Disciplinary School Exclusion: Pushing Children over the Edge

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Abstract

Disciplinary school exclusion, alongside the issue of school discipline, has been identified as a problem in education since the mid-1980s (Department for Education and Skills, 1985). Education in England has been exclusive since its conception, beginning with the exclusion of more than 50% of the population from schooling when it was only available to the upper and middle 'classes' (Gibbs, 2022). There is a distinct gap in the literature exploring disciplinary school exclusion as an object constructed through discourse, using a discourse analytic approach.

This thesis adopts a critical realist and social constructionist perspective to explore the construct of disciplinary school exclusion through samples of talk collected from decision makers in schools. Five participants were interviewed with a focus on the topic of disciplinary school exclusion. The interviews were transcribed and analysed using an amalgamation of Willig's (2013) Foucauldian discourse analysis and Parker's (1992) steps for distinguishing discourses.

Constructions of disciplinary school exclusion that emerged included disciplinary school exclusion as protection, as a punishment, as a weapon and as a bad thing. The decision makers employed discourses of 'education as an unquestionable good,' 'civilised society,' 'human rights,' 'criminal justice' and the 'essential nature of humans' which legitimise the use of disciplinary school exclusion. An alternative, oppressed discourse that emerged from the analysis was a discourse of 'education as an oppressive regime.' The use of disciplinary school exclusion appears to be legitimised to protect education, civilisation, and human rights.

At the outset, this thesis aimed to explore 'exclusion' to identify possibilities for disturbing the discourses around children excluded to facilitate their inclusion. As the analysis progressed, and the wider discourses that emerged from the data were critically analysed alongside the chronological review of education policy, the concept of inclusion itself became problematic and led to questions about the purposes of education as it stands. The implications for educational

psychology practice are discussed followed by recommendations for future research.

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Chapter 1:   Introduction

1.1 Introduction

This thesis forms part of the requirements of the Doctorate in Applied Educational Psychology at the University of Nottingham. I completed the research whilst on professional practice placement working as a trainee educational psychologist within an Educational Psychology Service.

This chapter will begin by outlining the theoretical orientation to this research, followed by my positioning and subjectivity statement which will outline my journey to the doctorate. I will conclude this chapter with the rationale for this research and an outline of the structure of the thesis.

1.2 Theoretical Orientation: Turning to Language

This thesis adopts a critical realist and social constructionist philosophical position to explore how disciplinary school exclusion is legitimised within the wider discourses employed by decision makers in education.

Social constructionism is concerned with the generation of meaning through language, and the way in which meaning is generated, transformed, and suppressed to become "what we take to be objective knowledge" (Gergen, 2001, p.25). Social constructionism argues that knowledge is generated through discourses, which "systematically form the objects of which they speak" (Foucault, 1972, p. 54; I. Parker, 1992).

Discourses are culturally specific sets "of meanings, metaphors, representations, images, stories, statements and so on that in some way together produce a particular version of events" (Burr, 2016, p.74). If we accept the social constructionist belief that there are multiple versions of events constructed through language, then it follows that there are multiple ways of representing any one object, event or person through language (Burr, 2015).

Disciplinary school exclusion has been identified as a problem within education since the mid-1990s (Department for Education, 2019b; Parsons, 2018). However, disciplinary school exclusion prevails as an institutional practice, with

official rates of disciplinary school exclusion increasing since the 2011-12 academic year (Department for Education, 2020; Parsons, 2018).

Thrupp and Archer (2003) argue that problem-solving approaches within education "reflect 'common-sense', functionalist, ahistorical, individuated and often monocultural views about the purposes and problems of schooling" (Thrupp & Archer, 2003, p. 4). The exploration of problems in education through a critical lens enables the researcher to engage with wider socio-cultural and political factors (Thrupp & Archer, 2003).

This thesis takes the perspective that an exploration of why children are suspended or excluded from school via disciplinary procedures is an important starting point as a catalyst for change at the level of policy and educational practice (Hallett & Hallett, 2021). A critical response to exclusion as a problem enables research that is wider in scope than what is currently known about how to respond to behaviour deemed problematic in schools (Hallett & Hallett, 2021).

Therefore, this thesis will explore the problem of disciplinary school exclusion through a critical perspective, drawing on a social constructionist epistemology and critical realist ontology, and through a discourse analytic approach.

1.3 A Note on Terminology

This thesis focuses specifically on disciplinary school exclusion as an institutional practice, rather than exploring wider educational exclusion through exclusionary practices (such as internal exclusion), unofficial exclusions (such as coerced home education) or managed moves (Hutchinson & Crenna-Jennings, 2019). However, instead of using an acronym to refer to disciplinary school exclusion throughout, I will refer to disciplinary school exclusion and 'school exclusion' interchangeably. I will clarify other forms of exclusion in schools or society by referring to them as unofficial exclusions, exclusionary practices, or social exclusion.

