and success for them will be having a nice day ... the school they go back to could be a special school, not necessarily a mainstream school, some of them are happy to go onto another pupil referral unit, I think a success really for them is really to enjoy life really.

Do you think that *certain pupils* do better than others here?

Those types of pupil who have been excluded, or are about to be excluded, who want to change, and if we can't get them to that point over a period of time, then we won't be accessible... if we can get them to that point then great.

As yet, I haven't met anyone who's come to Explorer who hasn't engaged in some way. There are various stages. First, the honeymoon stage, which may be an hour a day or a week, where they're really figuring out what it is that is going on here. Then there is the acknowledgement that they need to change their behaviour that is the next stage. And when they are really using the REACH scores, they are really taking things on board. The whole reflection thing, and actually working at trying to change their behaviour. And this was designed to work within two terms as a short intervention for them so they are properly ready for reintegration back into school or to move onto their next phase of education. Not all pupils achieve all of those phases. And it's certainly not an easy or smooth or regular linear progression. Now if we cannot get them through those stages, and then we've lost, and sometimes it's not our fault. We are more successful and it appears that outdoor learning is more accessible for the lads than the girls.

So you mentioned that girls were not that successful Explorer.

The bizarre thing use, pure statistics, I've been here five years, and I think that in that time I've worked with five girls.

Do they tend not to come here to begin with?

They don't seem to get excluded as much or for the same reasons, and therefore by default we see fewer girls. And also the language we use, is based on our experiences and we have less experience of dealing with girls

What do you see as the biggest challenges or constraints for Explorer being successful?

Every year is difficult every year there's something new or different, but this year there seems to be something out there that is not right. The staff really, I mean at the end of the day it's the staff that really make or break ... we create Explorer and it's how we adapt to the constraints of the outside ... so if we are not connecting with the young people, then it's me, it has to be me! At the end of the day it has to be me, I'm not going to point the finger at anybody else

No, it's interesting, you've identified that there are external factors which is the system, and we have already talked about the LEA...

But there are so many changes going on out there ... at the end of the day I am the only person that can change what's going on in here

So you've identified internally that the staff as a whole [is a challenge].

So would you say there is an Explorer ethos? If so what is it and how is it shared and developed? I'm glad to see you're in pain here, Rich. I'm making you think?

[Laughs] ... yeah no that's good! Well the Explorer ethos, or the way some people view it, is staff and pupils how you interact with the young persons face-to-face ... it varies ... it is really dictated from the Head[teacher].

Okay it's interesting that you used the word dictated there! Is it a shared collaborative development the ethos? Or is it predominantly, one man's vision operationalised through the staff?

*No. I definitely, if I disagree with something, then definitely stand up and talk about it but ultimately I would influence it through Brett. Brett is basically an outstanding leader, people will follow him. So the best way to change things is to influence Brett ... if you can't influence Brett then don't fight it, it won't change. The way to influence Brett, is to get him to think that it was his idea. **This is why it is anonymous Rich!** And I would say that to him! It is because at the end of the day I can influence him. I have some concerns about some of the people who influence him, you don't want people whose heart isn't really fully in Explorer to influence things and I've spoken to him about this and he knows. No ... I support Brett 100%*

Dictated suggests a strong leader, and that's just what Explorer needed. You know it's ironic that there was a whole bunch of people who said what we need is strong leadership. And as soon as we have strong leadership, there is a bunch of people who turn round and say the leadership is too strong?

And would you say that this [the ethos] is shared by the staff?

A lot of the staff don't understand them self. I think there is a number of staff that don't understand Brett.

So coming back to my original question, the staff are one of the biggest challenges and constraints?

Yes without a doubt. At the end of the day, Explorer is a bunch of people ... So they make it successful but are also the biggest constraint? Absolutely!

What does the P.A.S.S. data tell you?

PASS is one of those tools that is somewhat new and experimental ... and we need those kind of measurement tools, but hand on heart we're definitely not using the data as much as we could, or as much as we should be. It's a diagnostic tool and we're not really using the data to target pupils' individual behaviour or attitudes to school or self. We need to link it much more with what we're doing. It is definitely, it seems to be providing information about pupils that shows we are making a difference, but I'm not convinced we are using it as well as we could ... how you do it, when you do it, or what mood the kids are in when they take the test can all affect the outcomes. There are so many variables in that we might come round to the idea that there's no point in doing it at all ... of the data it gives you can fluctuate and I'm saying at the moment we haven't used it enough it's not something I do with the pupils outdoors and at the moment the information collected indoors isn't open to all the staff. And this is frustrating. Again, it's one of those areas of communication, because I'm not in ... I do try [to be involved and use the data]

Do you see the need for greater integration between outdoor and indoor learning?

Everybody, all staff, would agree that we have made huge steps towards this, but there is more to do and I know, that's one of those things that I've got to drive more.

I guess I could have started with this question; the Explorer curriculum has *outdoor learning* lessons, outdoor days! How do you justify these?

With these young people, all I am attempting to do is to create an environment in which they can interact and help them be successful and develop relationships with staff. In terms of what we get them to do is to find something that they can hook into. The outdoor environment is often one where they have not experienced failure before, so it can be a positive thing. They don't like all the activities, but the thing to do is to find something that the group likes and can be successful in. The difficulty is you may have three who really like an activity, and one who doesn't. As a general thing they like doing the outdoor lessons, most of them. So it is a hook, generally, they want to go and do these activities. That is its strength. Also, you're taking them into an environment where if they do get frustrated, it's physically very easy for them to move away to walk away from the frustration. The environment doesn't have the history for them ... it's a great environment for the staff and pupils to develop their relationships ... there are some very definite consequences to their actions for example, if they don't put a helmet on then they are not doing climbing because they might get a rock on them that could kill them, whereas indoors, consequences are not necessarily always as direct and obvious for them.

Do the outdoor learning lessons help the pupils be successful or is it just fun?

*No! Because I do indoor and outdoor I find it perhaps easier for communication and easier to set them a target at which I know they are going to be successful. Perhaps the consequences are just more direct and obvious for them. So yes, definitely helps them to be more successful. Would Explorer still work without outdoor lessons, is a question I often ask myself. Would Explorer still work without outdoor learning? I think a lot of staff within Explorer think it would... **What do you think?** No I don't agree with them.*

Are you suggesting that outdoor learning is a key, fundamental attribute of Explorer's unique approach to the curriculum?

Yes, I wouldn't say it is more important than the indoor learning, but it's definitely a key part.

So what would you say to people who suggest that the outdoor sessions are just a reward for bad behaviour?

If it was a reward, the pupils would choose ... but it is set in the programme ... that's what we are doing ... if people see it as a reward, then they really need to experience it and see how we get the pupils to reflect upon their experience and their behaviour, it's the language we use on the sessions that counts, so they don't always have fun and enjoy the sessions, because they are challenged about their behaviour. The difficulty is

you can't really explain how these sessions are you've just got to go and experience them. Sure, some of these sessions are fun, enjoyable. It just depends on what stage the pupils are and how they are interacting that day, what the activity is, what the weather is doing, and all the other variables that affect the pupils when they arrive at Explorer in the morning. It is and can be very stressful and you need eyes in the back of your head sometimes.

So what you're saying to me, is that the outdoor learning sessions are a key integral feature of the successes of pupils here, because they provide an environment, in its broadest sense, a social and physical environment in which pupils can be challenged physically and mentally and still be successful, and raise their confidence and have their behaviours addressed.

Yes with somebody with whom they have a respectful relationship with.

The research suggests that the longer the experience, the bigger the benefits. So why don't you do an extended journey or residential experience?

It has been done, but it's not part of the regular programme. But I have been constrained, I have always been told that if we are to do it, the whole group, the whole class has to be committed to doing it and that has often been a stumbling block. There will be one or two pupils, who will not be engaged. I have often talked about doing a camp at this time of year, but the pressures seem such that it has not happened for a while. I wouldn't have a problem with only taking part of a class. I would like to see my pupils have this kind of experience as part of their time at Explorer.

OK, so then how would you *describe and explain* the pupil/staff relationships at Explorer?

*Okay Lloyd and I often used to acknowledge that each pupil in general, would latch on to one of us ... I know that I have the ability to make things very clear but I am also aware that not all pupils respond to this. There are qualities to this relationship. **How would you describe it?** It's not a friend relationship, its friendly at balanced with a teacher relationship, but it's not a teacher. You have to maintain the authority ... **so, is it parental in that respect?** No! You don't have the same relationship as a parent ... it's not a youth club worker, it's not a teacher friend, pupil relationship... it's really complex ... it's not a one to one ... there are times when you are a teacher in the traditional sense of the word ... to take it to an extreme, there are definitely times when you are a friend, there are times when you are the instructor, when you tell them*

what to do for safety ... there are times when you are, the uncle, the facilitator, there is a time when you are a youth worker and there is the balance between being a friend and a leader, you're more than a social worker just making them feel good and sometimes you are a parent figure to them ... saying the things that their father cannot

So do staff have to be caring?

You have to care! If you didn't care, you wouldn't get up and come in you have to care.

Do you think staff at Explorer have lower expectations of pupils?

I think we have higher expectations. We actually know them better, and know what they can do and how they can behave and they are constantly with staff. There's no escaping from us and we constantly remind them of how they are expected to behave.

How do you think of the pupils view this staff pupil relationship?

*There are days that I know, it will vary across the day or at the end of the day, there are times when the young people think I'm great, and there are times when they will hate me ... deep down, when you ask the pupils in five years time, I'd like to think that there aren't many pupils who won't go 'he was all right really' ... I like to think that ... that he wasn't like my teachers ... **you say that [teacher] like it's a bad thing** ... in terms of stereotypical teachers yes, the majority of young people, their experience ... the experiences they have gone through to get here have been horrendous, it must have been awful and the majority of their experiences of teachers have been negative ... and I guess one of the things I'm trying to do is change their view of authority figures ... and that comes back to the values. I want them to value young people. I want them to value society and concepts of society such as authority.*

Tell me about target setting then? REACH targets how do they help you? How do you feel about doing them, do you always enjoy doing them?

I think REACH is something great. I definitely use it as a reflective tool. I really don't care whether they get a red, green or gold, I don't really care at the end of the day what they get, it's not about the points, strictly speaking. I use it as a reflective tool to get them to think about their behaviour. The rewards thing helps them with their motivation, to get them to accept, to think about and reflect upon what they've done. It's a tool; I've never ever really seen it as a method of measuring pupil progress. It would be very easy to say what they have not done and I don't know anyone who would turn up to work and was measured, and all they ever got was you haven't done this and you haven't done that. So, I like to use it to get the young people to think

about how they behaved in those categories, to see where they have been successful. I use it as a reflective thing to get young people thinking. I use it as a refined tool, not a dogmatic approach to behaviour.

Would you say that the staff need to be careful in how to use the REACH targets?

Yes, a lot of our staff completely misuse it, and then wonder why they have problems.

Why [REACH scores] twice a day? Do you ever feel that that is too often?

There are times in the outdoors when it's not possible, not practical to get out the sheets, to do them twice a day. There are times when you definitely need to do it. So you have to structure your activity for that. If the day is going well, you can just extend the session and reflect at the end of the day. We ask them reflective questions as we're going along, we are having reflective conversations all the time, you don't have to get the sheets out in order to be reflective. Generally, I think doing it twice a day is okay, any more would be too much, and the less often than you might get away with it ... but twice a day, if they're doing well, you can encourage them to keep going. If they're not doing so well, then you can use it to not allow them to spiral down and crash the day.

How and why do you use 'feeling positive' targets?

I think that the self esteem is much much more significant than any of us really understand and there is a part of me, that would like to experiment with not having any REACH, not going to challenge any behaviours, just focus on feeling positive, to some degree and if I did that, could I actually move somebody along the same path without actually challenging any of the behaviour ... in my mind, that's some kind of an ideal, and I think that possibly we could, but that's not practical, it's not realistic, I'm not going to be allowed to do that. So, we've got these behaviour targets, but I have always said to people, with these young people, if I came every day and said we're just going to focus on behaviour, that is not right we're going to change it, that would be so soul destroying ... and implicitly within Explorer, we have always tried to point out the positive that underpins this.

So how does it [feeling positive targets] help you?

It helps me because when I'm planning, I am consciously thinking, a) When I set my behaviour target, I always ask myself are they definitely going to achieve it? That doesn't mean the target is easy, it means it's SMART. If they are definitely going to

achieve it I definitely want them to reflect on both what they achieved and how they feel about it. So by having a feelings target, I directly link it to the behaviour target.

So do you think it helps pupils, or how does that help pupils?

I think if you said to the young people, what is your feelings focus, they wouldn't know. I'll put it up on the board, but it doesn't have the same emphasis as the behaviour target its less tangible, because it's not part of REACH, there is no consequence of it, whether we do it or not, again it's just an indicator of the power of REACH, if it was, it would have a higher value, and I think it would have a higher value a higher focus with staff, and at the moment there is no constant among staff in how we use feeling positive. I use it on a daily basis, partly because it's a familiar to me and I initiated it, some staff don't use it at all, some staff use it in general terms across the week.

Do you believe that self-esteem is changeable trait?

I have to! Yes yes definitely. From personal experience, my self-esteem through outdoor learning has been greatly improved. So yes, definitely no doubt.

What are the five top qualities of a good member of Explorer staff?

Empathy and calm, those are the two main ones. Individually they all need to be leaders, they need to be calm, and they need to be strong-willed. You've got to be to work with these types of pupils.

How would you describe the leadership at Explorer?

Brett is definitely pupil centred, he definitely has empathy ... he is purposeful yes ... he will listen to the staff and their ideas, and make up his own mind ... he needs to be the centre of attention, and anybody who knows him knows what he's strengths are, he goes out there and fights for what the staff need ... he is a fighter. There are issues that he consults the staff upon and finds a consensus ... he will go out there and fight for what we think the pupils need what the unit needs.

What motivates you to stay here, what motivates you to keep working with PRU pupils?

Because I think that I can provide for some of the needs of some of the young people. I can help.

What motivates you to stay?

I believe I can continue to ... and I really love the job, I find it incredibly stressful, it is stressful in that it is so challenging, because what you are dealing with is just so unpredictable, there are days, quite a few days, where yes, that's fine, you can switch off, you can relax and you can just ... and everything is under control, it is within a comfort zone of predictability, but there's not many, and it's not a whole day, or very rarely, generally it is a moment within a day but those are the only times you can relax ... like this morning it was three hours of complete unpredictability and that is absolutely exhausting ... now I don't know if this is sustainable for me, five years for me or for anyone ... if you look at the classic challenge support model. We are in high challenge, low support. Every single member of staff in here is working in a higher challenge environment, we support each other as best we can, but you know, get realistic these are the most challenging young people in this county, and we're with them, how many hours a week? We are being asked to challenge behaviour, where the behaviour is really challenging, it's unbelievably stressful. So I don't know how long it is sustainable. I'd like to think I can do it forever, in terms of outdoor learning, I do believe it is pure outdoor learning, it's really taking what outdoor learning says it can do and going okay, let's put it to the test. And there's even a move within outdoor learning generally, what are the two CPD courses at IOL have set up, it's all about challenging behaviour ... so that's pretty major, they don't setup any others! Challenging behaviour is right up there.

What else about your experience here do you think I should know about? Is there something that I haven't asked you about?

With never really chatted about; the pros and cons of different activities, how you actually set a target within the context of an outdoor activity, there is lots of exciting things to do with change the new curriculum, the factor that Explorer is at another moment of big change, I don't know if necessarily we are going to take the new curriculum but you know it's flagged up as an opportunity for us, a chance for us to look at everything that we do, there's lots of things that we do that individually are very good, but there are some links that we need to bring back together again. Our success, my feeling is that our success is not as good as it was ... and in some respects that's the normal development of any new programme ... but I'm not just going to roll over and accept that you know, what's the next stage. We've never really chatted about intervention work, going into school and working with them on a one day a week basis ... there's this new kind of super-PRU model, the jury is still out on that one for me, small is beautiful you know. I understand in terms of financial provision, I understand the rationale, but in terms of quality of provision small is beautiful. Ratios I think that is a 'biggy' for me. When Explorer was first set up, the ratios were three

staff to four pupils. And now it is two staff to five pupils. When Brett started it very quickly went four to two, and when he asked me about going five to two, from an outdoor basis, it was on the understanding that we would never really have five pupils ... some are coming in and some are going out and some will be off and some will be excluded. The reality is when you've got five pupils out there, or even in here, it's too many, there are too many things going on ... and when I did some research for other providers, they were amazed that we were having success with a ratio of four to two.

Describe the best bits of Explorer?