1.4 Positioning Statement

Reflexivity is fundamental to discourse analytic research (Pomerantz, 2008a). As an emerging post-structuralist researcher, I must be aware of how my subjectivity (my experiences, beliefs, values, morals) are at play throughout the construction of this text (I. Parker, 2013; Pomerantz, 2008a). I must also enable the reader to evaluate the quality of this research by understanding the vantage point I take (Yardley, 2017). Therefore, the following sections aim to present my reflections on the development of my own subjectivity.

1.4.1 "The Gift"

First and foremost, I must note my inherent criticality. Since I was a very small child, my mother affectionately named me "her gift" because I could never let anything lie if I felt something was wrong. This could have been conflict in the family or perceived injustice, and the outcome of this so-called 'gift' was that the family would meet together to develop a shared narrative about 'the problem.' Of course, at the time this felt like arguments or heated discussions.

This criticality is a heavy burden, particularly as a young, strong-minded, and insecure child and adolescent. I struggled for many years with this strong sense of justice and impulsive need to draw attention to injustice, seeing the problems this created (by some fairly unskilled social interactions on my part) as a reflection of badness in myself. Where different types of criticalities are needed, such as in academic study, I find myself giving too much or not enough. This balance is something I have been striving towards and continue to do so.

I have often wondered whether this sense of myself as critical, but blundering, is something that has drawn me to the profession of educational psychology, desperately looking to develop the skills to challenge the wrongs in the world without causing social pandemonium.

1.4.2 Resisting the culture

Perhaps the beginning of this journey was most evident to me during my sixth form years, but it seems the writing on the wall for my tendency towards resistance was much earlier. A conversation with my mum about this very piece

of writing prompted a memory in herself of resisting cultural expectations on my behalf when I was 5 years old.

My mum had a very different early start to the one she was able to provide for me. She came from what she described as a "working-class" background within a "very dysfunctional family", although she is still proud that she passed her 11-plus and managed to get into grammar school! She told a story of a time when I was in 'transition' (more widely known as 'Reception') and she got a "ticking off" from the teacher about me not completing my homework.

Mum described me as a "busy child" and said I was too tired after the school day for reading and writing practise, so she didn't make me do it. She reflected on the expectations and culture around sending kids to private school: to achieve? But she didn't think homework was important for me when I was 5, so she said "no, she's tired, I won't force her to read." After recounting this anecdote, she asked "how *do* parents make their children do homework?"

I had what I would describe as a 'privileged upbringing', I had attended an all-girls private school between ages 7 – 16. Throughout my schooling, particularly high school, I never saw myself as a 'good girl.' I couldn't concentrate, made sure I had fun and, as a result, distracted others around me. I was always in trouble: detention on a Friday, sent out of class so I didn't annoy the teacher.

I was told year on year at parents evening that I wasn't working to my full potential. Being at an all-girls school, perhaps there was the space in class for a girl to enter a more masculine position, which didn't fit the mould, but I still built some good relationships with teachers and ultimately, I was achieving in the way the school expected. My outcomes fit with the idea of the 'good girl.' And I'm still left asking – what potential were they asking me to meet?

After GCSEs, I felt I was ready for a change and transferred to a private all-boys school which had a co-ed 6th form. At the time, this school was going through a transition from only boys to co-ed throughout, with only certain year groups having admitted girls.

Throughout the two years I spent there, I gradually withdrew further and further from the systems I felt I should have been grateful for. My outstanding memories are being told to stand in class to stop me falling asleep, spending hour after hour in the art room with no one coming to find me and a peer saying, with total seriousness, that the 1st XV rugby players should be applauded as they crossed the playground. At the time, this felt like the 'not fitting in' that had been lingering throughout my educative experiences. Earlier it may have been 'only just not quite fitting in' but by 6th form it transformed into a complete rejection of everything I thought I knew.

This was completely unexpected, as this school had been known to me my whole life (as my older brother had gone there) and had not at all seemed the type of place I wouldn't want to go; the academic reputation was good, the sporting opportunities were considered much better than my previous school and the school was situated in the city centre, providing greater freedom during the day.

At the time and for a long while afterwards, I saw my social exclusion there as my failure and not my strength. It turns out, singing hymns in Latin and allowing myself to sink into a culture of elitism, racism and misogyny was never going to be an option for me[1]. Perhaps there was no space for the masculinity in me, so instead of remaining on the borders of acceptability within one culture, I suddenly stood completely outside of those same borders in another.

In hindsight, the privileges that I had (being that my parents paid for my place, grades came easily to me and all the other compounding privileges that come with being white, middle class, and privately educated) perhaps meant that my social exclusion never became official exclusion; I was never explicitly denied access to the community.