For me personally, I absolutely loved working with Lloyd [recent outdoor colleague] so the staff relationship of the person you are working with ... the best bits then are those moments when you can see that the young people like ... the one I always refer to is we were going canoeing, we had a battle to get them to put the canoes on the trailer, we had a battle to get them down to the water, battle to get them into their buoyancy aids battle to get them into their waterproofs, got them out on the water and they were still squabbling, paddled across the estuary, got to the other side, still battling, got the tarp up, lit a fire ... and we were all sat down by the fire and one of them turned to us and said "this is the best day of my life!" At that moment there was nothing happening, they were just sitting there looking out across the estuary and the outdoor environment just connected with them and they felt good. Their esteem at that point was great. That's what makes it ... those are the best moments.

What are the worst parts?

The worst bits ... when you get frustrated that a young person can't see what it is that they are doing and the impact of what they're doing, you know they can't see beyond this afternoon. Sometimes it doesn't matter how many times you have the conversation, they can't see it ... when they can't see the potential within them, that's definitely the worst bit and when you can't help them to see it that's definitely the worst bit. Closely followed by when staff can't see the impact that their having on the pupils.

Okay, so if you're able to change Explorer, make it more successful, what are the key things you would do?

I would make sure that the two staff working with the pupils had the resources to stay with the group all the time for continuity of relationships, and to give them the resources to do whatever they want to, so if they felt that being indoors was

appropriate, if they felt that going outdoors was needed then they could go outdoors. They'd have the skills, qualifications, and the kit to do this. That's the biggest thing I had to change. We're working within a system whereby it doesn't support the continuity, it doesn't support being flexible enough to give the pupils actually what they need on that particular day, which was the original Explorer model.

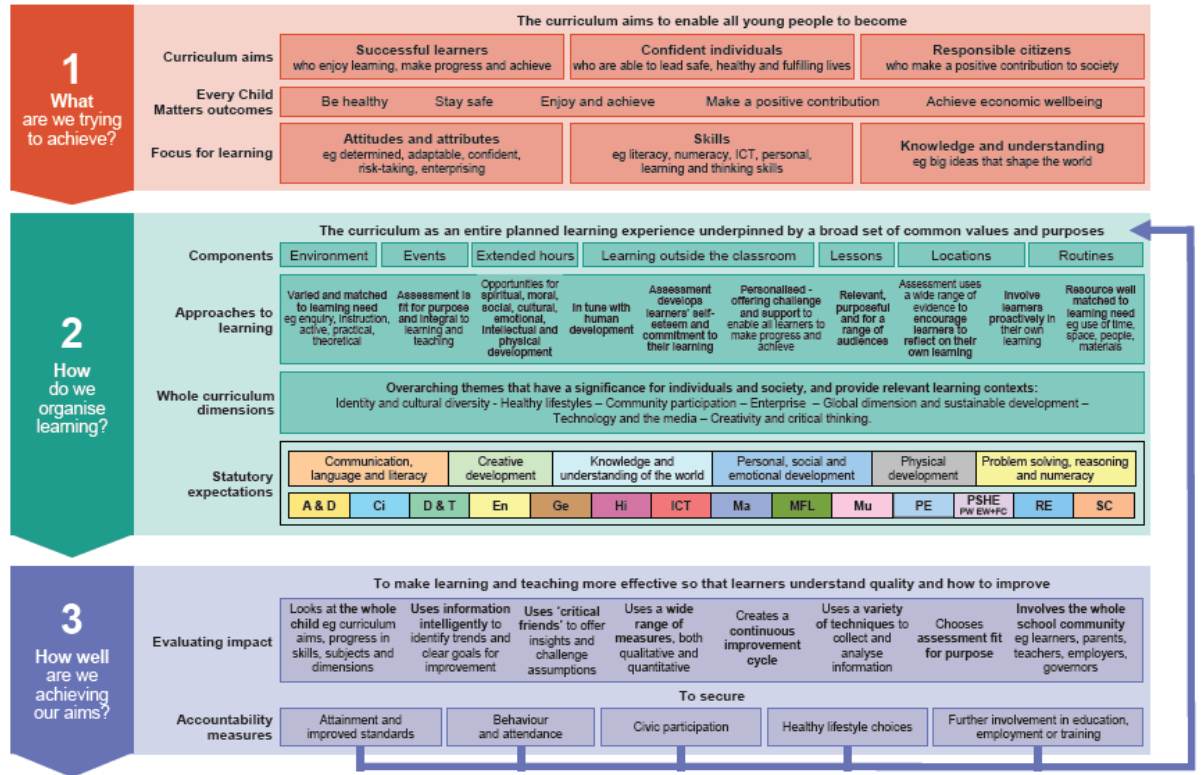
Appendix L – QCA: The Big Picture of the Curriculum

Working Draft: April - June 2008

A big picture of the curriculum



Three key questions



Adapted with thanks to colleagues at the Council for Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA)

Appendix M - Outdoor Learning Lesson Field Notes

Field Observation ~ 3rd July 2008 ~ 1100-1345

Outdoor Learning; Forest Skills, a woodland site in rural Devon

Activities; fire building, fire management, cooking – dough twists, eggs, bacon

Staff; 2 experienced outdoor tutors (1 with five years service, 1 with less than 3 months)

Class; 2 pupils, 1 at the end of PRU time due to be re-integrated within the next 2 weeks; 1 new to the programme with approximately 2 weeks in the PRU (2 class pupils absent on the day; 1 visiting mainstream school prior to re-integration, 1 permanently excluded from PRU)

Observations

The activity provides a vehicle for a process of constant and ongoing engagement between staff and pupils. There is a constant dialogue around; the daily REACH targets, general knowledge (e.g. what three things do we need for fire?) and general socialisation issues and ideas, as well as opportunities for frivolous fun

Staff Characteristics

Patience, persistence ~ a relentless engagement with the pupils, sense of place in the outdoors, calm manner

Pupil Characteristics

Needy, low attention/concentration, responsive to staff, engaged (long term pupil), subdued/withdrawn (new pupil)

General

A non-stop, continual addressing of the pupils ... including great 'hooks' for the pupils to help them address their general demeanour e.g. "find the inner snail" for pupils to have patience when cooking as an example.

NOTES: observations made recorded via electronic voice recorder to self, and written up on the same day

Field Observation ~ 4th July 2008 ~ 1100-1400

Outdoor Learning; Forest Skills, a woodland site in rural Devon

Activities; fire building & fire management; cooking – dough twists, sausages, bacon; shelter building; using tools including knives, saws, bill hooks

Staff; 2 experienced outdoor tutors (1 with five years service, 1 with less than 3 months)

Class; 4 pupils, 1 at the end of PRU time due to be re-integrated next term; 1 fairly new to the programme whose first session it was in the woods, and two long term PRU attenders, with no current next stage provision in place.

Observations

The activities provide a vehicle for a process of constant and ongoing engagement between staff and pupils. There is a constant dialogue around; general socialisation issues and ideas as reflected in the twice daily REACH scores. The outdoor activities are definitely the vehicle for learning how to behave in complex social interactions.

Staff Characteristics

- patience – even when there are constant multi-pupil demands being made
- persistence ~ a relentless engagement with the pupils
- a sense of place in the outdoors, calm manner
- awareness of and a constant monitoring of pupil action, inter-action or lack of such

Pupil Characteristics

- responsive to staff,
- engaged (long term pupils) needing little support or supervision
- in need of attention and the seeking of approval and recognition by the lead tutor
- frustration between pupils ~ clearly a lack of understanding or empathy between them, intolerant, showing extreme ego-centric behaviour
- competitive to gain attention
- pupils seem to enjoy the opportunities for physical aggression e.g. breaking or chopping wood,

General

- A non-stop, continual engagement between pupils and staff
- A good rapport between pupils and staff

NOTES: observations made recorded via electronic voice recorder to self, and written up on the same day

Appendix N – Focus Group: Leadership Adjectives

FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY

Please list five adjectives that best describe the LEADERSHIP of Explorer.

Post-it note activity.



Appendix O – Focus Group: Successful Adjectives

FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY

Why is Explorer SUCCESSFUL? Post-it note activity.



Appendix P - Focus Group: Staff Qualities Adjectives

FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY

Please list five adjectives that best describe the qualities of the staff at Explorer.

Post-it note activity.



Curriculum Policy



The aim of Explorer is to provide a short-term intervention that enables pupils to reintegrate into suitable mainstream education by teaching them to learn the value of themselves, others, society and the environment. We will adapt our curriculum to meet the special needs of our pupils when necessary.