Phone calls to my parents asking where I was when I should have been in economics, tutorial, assembly, were the end of it. Of course, this was before education became compulsory until age 18. There was no police involvement,

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[1] There have been recent anonymous calls for evidence in which alumni and current students have documented their experiences of racism or sexism whilst at this school in order to highlight the issue and hopefully provoke change.

no disciplinary procedures. Now, I have questions – what was the school doing to support my wellbeing? Did they care? Did they notice? How were they helping me understand myself? In effect, none of this was the school's problem, because I had self-excluded in all aspects of schooling but the outcomes that would make a difference to them – my results and my university destination. And on those counts, I didn't disappoint.

As I left my school days behind me and moved through university, I began to become somewhat aware of what I cared about. My application for a psychology undergraduate degree was focused on a need to understand myself and developed into an interest in understanding the social world.

Again, I resisted the expectations, the norm. Towards the end of my degree, when my peers and friends were applying for corporate graduate schemes, here was my first sign of again wanting to break the mould. I knew that a corporate grad scheme wouldn't work for me. I needed something I could care about. But that search for belonging led me to look at options that fit within the idea of a successful graduate. In the following September, I started on a graduate scheme with the Met Police.

This was my first self-aware experience of sitting within a culture that I could not tolerate, and the first in which I understood that my need to challenge would not be tolerated within it. After 12 weeks of classroom-based training and 2 days of 'coached patrol', it was clear that there was no way for me to move forward in that belief system. My first and only experience of arresting a woman, who was in tears, for a reason that was unbeknownst to me, drove it home that the discipline and punishment of the police was not for me. So, my search for belonging continued.

The most influential moment, perhaps of my life so far, followed not too long after. Whilst still searching for a place to belong, I met Steve for a coffee to find out about what social workers do. Steve was (and still is) the principal educational psychologist of an independent Educational Psychology Service, and I met with him as a friend of my parents who had worked with social workers in the past and might be able to give me some context. We spoke for a

long time whilst I told him about my journey so far, my experiences of school, and the sort of meaning I was looking for, before he began to tell me about the role of an educational psychologist. He called himself an 'equal opportunities officer.'

It felt like an epiphany moment where everything fell into place. Here was a possible career, which gave me those tendrils of belonging to the achievement and 'success' expected of me whilst providing opportunities to challenge the wrongs and help create the rights. He said, "get a job in a school and see how you go." And within 2 months I was soon to start in a pastoral role in a small-town high school.

This proceeded to be, perhaps, the most difficult year of my life. Again, I found myself sitting within a belief system far from my own and contended with daily tension in trying to challenge the status quo. But now, it wasn't only *my* belonging I was fighting for. In my care were some of the most marginalised children within that system; children being excluded within the disciplinary school exclusion process. And sometimes, I was their biggest advocate. Some of those children I still think of today.

Without having been aware of the research that I am now, or the psychological impact of official exclusionary policies, I got this sense of closing the doors to society on these children who were just trying to find the place where they belong.

I felt the sense of this uncontrollable cycle – an exclusionary conveyor belt on which it was inevitable that some children would land and never escape. The lack of empathy and understanding from staff, who wondered why some children can't just follow the rules. But perhaps the rules are different for everyone; the stakes certainly are.

1.4.3 Changing the subject, using the gift

When my professional role changed and I worked within the educational psychology profession, first as an assistant and now as a trainee, I began to recognise my passion for making a difference to the lives of children excluded

from school. I leant about the importance of the narratives we build around children and the real difference this makes. This was particularly highlighted to me through the 'Circle of Adults' approach. I've always understood the focus of this to be to change the subject for the child, so that the opportunities for action are different.

This closely preceded a philosophical awakening whilst at university on the doctoral course when the terms epistemology and ontology entered my vocabulary. Here, Foucault's idea of discourse gave me a sense that the uncontrollable exclusionary practices I had been and remain complicit in could be explored as something bigger than various interventions that had been tried, as something bound up in the complexities of our social world.

As I reflect on my own experiences of unofficial exclusion and how I had seen this as my own failure and self-exclusion, before experiencing the way in which the systems around us work to exclude and marginalise those who 'don't fit,' I came to wonder at how I managed to stay within the edges and had not been pushed off the verge. Now, as I write this whilst finding my way through the analysis, I've come to perhaps understand that what I am interested in is where that boundary lies between tolerance and intolerance of non-conformity and the practices that uphold and reproduce it.

I wrote the first draft of this reflexivity statement after the first stage of analysis. After a second reading of the first draft, I came to realise how much my subjectivity influenced the development of this text and how the process of constructing this text gave me the tools and language in making meaning of my subjectivity. In other words, my passion about preventing exclusion influenced my decisions, and in turn the process has helped me understand what it is about preventing exclusion that matters to me and why.

1.5 Rationale for this thesis

The following sections will consider the concept of inclusion and its relationship with exclusion as a starting point for this thesis.

1.5.1 What is Inclusion?

Inclusion has emerged as a key policy objective internationally, despite there being no agreed definition of inclusion or inclusive practice (Ainscow, 2020). This section will explore definitions of inclusion and clarify the definition taken forward within this thesis.