Explorer is an exciting opportunity for young people to undertake work which will help them to better 'survive' in school/college. We have very small class sizes and our entire approach and curriculum at Explorer is designed to help improve the likelihood of the pupil 'surviving' in their new or existing school.

At Explorer, we don't simply use traditional classroom based lessons. Our approach to the pupils is based on developing the Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning with a non-violent communication style. We also use the great outdoors, a variety of games and role plays, a specially developed lesson entitled '*School Survival Skills*' and techniques derived from the *Learning to Learn* approach. This approach highlights the importance for the pupils to learn The 5 R's for lifelong learning model: **Readiness, Resourcefulness, Resilience, Remembering, and Reflectiveness.**

We have found that adventurous outdoor education can give the pupil a real opportunity to succeed at something they do not normally associate with learning. It gives them the chance to build trusting positive relationships with an adult, develop social skills with their peers, take risks in a safe and controlled environment and build up their own self-esteem.

We want our pupils to view their education and their relationships with peers and adults as a positive experience so that they can re-engage with learning and feel able to reintegrate into a mainstream setting and access the full curriculum on offer to them. However we can only be successful if we have the co-operation of all those concerned. Prior to an admission to Explorer we will visit the pupil at home and discuss the entire process, so that they are an active part of what is going on.

We ensure that all our dealings with the pupil, the parent/carer, the school and any outside agencies are always transparent, open and honest. We have a home-school agreement which includes commitments from Explorer as well as from the Parents/Carers and the pupils themselves.

The Explorer Curriculum:

Explorer has created a curriculum based on the Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning with Learning-to-Learn approaches, which also incorporates significant Outdoor Learning opportunities. This targeted personalised learning programme for each pupil has resulted in a scheme of work that teaches pupils how to choose to behave in an appropriate manner and accept responsibility for their own actions. Explorer teaches pupils the value of 'mutual respect' and specifically teaches the pupils to learn the value of themselves, others, society and the environment, so that they are more likely to succeed in a future suitable educational setting.

It is our intention to teach the pupils the skills necessary for 'School Survival' and this core aim is followed throughout all sessions at Explorer. To help achieve this aim we have very small groups with a small number of staff changes – this helps build trusting relationships. Each day starts with a 30 minute 'circle-time' session (over breakfast!) and includes time for personal reflection using the 'REACH scale' (Respect, Effort, Achievement, Choices & Honesty).

In our *School Survival Skills* sessions the pupils learn to cope with feelings and difficulties that may arise in school. These sessions include work on; anger management, stress management, emotional intelligence, teamwork, attitude, motivation, 'what-if' scenarios, social skills, self-esteem etc.

We play a range of different team, individual and board games with all our pupils. This helps in developing socialising skills, understanding the need for rules, how to lose and how to win, taking turns, taking risks etc.

This means that during a week at Explorer the pupils will take part in a selection of the following sessions:

Learning to Learn: Offers pupils an awareness of things they should consider such as the importance of water, nutrition, sleep and a positive environment for learning; some of the habits they should develop, such as reflecting on their learning so as to improve next time; how they prefer to learn and their learning strengths; how they can motivate themselves and have the self-confidence to succeed.



Outdoor Learning: Involving a variety of disciplines; kayaking, canoeing, archery, climbing, mountain biking, letterboxing, coastal studies, walking, camping, gorge scrambling, surfing etc.

School Survival Skills: Teaching pupils the skills they need to survive in a mainstream school (our main purpose!) These include sessions/work on: Anger Management, Stress Management, Emotional Intelligence, Spiritual Intelligence, Teamwork, Social Skills, Coping in Schools, Peer and Self evaluation, Role-playing scenarios etc.

SuccessMaker: A computer-based learning programme that specifically tackles the pupil's Literacy and Numeracy needs. It helps assess the level they are working at and then ensures they make progress at an appropriate pace.



MTa-Pass: Revolves around a selection of practical activities that are fun and involving. They lead into 'whole brain' learning through group interaction followed by individual and group review.



Different needs are met by the varied content, difficulty and length of the activities whilst the style of learning review may be by thought provoking discussion, drama or drawing. Quite simply MTa PASS is about getting young people to think about and understand what success means for them.

PSHCE: Personal Social Health & Citizenship Education – basically this is sex, drugs and rock'n'roll. We look at the many issues that affect teenagers today.

Speed Stacks: A fun and challenging desk-based activity that students can use to compete against themselves and others. It has also been recently adopted by many physical education programs to enhance rudimentary motor skills such as hand-eye coordination and ambidexterity as well as quickness and concentration and is used at the police training college in Hendon.



Games: We play a range of different team, individual and board games with all our pupils. This helps in developing socialising skills, understanding the need for rules, how to lose and how to win, taking turns, taking risks etc.

Review of Outdoor Learning: Recognising achievements, health and safety, rules, target setting etc – all relating to the Outdoor Education content.

Some National Curriculum subject areas: Integrated into many areas of our work are areas relating to the National Curriculum (English, Maths, Science, Geography, History etc.)

Art & Design: Drawing, sculpture, painting, technical design, etc

Projects: Individual and/ or small group sessions (as appropriate) based on Design and Technology projects or further work in any of the above areas, or maybe something entirely different!

ICT: Using computers and understanding digital media is an integral part of life today and as such any lessons could include the use of a variety of ICT equipment (e.g. computers, digital media, cameras, the internet etc).

Note: Pupils can and will be removed from classes / groups for one-to-one work, re-integration readiness skills, trials at school, etc as and when required.

Explorer Outdoor Activities:

Although we undertake many adventurous outdoor activities they all have the same aims:

- To increase pupils self-esteem
- To help build positive relationships with peers
- To learn to take risks in a controlled environment
- To understand health & safety & rules
- To increase pupils self-confidence

- To help form a positive & trusting relationship with an adult
- To facilitate learning that is not inside a classroom
- To learn the value of taking part and co-operating

These activities are linked to work in the classroom and the pupils can also earn nationally recognised certification in many areas.

So what do we actually do?

- Kayaking
- Walking
- Mountain Biking
- Surfing
- Archery
- Caving
- Canoeing
- Coasteering
- Forest Skills
- Orienteering
- Letterboxing
- Gorge Walking
- Climbing
- Rock Scrambling



Appendix R – Transcript of Staff Focus Group

STAFF FOCUS GROUP

Present

Sam – classroom teacher

Sarah – classroom assistant

Doug – senior outdoor tutor

Megan – assistant outdoor tutor

Liam – classroom teacher / deputy headteacher

Chloe – classroom teacher and outreach teacher

Sophie – classroom teacher

Why is Explorer successful?

Individual responses were written on post-it notes and flip-chart, followed by group discussion.

Is Explorer successful?

Sophie: The original remit for an intervention programme, when kids have been permanently excluded, is that they go back to mainstream school and stay there. But my definition is making independent and responsible young people. There is a policy remit and then how I interpret that ... It may be that the two go together in that they may be successful, on returning to school but sometimes the school don't fit them, it may be that school is not the right place...

Doug: There's three things, really. How we as an organisation as Explorer feel's that we are successful, there is how the staff feel we have been successful and thirdly, probably most importantly, it's how the students actually feel

Are you able to help the pupils be successful?

Sophie: It depends on the school when they return ... they can make immense progress with us and then go back to school, and it can all go wrong. And in some cases it is definitely the school's fault.

So in answering the question are you able to help the pupils be a successful...

It depends on what your criteria are

In terms of the remit how successful are you in terms of reintegrating into another school?

Liam: In the past we have been a lot more successful than we are now, but the external measure of success ... are the kids changing ... are boundaries of what schools accepting changing

Are you able to make them successful pupils, as you suggested earlier, as independent learners?

Sophie: Not necessarily as learners but as young people who can go out there and be responsible ... you know the thing is we are not starting from a very good foundation base, you can't do much ... you can do a little bit about their home and their values ... but most of it you can't change really ...

Are you able to help the pupils be successful? Or refine that question; are they able to be more successful than they were when they started with you?