The concept of inclusion initially emerged in relation to educating children with special educational needs in mainstream schools. Ainscow (1995) differentiated between integration and inclusion. He defined integration as making limited and specific arrangements to support an individual child with additional needs, which doesn't result in wider systemic adaptations to develop more inclusive school systems. He suggested that inclusion implies changes to the structure of schools so that all children can have their needs met within mainstream educational settings. This concept of inclusion holds schools responsible for change, rather than the individual (Frederickson & Cline, 2015).

Sebba and Sachdev (1997) define inclusion in terms of what is required instead of describing current practice. They suggest that inclusion involves a process by which settings try to respond to the diversity of all students by adapting, reconsidering and restructuring the way they deliver education. The aim of this process is to improve equality of opportunity by building capacity within the school to accept all pupils from the local community who wish to attend. This adaptation of the system should, therefore, reduce the need to exclude children.

The definition offered by Sebba and Sachdev (1997) distinguishes between a definition of inclusion as integration of children with additional needs in mainstream settings, with a definition of inclusion that encompasses wider issues around diversity such as race, ethnicity, gender, social class, and sexuality.

Taken further, effective inclusion should be able to promote diversity and reduce intolerance of difference, including racism, sexism, classism, homophobia, or disablism, for example (Booth & Ainscow, 2002). Where schools undergo a process of adaptation and restructuring to take account of the wider diversity of all students, inclusive education should help to challenge

and reduce discriminatory practices within schools and become a tool for social justice (Booth & Ainscow, 2002).

Ainscow (2005) later claimed that inclusion relates to a moral responsibility to ensure that those most at risk of marginalisation, exclusion, or underachievement, for whatever reason, are supported to be present, participative and making progress within the education system. This view is also shared within the most recent school inspection handbooks, which highlight that an inclusive culture should identify those who may be disadvantaged, those who may have additional needs or barriers to learning, so that their need will be met to enable them to positively engage with the curriculum, have a positive experience of learning and achieve positive outcomes (Ofsted, 2022).

More recently, Cole, McCluskey, Daniels, Thompson and Tawell (2019) use the term 'inclusive practice' when discussing inclusion and exclusion. Within this term, they refer to the policies and interventions that schools adopt aiming to avoid exclusions (in any capacity).

The definitions of inclusion discussed above perhaps highlight that the concept has increased its breadth since early ideas of inclusion as an approach to meeting the needs of children with disabilities in mainstream schools (Ainscow, 2020). Ainscow (2020) highlights a presumption that inclusion aims to reduce and eradicate social exclusion, underpinned by the assumption that education is a human right and the "foundation for a more just society"

Whilst there is no single agreed upon definition of inclusion within the literature, throughout this thesis I will refer to the idea of educational inclusion as promoting diversity and reducing intolerance of difference within our schools (Booth & Ainscow, 2002; Cole et al., 2019), with the aim to eliminate barriers to education for different groups arising from attitudes and responses to diversity, and ensure equality of opportunity to access education (Ainscow, 2020).

There are many different conceptualisations of inclusion and deconstruction of the term could involve a whole other thesis exploration (perhaps an idea of future research).

I remember, early in my career as an Assistant Educational Psychologist, Steve (the PEP) and I discussing an operational definition of inclusion as the 3 P's: presence, participation and making progress. Steve and I discussed evaluating our own work in Educational Psychology practice by considering whether, or the extent to which, children are included, in line with Booth and Ainscow's (2002) definition.

Through the completion of this research, I have been envisioning a different idea of inclusion and wonder whether perhaps the term inclusion is helpful after all, especially since the ambiguity in the concept leads to difficulties in operationalising it (Ainscow, 2020).

Whilst I accept the idea of inclusion as a process, focussing on structural, strategic, and systemic adaptations to ensure that all children are 'included,' the metaphor I have in my mind is the growth and spread of the educational institutions to be more diverse themselves, so that no child needs to be 'brought into the fold' and included in something which, at its conception, is exclusive.

1.5.2   Inclusive ideologies and school exclusion

The language around inclusion and exclusion suggests that they are two sides of a coin and that inclusion relates as much to children with SEN as to children with presenting behaviour that challenges (Ainscow, Booth, Dyson, Farrell, Frankham, Gallannaugh & Howes, 2006).

Yet the concept of 'exclusion' again requires clarification. Exclusionary policies and practices (including disciplinary school exclusion) are related to

discriminatory processes within our education system as well as in wider society (Ainscow, 1995). The idea of exclusionary policies and practices as relating to discriminatory processes is distinct from exclusion being barred from school, which presents a narrow view of exclusion (Ainscow, 1995).