Liam: The majority we can ... the majority we can ... it's giving them opportunities ... I think we make a difference for most of our kids ... a positive difference for the vast majority of our kids

Sophie: They can look back and say yeah, I got on really well with that guy and that might be the first time, they have had a positive relationship with an adult

Doug: There is a part of this, which is the main key to Explorer, which is to enable our young people to change to become more responsible citizens, but not now, we do it, and they probably become more responsible citizens in 10 years time ... what we do is we create a society of respect for us in 10 years time... or whatever that timespan is ... they are not ready when they go back to school, and it's proved over and over again, because they keep coming back to us ... and yet, although I've been here five years we can't tell if they are ready in 10 years time

So what you are telling me is that you'll believe in the success of Explorer is that it is the investment for the long-term

Doug: Exactly

Liam: I think we have heard more back positive things, and I qualify that, heard back more positive outcomes for kids ... as they have grown and left school, than we have negative, there's an awful lot of kids who had settled down, got good jobs, they are not taking drugs any more, they are more successful than they were than I can think of negative

Doug: They are more successful by coming to Explorer than staying where they were ... so just to clarify it's the time factor that we don't have enough time for the business of being here to say ...

So I get a sense of perhaps frustration, would that be fair to say that you perceive, you could do so much more if...

Sophie: There are not enough suitable professional educational settings for them to move on to and probably 50% of the kids that we get would do really well, they would thrive in a residential or weekly special school

So what you are telling me is that you do what you can in the time you have them for at the outlets where they are going

Liam: Sometimes that really lets us down

Sophie: Especially if the school and the teaching has not changed ... which depends where you are

Doug: The values ... the values which are taught, and the values which they hear, and listen and understand, I think, I believe sits in them as a seed and matures once they are ready to hear it for themselves

Megan: From my side, even if there is no direct measure of success, their time here they are doing something constructive, positive yeah, and the situations they could be in for that time i.e. sat at home doing nothing, will have negative effects, so even if you can't measure that they have moved on particularly, they haven't moved back they have been doing something constructive.

So what you're saying is that you have given them a positive constructive experience of the time they are with you and you believe along the way that you have given them some values which they might not yet be ready for but somewhere down the line that seed will germinate and help them down the line

Part of my research, if you like is to unpick the successes as perceived by the pupils and the staff because one of the difficulties is this direct measure of success and we work in that kind of educational culture

Sam: Is it pessimistic to say that sometimes a measure of success may just be getting to the end of the day without kids throwing something through a window, or without exclusions going up, and making sure that everyone is safe?

Liam: I would feel that it is a very strong measure of success if the starting point was that you didn't get to the end of the day safely and if you are now getting to the end of the day safely, then you are making progress that's how I see it. When I first started at Explorer there was a boy and I measured success with him by, in his first week, he managed about an hour on his first morning, then I had to send him home and exclude him the following day, then he came in and managed the whole morning, and over the course of the next few weeks, the exclusion rates went down and down and down until the point where he was attending full-time, and we didn't really get any work done with him but I saw that as enormous success. A child who had been out of school was now at a school and he was learning how to be at a school, not necessarily anything in English, maths or science.

So we have some kind of agreement that Explorer is successful, depending upon how you measure it ... let's have a look at what you've said about why Explorer is successful.

Photo image of group post-it notes successful 1 and successful 2

Liam: There is a big theme about relationships ... and in amongst that there are things like humour, caring, trusting, things like that... and supportive, caring, friendly.... personal.... supportive ... ethos...

Chloe: It's a bit difficult to separate them all

Liam: Yes it is...

So there is a whole bunch on relationships and ethos ... and it's all interrelated? Perhaps if we could focus on relationships then ... how would you characterise Explorer relationships?

Sam: respectful

Chloe: complex

Liam: [laughing] very complex

Sophie: well, it is a completely different relationship to school; you know there is no uniform, so we are not down on them like a ton of bricks about what they are wearing ... erm and they call us by our first names ... there is only a small group of them, so that immediately puts on a whole different perspective to a mainstream secondary school, where you may only see a pupil once or twice a week ... as opposed to five hours a day

Megan: you've taken the barriers away, you know, I hate school, I hate my teachers, I hate this, you've taken all that away so that they can then think about behaviour or why they are doing stuff, like if we can start them thinking about things you can't tell them to stop hating something.

Doug: it's unique ... **unique in?** in a school setting ...

What would you describe as the key factors that make your relationship unique?

Liam: for me, we are somewhere between a responsible parent or and a teacher, somewhere between that ... but we are neither ... there is a number of times when we get called dad or mum ... and a number of times that members of the public assume that we are a family, a somewhat dysfunctional one, but a family nonetheless.

And would that be a good thing to be described as a family?

Liam: yes

Doug: Yes, I think the young people would see it as a good thing

Megan: it is a key factor that the staff are getting to know the kids and vice versa

Doug: you have to understand that there is a timeframe for building this ... unique relationship, that is built on trust, respect for each other, and it's built on the knowledge that there's no harm, no prejudice ... it is without ... it's non-judgemental. ... there is a clean slate for them every day ... we are not going to hold a grudge and they can come back in and be themselves again.

Sam: I think we are actually being judgemental ... in fact, every single day, we are judgemental, we are judging their behaviour. We are setting targets ... we are judging that their behaviour is correct.

I guess what you are saying is that you pass, a judgement on them ... [agreement noises]... you are the arbiter of a socialisation process; you are not judgemental about them.

Would you say as a member of staff that you have to actually care about these pupils?

Sarah: I think so. And if you didn't, you wouldn't be doing your job properly

Sam: I care more about their mental health, are lots of our kids risk takers they will jump off bridges, joyride cars ... and maybe they can handle that, but it is more about their mental health that I am interested ...

Chloe: I care about them as individuals, and that is what is so frustrating at times ... in terms of the relationship you go so far and then you can go further backwards than when you began ... and that's frustrating because you do care about them. Of the course a lot of them might have difficult backgrounds, and with that chucked it is well...

So do you think they sense that you are an adult who actually cares about them?

Doug: sure, sure

Liam: without a doubt, the kids read you like a book, I mean, just because we read them like books

Sam: they know who to hurt like a family

So what you have described is a very intense educational relationship that from your experience is not present in a mainstream setting for a whole variety of factors

Sophie: I think it is but you don't have the opportunity to get so involved with the pupils ... so it's not intense like this, but on the other hand if you take it home with you, you won't last long so you have to be able to... you care about them ... so you have to be there for them when you are there and then you have to go home and forget all about it and not think about them ... and that is quite hard.

On post-it notes. Please list five adjectives that best describe the qualities of the staff at Explorer.

Individual responses were written on post-it notes and flip-chart, followed by group discussion.

Is there anything on the flip chart that surprises you?

Chloe: determined...

Sophie: it depends, you know ... that could be a bad thing ... one thing that you mustn't do, a bit like your own kids, is to bear grudges, if you hold onto things with pupils then that's very damaging

Liam: to me it means something else, if you're determined, I'm going to make this successful. It is going to bloody work. I accept that sometimes it worked, but I will never give up on a child.

Sophie: oh yes

Liam: if a child gives up on me then I have no control over that, but I won't give up.

Sophie: but how would you give up?

Doug: they sometimes they hang themselves before you get in the door ... and if you are determined to just let them carry on doing that, then you get them to take some time out before they come in, or you can just go and make yourself a cup of tea and let the kids sort it out

Sophie: in this context then is determined the same as being consistent? Because I think that consistency is vital, being determined, is that the same?

Doug: consistency is a personality trait of the staff; it's not in essence all the staff

Chloe: what I meant by determined was to make Explorer successful. So we are determined, we believe that educating kids at Explorer is great ... because like we said earlier, some of these don't fit into school ... we are determined as a cause to give them an education ... sometimes it is just to keep going that's part of it.

Tell me what you think about the REACH targets, the process itself? Do they help you and if so how?

Sarah: you know that with some of the kids it is going to cause problems.

Chloe: the kids enjoy doing it when they know they have had a good day

Megan: there are times when it makes things more difficult, or it's not necessarily relevant to what you are doing but also that's part of having consistency, the core routines they are there all the time, so even if it may not be useful and they do kick off sometimes because of it they do realise that they have had a bad day you are getting that message across about their behaviour.

Liam: it's useful to show that there is a consequence of their behaviour, there is a positive consequence that they review their day and they may feel good and get a slip home. But there is also a negative consequence in that they are made to face it and ultimately they make themselves sometimes feel incredibly bad because they kick-off about it and that ends up with some very strong emotions ... very strong negative emotions, which will hopefully be a consequence of their action ... you see what I mean?