Children presenting with behaviour deemed challenging within schools could present a great challenge to the inclusive education movement (DfES, 2004; Heath et al., 2004; Ofsted, 2004; Vincent et al., 2008; Visser, 2000), potentially due to the disruption caused by the behaviour of these students to their and others' education (Hamill & Boyd, 2002; Vincent et al., 2008). The protection of the educational environment for other children is often used to justify the exclusion of students presenting with challenging behaviour (Ofsted, 2005; Vincent et al., 2008).

Armstrong (2021) argues that:

> *"If school suspensions and exclusions pose an existential threat to effective inclusion, (…) then this logically infers that preventing disciplinary exclusion is an important enabler for the systemic transformations necessary for educational inclusion"*
> *(Armstrong, 2021, p. 4).*

1.6 Overview / Structure of this thesis

This thesis is made up of seven chapters. The first chapter, this introduction, presents an outline of the theoretical orientation of the research, my positioning statement, and the rationale for the research. Chapter 2 will present a review of academic discourse, including an overview of relevant policy and literature relating to disciplinary school exclusion. In the literature review, I will define and describe disciplinary school exclusion and its prevalence according to statistics available. I will follow this by outlining the literature relating to children excluded and the impact of exclusion, as well as factors considered relevant to exclusion. I will refer to Parsons' (1999) critical theory of educational exclusion to situate the problem of school exclusion within wider socio-cultural factors and issues of educational ideology. Chapter 3 presents a chronological review of education

policy, including reflections on the emergence and transformation of discourses since the 1800s.

Reflexive Box 1.2: reflections as a researcher

Chapter 3 is an important part of this thesis as a Foucauldian analysis must have a historical (or archaeological) element. To analyse discourse out of context would be inappropriate. However, I held questions about whether the chronological review of education policy should be positioned in the analysis section or in the literature review section. Exploring how discourses have emerged over time is a necessary element of the analysis, however I am conscious that I did not conduct a discourse analysis on the content of the chronological review. Instead, the purpose of the chronological review is to provide the context for the analysis, and to enable the reader to experience the journey along with me.

Chapter 4 will present the methodology, including the philosophical assumptions, key Foucauldian concepts, and the adoption of a Foucauldian approach. Chapter 5 will present the methods used in this research, including research questions, processes of sampling, data collection and analysis, as well as ethical considerations and reflexivity. Chapter 6 presents the constructions emerging from the analysis, followed by an account of the wider discourses and how they overlap, interact and contradict one another. Chapter 7 draws the research together with conclusions, implications for educational psychology practice, considerations for future research and my personal reflections.

Chapter 2: Review of Academic Discourse

2.1 Introduction

The following chapter presents a review of literature around disciplinary school exclusion. The chapter will first define disciplinary school exclusion, discuss the prevalence of school exclusion within England and consider policy statistics reflecting the characteristics of children excluded from school and the official reasons cited for school exclusion.

This will be followed by consideration of the impact of disciplinary school exclusion, an exploration of the construct of 'challenging behaviour' and literature around the prevention of disciplinary school exclusion. I will then refer to Parsons' (1999) framework for understanding exclusion to discuss factors at the level of the individual, the institution, and socio-cultural levels. This will be followed by Parsons' (1999) critical theory of educational exclusion, reflecting on ideological perspectives on the function of schooling. I will conclude the chapter with the rationale for this research and the research questions.

I have not completed a systematic literature review as part of this review of academic discourse, as I am not attempting to present the 'truth' or all that can be known about school exclusion. However, I used a search strategy to identify relevant research which will be presented in a narrative review. Please see Appendix A for a summary of the search strategy.

2.2 Disciplinary School Exclusion

2.2.1 What is Disciplinary School Exclusion?

'Exclusion' from school can be defined as a "formal process of disciplinary exclusion, where a pupil is officially removed from education on the school premises permanently or for a fixed period of time" (Hatton, 2013, p. 155).

The Timpson review of exclusion in England states that children may be excluded from school for either fixed periods or permanently (Department for Education, 2019b). Permanent exclusion should be used only as a last resort and as a response to serious or persistent breaches of the school's behaviour

policy, *and* where allowing the child to remain at school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the pupil or others in the school. The decision to exclude a child must be lawful, reasonable and fair (Department for Education, 2019b).

Cole and colleagues (2019) define children who are labelled 'at risk of exclusion' as those who display behaviours which are disruptive and challenging within schools, and are likely to lead to school exclusions, and those who have experienced either fixed term exclusions or have been permanently excluded.

Evidence suggests that children can also be excluded unofficially, often termed 'off-rolling', where parents are pressured to move their child to a different school or electively home educate under threat of permanent exclusion (Cole et al., 2019; Daniels et al., 2019; Department for Education, 2019a; Hutchinson & Crenna-Jennings, 2019).

Unofficial exclusions could also include 'managed moves' (Bagley & Hallam, 2016). Managed moves are said to strategically move the child to a new educational setting and avoid a permanent exclusion, and should rely on the collaboration between the schools, the child and their parents / carers (Abdelnoor, 2007; Messeter & Soni, 2018).