Doug: I find it different because REACH the questions that came about I was involved in it, and I see it as a reviewing tool ... so it is part of a reflective process, and the REACH gives us a vocabulary ... I think that if you

only take one compartment of this resource, then it is wrong to look at it, just in that one element. Questions themselves have changed its changed many times before, it's got to where it is now, and it needs changing again. Ultimately what you are doing is having a review that can be assessed at the end of the day, so if the words are not quite right change the words.

Megan: as a tool you can use it in lots of different ways, you can leave them just to tick their boxes and have a chat amongst themselves and other times you may not use the sheet you might have a chat with them, you can focus on one part of it, you can talk about their choices, I think it's quite a flexible tool.

Sophie: it is a useful tool, but one of the most surprising things about it is how it embeds the language, for example. One kid might be walking along and knock another on the head, not hard you know, and the other pupils were say "hands, feet and objects" (group join in and laugh) or a new kid might say something and the others respond "that's a putdown" and they might be shocked because it never been told by their peers that something that they've said is a put down. I think that that is better than anything

Doug: it's a good tool, but what we need to remember is that Explorer is ever changing and we are stagnating and if we don't amend the words and how we use them...

Do you believe that Explorer is a changing or evolving approach?

Doug: I have been here five years and on each day, it is changing. I'm in a different organisation now to what it was when we first started.

Liam: it is the most changeable environment I have ever worked in.

Chloe: I think it is important that it is proactive rather than reactive ... things can happen in the base, one day and it's natural to react to them, rather than actually think I'll act on that and do something for the future

Are the core values the same?

Doug: I believe so...

So what are the core values?

Sophie: I think respect probably...

Liam: you can almost come up with the ethos of Explorer, core values using REACH: Respect Enjoyment Achievements Choices Honesty... you could almost, it doesn't quite fit...

Nods around the table? Disagreements?

Sophie: well, certainly respect and choices I think...

Chloe: when the kids come to us, almost 90% of them when you start chatting with them getting to know them better, you start talking about where the problems were in school and almost always it will be the teachers they didn't get on with, then you can probe a bit deeper.... I am not saying it's all the teachers, but that whole respect thing, you know, they didn't listen to me when I did so and so ... there is a massive amount of the labelling and often it's not the other pupils it's the relationship with that teacher.

So the core values are about respect and choices?

(Nods of agreement)

What does the PASS data tell you and how do you use it?

Doug: how much the mainstream schools have damaged their kids. It gives us an idea about how little we have damaged the kids, so we can show progression...

Sophie: I don't really know anything about it yet...

Doug: we need to be clear about this PASS data and how it's been used... was a training day setup that the indoor staff the teaching staff could use it, and the outdoor staff wouldn't, so I can't comment.

Chloe: it's a bit tricky with PASS because some days you'll decide to do PASS with your group and an individual in the group will be particularly in a bad mood that day and it will be appalling results compared to what it's telling us that he has gone backwards and of course it works the other way he could have a great day... it's got to be treated quite carefully, I think which is why I think it's good to do it regularly so that it can average out. Because that's what I find when you do it first thing with the kids they don't always answer it may be as well as they could because they don't feel comfortable with you, there's a lot of questions for them ... I think it's a powerful tool for us and when it worked it's been successful to go look, look how that really help this person to become more confident, they are learning, and they like education, we just need to bear in mind all these factors; when you do it how you do it...

Sam: I do it slightly differently to Chloe; I would do it after I've known the kids are a short while as I think that's more useful...

Liam: some of the questions are a little bit loaded as well, can't stay? I have sat there with a child and the question is "do you like your teachers?".... there is a loaded element to some of it

Are there some factors that are more useful to you than others? And do you take it and work it into your planning?

Chloe: I certainly don't either as effectively as I should do, you know we've got a tool that you know if you use regularly, not too regularly, then hopefully, you could go to some of the learning areas and it may not be just so much of their behaviour

Do you think that all the staff sat around the table would benefit from being involved with PASS?

Doug: it comes out on the reviews, so it seems quite a successful tool and I do see some interesting facts through it, but I don't know where those facts come from

Liam: things I've found it useful for is when you do it and it then backs up what you feel as a teacher that's really nice because you've got some statistical data, which unfortunately we are all measured by, you've got something backing up your professional judgement and it gives you that the validity to say, yeah I know, but here is a measurement a number that says this child has improved just as much as I said he had

Chloe: and also importantly for the child, I've had it before with one of mine who has improved greatly and shown it to them and they've gone "wow" ... and can I take a copy home, I have improved my attitude? So it can be really successful to use with the pupils.

Could Explorer as a whole use it more creatively?

Sam: we've thought about getting them up on the boards

Liam: I find that kind of thing, and I am only speaking personally, I find that quite difficult because when kids have got low self-esteem, they will classically look at theirs and compare it with someone else's, they always compare their scores with someone else, they will compare themselves against the best person, because that's what they want to be, whatever they mean by best, ooh and I'm not the best so therefore I am

rubbish. Whereas what I want them to do is look at well okay, I scored 13% on my attitude to teachers, I still hate teachers, but my attitude is now 30% ... well that's over a doubling of your scoring so you've improved massively. What I do is look at the factors where they are in deficit, where they are really low and target that will stop. There may be some factors, like attitudes to teachers, that is quite high, so I won't worry about that I'll concentrate on the areas where they score really low.

Do you think you could use it in the outdoor teaching?

Doug: yes I do.

Could the PASS software and the data it produces be used more consistently in Explorer?

Multiple responses of yes, and laughter and 'sounds like it yes!'

The outdoor-learning appears to be a key feature of the Explorer approach. Is outdoor learning, a key fundamental feature of their Explorer curriculum or is it just a reward for "naughty boys and girls."?

Sam: it's definitely not a reward!

Chloe: no, it is not a reward.

Sam: I left mainstream [teaching] because of that attitude, it's definitely not a reward.

Doug: I think it is a more immediate way of showing that keeps the consequences of the choices they make.

Sophie: it takes them outside of their comfort zone, it challenges them and that can be really useful because we can't always do that in the classroom setting

Liam: I think it is a fundamental part of what we do. Because of its difference, the ability to do something other than what we normally do in the classroom, and it's definitely not a reward because sometimes they don't want to go out in the rain and cold, they don't want to go out and face a fear, they are scared that they are not going to be able to do something, again, it is an opportunity to teach resilience but in a completely different setting, they are not comparing themselves against 99% of their colleagues in a mainstream school.

So could these outcomes that outdoor learning brings, be achieved by other means?

Doug: I don't think it could be. It's such a special place, the young people to achieve things, even the very smallest thing, they can go away with a feeling of positive self worth, a feeling of I can do things, that nobody else can take away from me, that can't be achieved by taking them down the sports hall, that can't be achieved by taking them in the kitchen.

Sophie: well they're in the elements aren't they?

Megan: it's bringing lots of things together, working as a group and the whole team work thing, leadership and safety and the environment, and adventure and fact that it is so flexible ... people assume, as I assumed before I started here, that you are going outdoors to do an activity, and it's not like that at all, your whole day, every sort of minute almost, is flexible, it changes all the time depending on the group and other factors. You are not abseiling down 200 ft cliffs; you may just be wandering around for half an hour and making a cup of tea on a Trangia.

Do you believe that the pupils value it?

Chloe: I think it's like one of those things you said today it is like the seeds; they will remember and value it in 5 or 10 years time.

Sam: yes yes they will be sitting on the loo somewhere in five years time and go...

Doug: I have found it particularly difficult this year because I've had lots of students who have said "no. I'm not going out." And they won't physically leave the building and for me as an outdoor instructor, I find that quite ... and it takes a lot to get your head around.

Doug: we are fortunate in that our ethos is based on going outdoors for an activity and challenging things, themselves and each other, and doing adventurous exciting things mind boggling stuff ... like making tea on a Trangia

Liam: it opened a few doors, you know, it's opened a lot of opportunities for kids who previously didn't really know what to do and were risk takers, who liked going joyriding and smashing windows and stuff, found an outlet it's something that they can do that gives them that buzz, but it is constructive, got a few kids who are at xxxxxxxxxxxx (local further education college specialising in outdoor activities and sports) and one I know of who works in an outdoor shop, and one, who we just got a letter from his dad thanking us turning his son from a couch potato into and outdoor enthusiast.

Liam: so it is part of what we do, a big part... I'd like to see more integration... I'm not sure that it is as well integrated to what we do as it could be and at times, it is separate, not just physically separate, but emotionally separate as well for the kids.

What do you think are the biggest challenges and constraints for Explorer?