A key distinction between managed moves and permanent exclusions is the nature of the agreement. A managed move should be voluntary and involve the consent of all parties involved, including both schools, the child and the child's parents / carers (DfES, 2004; Messeter & Soni, 2018). However, feedback from parents on the process of managed moves suggests that some take place under coercive circumstances, with the threat of permanent exclusion if parents / carers and children do not agree to a managed move (Hutchinson & Crenna-Jennings, 2019).

Unofficial exclusions are reported to disproportionately impact on children with special educational needs and those considered to be from socially deprived backgrounds (Cole et al., 2019).

2.2.2 Department for Education Exclusions Data

The Department for Education publishes annual figures to capture formal disciplinary exclusion procedures, including suspensions and permanent exclusions (Department for Education, 2021). The rate of exclusions is calculated as the number of exclusions divided by the number of pupils (x100) (Department for Education, 2021).

Reflexive Box 2.1: Reflections as an emerging post-structuralist researcher

I am conscious that the data presented sits within a positivist-empiricist paradigm, presenting these figures as 'fact' and without considering the socially constructed nature of the constructs on which they are based. In particular, the section looking at the characteristics of children excluded, and the reasons cited for exclusion are heavily based on socially constructed ways of categorising and grouping people, and of understanding behaviour.

The data presented does not include unofficial exclusions, managed moves, exclusions that were upheld at appeal, internal exclusions, or exclusions from lessons. Therefore, they can only present somewhat of an idea of the use of disciplinary school exclusion, without considering other forms of exclusion.

However, I feel these statistics remain relevant to understanding the context of disciplinary school exclusion in England, despite their significant limitations with regards to the context of this research. They should not be considered without criticality.

The following statistics must be considered with caution, due to potential unofficial exclusions and 'off rolling,' which are difficult to quantify (Barnardo's, 2019), as managed moves are recorded locally and off-rolling is not recorded (Hutchinson & Crenna-Jennings, 2019). For example, analysis conducted by the Education Policy Institute on exits from education found that 8.1% of pupils who took their GCSEs in 2017 had been removed from a school roll at some point in their secondary education for 'unexplained' reasons (Hutchinson & Crenna-Jennings, 2019).

In addition, the figures produced by the Department for Education include permanent exclusions that have been upheld by the governing body or the Independent Review Panel, and does not include exclusions subject to ongoing appeal proceedings (Department for Education, 2021). Therefore, there may be further hidden exclusions not included within these figures which were successfully appealed, with an assumption that the child was reinstated at the school.

2.2.2.1 Permanent Exclusions

Department for Education statistics on permanent exclusions demonstrate an upward trend from 2012, with permanent exclusions increasing from a rate of 0.07 (7 in 10,000 pupils) in the 2011-12 academic year to 0.10 in the 2018-19 academic year (Department for Education, 2013a, 2020, 2021).

Data from the 2019-20 academic year must be considered with further caution, as school closures between March and July 2020, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, are likely to have skewed the statistics (Department for Education, 2021). Over the course of the academic year, the data suggests that there was a decrease in the rate of permanent exclusions to 0.06 (Department for Education, 2021).

However, closer inspection of the data to compare school exclusion figures for the Autumn term (the only term in the 2019-20 academic year not to be disrupted by COVID-19) might present a different picture. There were 3,165 recorded permanent exclusions nationally in the Autumn term of the 2019-20 academic year, which was a 5% increase on the number of permanent exclusions in the Autumn term of the previous academic year (Department for Education, 2021).

Secondary schools continue to account for the highest proportion of permanent exclusions, representing over 80% of permanent exclusions year on year since the 2015-16 academic year (Department for Education, 2021). In the 2018-19 academic year, the permanent exclusion rate in state-funded secondary schools was 0.20 (Department for Education, 2020).

2.2.2.2 Fixed Term Exclusions / Suspensions

The data from the 2019-20 academic year refers to 'suspensions' which were previously known as 'fixed term exclusions,' defining them as an exclusion from school for a set period of time (Department for Education, 2021).

The number of suspensions has increased by 29% from the 2015-16 academic year to the 2018-19 academic year (Department for Education, 2021). In the 2018-19 academic year, the suspension rate was 5.36, with 45.6% of suspensions relating to pupils who had received more than one suspension in that academic year (Department for Education, 2021).

In the Autumn term of the 2019-20 academic year, there was a 14% rise in the number of suspensions compared with the autumn term 2018-19, from 157,100 to 178,400 (Department for Education, 2021).

As with permanent exclusions, secondary schools represent a significant proportion of suspensions, accountable for 79-82% of suspensions each year from the 2015-16 academic year onwards (Department for Education, 2021).