Sam: other people's attitudes...

Chloe: I think some of the health and safety stuff ... we went to a great place the other day to make a raft, but you can't do this, you can't do that, you've got to wear a helmet ... and that is such a pain... and you just lose all the spontaneity.

Sam: yes, they can, they just need Rich's approval.

Doug: I think that's the biggest challenge for Explorer is our bases.

Liam: The physical accommodation and the budget behind it, because it will change. The physical restraints of the buildings is just criminal ... the fact that only one has access to an outdoor space ... the other two bases have no outdoor space and we are a school and we don't have any outdoor space, and I think it's just criminal. The volatile 14 year olds should not have a chance to just run off steam is crazy...

Liam: also county policy is a huge barrier filling us with unsuitable pupils for the type of provision we offer here, pupils who should be in a special school, they have statements and shouldn't be with us... pupils with Asperger's or ADHD or medical conditions who just shouldn't be with us that just prevent us completely from doing our core work

Sam: one constraint for me is the rest of the industry catching up with us and is taking on board what we are doing and how we do things...

Is it a constraint or a challenge?

Sam: it's definitely a challenge because Explorer is very innovative and different organisation and if everyone else catches up with us and everyone else starts doing the things that we do, what's going to set us apart? What is going to make us different?

On post-it notes. Please list five adjectives that best describe the leadership of Explorer.
Individual responses were written on post-it notes and flip-chart.

OK folks, thanks for your time and contribution today.

Appendix S

Extracts from Research Diary

all names of direct contact participants have been anonymised

28/6/2007 A useful meeting with Rich at Explorer, it really gives me a sense of what the place is really like. He wants to set self-esteem targets for the pupils. Not sure that this scientific positivist approach is appropriate. I have given him a copy of Harter's SPPC as well as the classic Rosenberg. This may help narrow it down in terms of a vocabulary to use. This could become a piece of action research, but there seem to be too many factors to tie it down to one instrument and measurement. It might be that the 'sensitive ethnography' and Bourdieu's work I discussed with Dr Darren Heath may be a research approach to take.

I think of Estelle Morris' resignation speech as education secretary when she talked about what is and is not measurable and what is valued. Must get a copy of this!

Rich seems to be receptive to the idea of the Video Diaries for pupils. They apparently already write a 'feelings diary'... we discussed the possibility of self-esteem being linked to behaviour being linked to depression - I will think about this - and measuring using the PHQ-9 questionnaire used by GPs - although maybe the mental health of the pupils could be a little too heavy and an area in which I am untrained.

I left with some paperwork ... these kids seem thoroughly tested when they arrive at Explorer - the SNAP (special needs assessment profile) has three sections alone - the 'What I feel' could be useful

18/9/2007 Rich has been busy. He has adapted the Harter SPPC with more UK and lower ability kids in mind. He has also adapted and is using the Rosenberg scale in order to set daily targets for the kids. I am unconvinced - all seems rather geared to what Gewirtz called managerialism and all seems rather imposed. I would like to broaden this research and find out more - this is a complex multi-faceted 'soup' of human inter-action. This reductionist approach is not for me - for a start the sample size is far too small to be able to do anything of significance with the statistics - there's only 15 pupils here at this base at a maximum.

After our meeting an email from Rich suggests that the rest of the staff are not that impressed by the idea of setting of self-esteem targets ... and he is finding the language difficult for the children to access, even on the Rosenberg scale.

19/10/2007 Bingo - Sociocultural theory - that is the perspective I am coming from - Vygotsky & Bruner & Feuerstein and the social-interactionist psychological approach to learning all nicely located in the interpretive paradigm - Prof. Bert makes it seem very clear to me I enjoyed his talk

20/10/2007 I enjoyed a really full on discussion with my EdD 'community of practice' about the ETHICS of video diaries with children ... some good and challenging thoughts. Is this just a gimmick? Maybe or could it be a useful tool to hear the pupils voice? I just don't see them a writing reflective paper based diaries - need to remember: safety, dignity, empowerment for the pupils. Must make sure video diaries is included on my UoEx official proposal form and that

consent forms are in place – and check what Explorer has already established with parents

Dweck and Self Theories – she is a self as a changeable trait – will read more of her work

been advised to check out an approach to research called ‘illuminative evaluation’ – must do this!

27/11/2007 The REACH twice daily system looks interesting! Respect Effort Achieve Choices Honesty – 5 areas, I wonder if these could be related more widely to the ECM 5 areas?

Explorer have bought another measurement package PASS – pupils attitudes to self and school – this looks interesting I will have to research it and see what I find out. It appears that all pupils will be assessed on it and then the software compares the responses to the norms programmed in and then it generates a package of results – that could be easier than stats. And manual manipulation of Harter’s SPPC – especially if the staff are not that committed to Rich’s ideas

10/1/2008 Another after school session with Rich at Explorer, I don’t know how he and the rest of the staff do it – all day conflict. He seems pretty excited about the new PASS software as it has produced some graphs that show some massive changes for some of the pupils – there is regular testing – on arrival then every six weeks. Rich and I agreed that the Harter measurement should be suspended and that we focus on the PASS.

I found a news item about PASS and an article in a book following the email correspondence with one of the authors Glen Williams. It seems sound and has been adapted from the myself as a learner scale -MALs of Prof Bob Burden of Exeter Uni! Still can’t really find any academic evaluation of its use – the W3 Insights website suggests that lots of LEAs are using it – I like to think that I am pretty useful on EBSCO, BEI and ERIC but nothing seems to come up, I hope this is not a negative thing – at least I am not planning to base my entire thesis around it as an instrument.. although that may be quite new and ground breaking ...

discussed and agreed that we would use the term ‘self-esteem’ as a generic cover all for general concepts of self, in the context of school. I really like PASS as it is not traditional self-esteem, but is more about pupils’ sense of self about themselves in the context of schools. That’s good, I think it is in Emler’s research that suggests that teenagers can have really high self-esteem: they are good at joyriding, shop lifting drinking, drugging and sex, yet can be disaffected by school. PASS seems to focus this nicely.

2/2/2008 lots of ideas and theories to explore that may help inform the thesis. Theory of Planned Behaviour (Ajzen & Fishbein) – whose targets are the PRU setting – where is the locus of control – explore attribution theory?

Explorer: I need to analyse the processes inside the PRU - what the kids make of it and what the staff make of it – what enables them to be ‘successful’? what identity do they have – explore identity confusion (Erikson 8 stages of conflict?)

Why don’t I make a talking head cartoon for on screen PC recording of Video Diaries – ask the e-learning director at work – we must have a techie who could do that – it sounds great but

would take me hours!

I guess in week 1 I need to ask the people to tell me the story of how they got to Explorer (not by taxi!!) but the story of their journey to bring them to the PRU

- 6/2/2008** a sense of excitement, anticipation and impatience. The last EdD weekend saw a quantum leap of things falling into some semblance of order and a reframing and focus on my thesis.
- This is a journey to carry out alone, but impossible for me to do alone without the support, guidance, critique and friendship of others!
- 24/2/2008** very positive feedback from meeting with both research supervisors – they seem encouraging and supportive with a good research design grounded in theory
- 13/3/2008** met with Explorer teaching staff – and outlined research – quite apprehensive about this but I think me and they were all reassured by the meeting. It makes sense with timescales for me to collect data in the school summer term – it looks like I can make 2 days a week in their summer term to Video Diary Big Brother style, interview and focus group the staff. It would be great to do some kind of 3 month or 3 year follow up on these pupils. 3 years outside the realms of this thesis, but 3 months is do-able – just not too sure of easy access to the pupils once they have left Explorer.
- 25/4/2008** first meeting with first class – I do like the unplanned and reactive nature needed when working with these types of pupils – still somewhat apprehensive before I started.
- This is all very new for me ... and then I guess. Wow, they can't sit still for any length of time or easily remain seated, there is lots of movement around the room, but no-one seems to leave. Perhaps there are clear boundaries here – physical and metaphorical?
- It's good to review the video footage of themselves with them, it is relationship building and gives me a chance to 'member check' the meaning of what they have said – not particularly Big Brother style anonymous diary room!
- all this non-contact time waiting is useful to think and observe. I have started the list of questions and thoughts that I can explore with the staff
- 2/5/2008** there is a lot of waiting on my part – fortunately I can be with the classes and participate (its hard not to) – so there is a lot of informal relationship building – like it appears that there is a lot of informal learning going on here
- from the responses so far I am going to need to re-work the questions and just see how these Diaries emerge.... the original planned 9 weeks won't work and without me in the room (still their choice) its not really that private. Dave suggested hanging the parachute up as a backdrop curtain – have tried this and seems to work – it would be better if there was a smaller office to use somewhere – not that the buildings and facilities here are that impressive – a bit like a throwback to the 1970s!

would Explorer be as successful without the outdoor learning?

- 9/5/2008** I am waiting to hear the children's voice!
1. Their mood and willingness to co-operate with me – they are very moody up and down from visit to visit – they have so much other stuff going on in their lives
 2. Their ability to articulate their thoughts – I am not sure of their ability to analyse their actions and behaviours – this is more of a prompted discussion than a private video diary – perhaps this is what will help them have their voice heard?
- 15/5/2008** an interesting mix of needy pupils – they all seem to crave attention in their own way – one who won't be videoed but will happily talk and record
- it is quite a privilege to be accepted by such a supportive (of me) staff who are very welcoming
- 16/5/2008** some of the pupils can try and play games with me ... especially XXXXX a girl! I guess some pupils will not respond to me, just giving mono-syllabic answers even with me here.
- PE as a subject is again recurring.... or is it that these pupils like kinaesthetic activities? they don't appear to be the types to be classic sports teams players in the traditional PE sports teams sense?
- Good to spend some time informally with XX in the office – the school administrator or secretary (not sure what her title is!) She seems to be (like the other staff) really caring about the pupils. She likes having an open door with no keypad control in order for the pupils to be able to steam in and out as they see fit she clearly builds a relationship with them ... she clearly is not working just for the money ... perhaps it is ALL ABOUT RELATIONSHIPS!?!?!?!?
- 17/5/2008** another weekend for the EdD community of practice! I love these, and learn so well in this kind of interactive environment! Prof Lily sessions on analysis are really useful at focussing my thinking – what is an authentic voice – it is clear that my conceptual position is from Sociocultural theoretical perspective...
- must use Miles & Huberman to help guide how I present and analyse the data
- perhaps I need to present the key themes in some kind of concept map as a summary
- 18/5/2008** this illuminative evaluation is great! Parlett & Hamilton 'evaluation as a form of social anthropology' an 'holistic study – programmes rationale, operations, achievements and difficulties should all be studied within the context in which they occurred.'
- 22/5/2008** more pupils – different class ... watching funny video clips on the PC and chatting about life in general ... a good way to build up into a video diary session but boy this takes time!
- 10/6/2008** lots of organising and sorting out of dates and times for interviews, the focus group, Video diaries and questions that need asking ... I guess this is what was described by Parlett and

Hamilton as **progressive focussing?**

I have decided that this is not an illuminative evaluation as I am not immersed in the PRU enough – I only have access to a one off staff focus group on their staff day. It is best described as an **exploratory case study informed by illuminative evaluation**. Good old YIN!! I guess Stake would call this *responsive evaluation!* This follows many months of reading around the research methods texts – and trying to see where I fit ... and led me to my phrase **METHODOLOGICAL ANXIETY** which is a result of being a professional engaged in research (EdD) rather than a professional researcher (PhD)

12/6/2008 there is a lot of informal learning here – the staff take time to build relationships with the pupils and are able to have fun with them and seem to genuinely care ... they take an interest in the pupils but explicitly acknowledge the very low ratios make it possible

interesting – making you do things you don't want to ... they should do ... its school! Perhaps they find all the choices and rights and responsibilities too much to cope with at times?

13/6/2008 some of the pupils are getting tired/bored of these interviews ... especially Jeremy Clarkson on the welcome screen ... I think they want to do big brother just to 'get off lessons' and not be in their class with their teacher at least they are being open and honest with me (I think) telling all the 'bad' stuff (REACH targets – feeling positive targets) as well as what they like doing

when pupils use Big Brother and I am not in the room I get a load of nonsense from them ... I was told that he had not taken his Ritalin today must get this Video pixelated so I can show to people to indicate some of the problems with trying to hear the pupils voice

some of these pupils seem unable to think for themselves about themselves ... how can we articulate the pupil voice? Or am I just a crap interviewer? Or is this the wrong method? I can't see how a focus group or group interview would work with these pupils though ... there is so much posturing when they are all in a room together

another good interview with pupil Dave who has told me a bigger picture than before... it may be good here with excellent relationships but this is clearly not universally true ... replaying video is a good way of MEMBER CHECKING with pupils

excellent pupil Steve has identified for him that the Explorer experience is about the whole thing i.e. it is an holistic experience he is the most mature and sorted of the pupils and really keen to move onto his next school next term.

20/6/2008 interview with the headteacher

on arrival only 2 pupils remain – 1 outdoor 1 indoor ... apparently it all "kicked off" yesterday and 7 pupils were excluded for the day!! It meant that we were not interrupted ... but wow... how exhausted I am after an hour of interviewing ... total focus and total immersion and trying to progress the questions and tease out the meaning of what he was saying ...

I am sure that I will have not done some things oh well given it a really good attempt

just over an hour ... plenty of data to add richness to this study ... just need to transcribe it now!

24/6/2008 I have really developed a rapport with Liam's class... I will focus on these for my 3 month follow up

25/6/2008 managed to speak with Dr Susi Pinkus to discuss the PASS software she was using in research for Oxford and seems to reckon that it is a helpful tool

26/6/2008 not a proper school more like a day care centre says Matt!

there is again this feeling of being cared for coming through from the pupils ... maybe it is a form of affection – or even parental love they are sensing that has been missing in their lives? Certainly from these interviews they did not experience it at their previous school.

once again pupil Chris highlights the focus, the positive experience of kinaesthetic activities – art, cooking, swimming etc

maybe because these pupils have been here quite a while now but there is a general feeling of Ifun – laughing and joking with the staff

wow I now have 26.2 Gb of videos stored on my hard drive excellent its going to take some time analysing that

30/6/2008 staff focus group on their training day ... I have been given about an hour and a half and a range of staff seems good – will use some creative active post-it note activities to give this some direction

some clear messages seemed to come across about the curriculum, caring relationships, success etc

2/7/2008 Interview with Rich ... deep thinking, analytical and caring man ... wish I could be that giving in my daily work he certainly considers every question very thoroughly – wish he hadn't spoken so quietly

his description of pupils change sounds like Prochaska and Di Clemente's Trans theoretical Stages of change model

8/7/2008 there are certainly plenty of challenges to researching this PRU ... interrupted interviews or Video Diaries, unintelligible language from the pupils and then today. I was turning up for the whole day to spend it with Liam and his class he was off sick, the head was away, and the deputy in charge was not very helpful and clearly did not want me in the unit today why do I make him uncomfortable – what is there to hide/ does he have a good idea that the pupils have told me their very negative views about him? Perhaps this is another indication of why this is not a classic *illuminative evaluation*... pretty close though – wish I could explore this aspect of the PRU other than what the kids have said!

15/7/2008 last real visit – an informal session with classes and THANK YOU certificates for the pupils participation and cake for the staff to say thanks for all their assistance ... I am not sure that the certificates will be enough of a hook to make them talk to me again

time to be patient and transcribe and analyse formally the data I have gathered...

I have been an interviewer, a focus group facilitator and explored this PRU – I believe a more detailed in depth consideration of the experience than an Ofsted inspection would give.

Appendix T

REACH Traffic Lights ~ Reflective Score Card

Respect	Effort	Achievement	Choices	Honesty
Have I kept hands feet and objects to myself?	Have I given everything a go?	How hard did I try to reach my target?	How have I reacted to instruction?	Have I always told the truth this morning?
Have I let people work without disrupting them?	Have I kept going the whole time?	Did I meet my target for the whole of the morning?	How well have I looked after Voyagers and others property?	Have I kept to rights, responsibilities and the fair class rules?
Have I spoken in an appropriate manner?	Did I complete what I had been asked to do?	Did I have to be reminded about my target?	How quickly did I settle in to the session?	Have I behaved in a trustworthy manner?
Have I tried to make people feel better about themselves?	My effort has been...	My target was...	Have I taken responsibility for my own behaviour?	Have I been honest to myself about what I can do?
Have I accepted others for who they are?	Have I helped others to behave appropriately?	How ready am I to change my target?	Did I make the right choices this morning?	Have I filled in my REACH form honestly?

● = 2 points
 ● = 1 point
 ● = 0 points

Total =

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