2.2.2.3 Regional variation in exclusion rates

There is also variation in the rates of permanent exclusion and suspension across different Local Authority areas in England. Looking at the 2018-19 academic year, the North East had the highest rates of exclusion and suspension at 0.17 and 8.00 respectively (Department for Education, 2020). The South East had the lowest rates, at 0.06 for permanent exclusions and 4.75 for suspensions in the same year (Department for Education, 2020).

In the 2018-19 academic year, all Local Authority areas in the North East region had permanent exclusion rates higher than the national average, with Darlington, Redcar and Cleveland and Sunderland seeing permanent exclusion rates exceed 0.2 (Department for Education, 2020). In the same year, Durham had the lowest rate of permanent exclusion in the North East region at 0.12 (Department for Education, 2020).

Within the South East, which had the lowest average rate of exclusion when compared with other regions in the 2018-19 academic year, the permanent exclusion rate ranged from 0.01 in Milton Keynes to 0.14 in Windsor and Maidenhead (Department for Education, 2020).

In the 2018-19 academic year, the East of England region had average rates of permanent exclusion and suspension rates just below the national average, at 0.09 and 4.95 respectively (Department for Education, 2020). However, there was significant variation within the East of England, with rates of permanent exclusion ranging from 0.01 in Cambridgeshire to 0.18 in Norfolk and 0.19 in Peterborough (Department for Education, 2020).

2.2.3   Reasons cited for exclusions

Persistent disruptive behaviour continues to be reported as the most common reason cited within the official exclusions figures for both permanent exclusion and suspension (Department for Education, 2021). In the 2018-19 academic year, persistent disruptive behaviour was cited as the reason for 35% of permanent exclusions and 31% of suspensions (Department for Education, 2020).

In the academic year 2018-2019, the second and third most commonly cited reasons for permanent exclusions were physical assault against a pupil (13%) and physical assault against an adult (10%).

2.2.4   Characteristics of children excluded

School exclusion figures also continue to demonstrate a stark picture in terms of individual pupil characteristics.

The data suggests that, across all age phases, pupils identifying as male are three times more likely to be permanently excluded than pupils identifying as female, at a rate of 0.14 and 0.05 respectively in 2018-2019 (Department for Education, 2020). There are currently no figures produced by the Department for Education giving consideration to gender reassignment or those who identify as non-binary.

Children are most likely to be excluded or suspended at age 14 (Department for Education, 2020). Children eligible for Free School Meals, an identifier often used in statistics as an indicator of socioeconomic status, are permanently excluded at a rate of 0.27 compared with 0.06 for children who are not eligible (Department for Education, 2020).

Children identified as having special educational needs, but without an Education Health and Care Plan, have higher rates of exclusion than children with an Education Health and Care Plan, and children without identified special educational needs have the lowest rates of exclusion comparatively (rates of 0.32, 0.15 and 0.06 respectively) (Department for Education, 2020).

School exclusion rates also vary by ethnicity. Children of Gypsy / Roma and Traveller of Irish Heritage ethnic groups experience the highest rates of exclusion, at permanent exclusion rates of 0.39 and 0.27 respectively in the 2018-19 academic year (Department for Education, 2020). Rates of permanent exclusion for children of Black Caribbean and White and Black Caribbean heritage are also high, at 0.25 and 0.24 respectively in 2018/2019 (Department for Education, 2020).

It is also important to consider how intersectionality of these characteristics (such as ethnicity, socio-economic status, gender and identified special educational needs and disabilities) impacts on the likelihood that individuals will be excluded. Whilst the official government data does not provide explicit statistics around intersectionality, Alexander and Shankley (2020) argue that boys of Black Caribbean heritage who also have identified special educational needs are 168 times more likely to be excluded than White girls who do not have identified special educational needs.

2.3 The impact of Disciplinary School Exclusion

The short- and long-term negative outcomes experienced by children and young people who have been excluded from school have been the subject of a wealth of research. The following section will outline studies which have explored the outcomes experienced by children who have been excluded, as well as the experiences of children excluded from school.

Again, the nature of much of the research presented within the following section is underpinned by a positivist-empiricist paradigm. I include these studies with the understanding that they risk reductionism and claim that the constructs under investigation have a reality outside of discourse (see section 4.4.). It becomes almost impossible to treat the constructs as anything but real, especially once they are researched and produced as 'knowledge.'

However, my critical realist position acknowledges the impact of exclusion, where exclusion has a reality through its effects. Therefore, it is important to consider the impact of exclusion on individuals and the way in which exclusion is constructed as a problem within education.

Children and young people who have experienced school exclusion are more likely to develop mental health difficulties (Cole, 2015; C. Parker et al., 2016; C. Parker & Ford, 2013) and become socially isolated (McGlaughlin et al., 2002). The impact of excluding young people and transitioning them into alternative provisions could marginalize them further, without providing them with skills needed for in-demand jobs (Savolainen et al., 2013).

In 2017, the Ofsted rating of alternative provisions found that some authorities lacked an appropriate provision rated above inadequate (Gill et al., 2017). Children and young people may also be more likely to become embedded in the 'street culture' of peers who are equally as vulnerable when attending (Arnez & Condry, 2021).

School exclusion has also been correlated with criminality, with studies claiming that school exclusion had previously affected 63% of the prison population (Williams et al., 2012), that children who had experienced school exclusion aged 12 were four times more likely to be imprisoned as an adult than other children (McAra & McVie, 2012) and that school exclusion preceded an increase in the likelihood and severity of offending behaviour (Berridge et al., 2001). Although merely correlations, these findings have led criminological

researchers to recognise school exclusion as a significant risk factor on the trajectory to criminalisation, coining the term 'school-to-prison' pipeline to summarise this pattern (Arnez & Condry, 2021).

Evidence also suggests that disadvantage can be accumulated for children who experience school exclusion when this intersects with other disadvantages such as poverty, poor health and housing and challenging family circumstances (McCluskey et al., 2019). Levitas and colleagues used the term 'deep exclusion' to describe how school exclusion interacts with other types of disadvantage and severely negatively impacts on later life outcomes such as quality of life, well-being, health, employment and housing (Gill et al., 2017; Keung, 2010; Levitas et al., 2007).

School exclusion is also argued to have negative impacts at a wider societal level. Patterns of school exclusion could be seen as reflective of a miniature version of society, which therefore perpetuates negative stereotypes and discrimination in wider society, especially relating to class, race, gender and disadvantage (Graham et al., 2019). This viewpoint was also held almost thirty years ago. Carlen, Gleeson and Wardhaugh (1992) suggested that disciplinary control in schools, particularly for truancy and 'unwanted' behaviour, along with the justice system, neighbourhood ghettoization, low quality public housing, poor social support, welfare and healthcare provision, were all part of structural 'civic exclusion.'

Ashurst and Venn (2014) suggest school exclusion is underpinned by factors at the societal level and principally affects communities considered to be disadvantaged, whilst poor educational outcomes and school exclusions are considered to be symptomatic of social inequality (R. Wilkinson & Pickett, 2010) and the number of schools exclusions could demonstrate the failure of social mobility policies in England (Gill et al., 2017). Therefore, school exclusion could sit within a context of cyclical poverty and structural inequality (Ashurst & Venn, 2014).

Research exploring children's lived experiences of school exclusion also highlight the negative impact of school exclusion on children's lives. Daniels,

Cole, Sellman, Sutton, Visser and Bedward (2003) longitudinal study, following the progress of children for 2 years after their permanent exclusion, claims that half of the young people who remained in contact at the end of the research perceived their permanent exclusion to have been damaging, and roughly half of the sample either continued to or began to engage in offending behaviour after exclusion (Daniels et al., 2003).

These findings were echoed in Murphy's (2021) qualitative exploration of the experiences of children excluded from school. The young people interviewed described feeling frustrated with a gap in provision between their exclusion and being offered a place at a Pupil Referral Unit, as well as feeling that the exclusion was not effective in changing their behaviour.

The children and young people also reported feeling excluded from social relationships as well as from school, leading to feelings of social anxiety. The young people reported feeling bored and lonely during evenings and weekends (Murphy, 2021).

The above research, whilst many of the claims made must be considered critically due to the socially constructed nature of many of the constructs under exploration, present a stark picture of the short- and long-term outcomes in waiting for children excluded from school.

2.4   Disciplinary school exclusion and "challenging behaviour"

School exclusion is defined as a disciplinary process used to respond to behaviour which may not be perceived as within acceptable limits at school, with these acceptable limits defined within a behaviour policy (Department for Education, 2017). This behaviour is often described as 'challenging behaviour' (Orsati & Causton-Theoharis, 2013).

Challenging behaviour can be defined as:

> *"…culturally abnormal behaviour(s) of such intensity,*
> *frequency or duration that the physical safety of the person*
> *or others is placed in serious jeopardy, or behaviour which*

is likely to seriously limit or deny access to the use of
ordinary community facilities…" (Emerson, 2001, p. 3).

This definition reflects the view of behaviour through a cultural lens and based on one's perception of what is socially and culturally 'normal' behaviour (Farrell, 1995). Interpretations of behaviour as challenging within the classroom will often depend on the perception of the observer, with conclusions on the acceptability, tolerability or value of the same behaviour highly dependent on the context (Cooper, 1999).

Terminology within statutory guidance and legal documentation in England has changed over time to refer to children presenting with behaviour that may be perceived as challenging within schools. When schools began to admit children universally from 1902, children deemed challenging within schools were labelled as 'maladjusted,' which was considered distinct from children who were disaffected, delinquent or simply naughty; 'maladjusted' children were said not to respond to ordinary discipline (Underwood, 1955).

Thirty years later, despite concerns that the label 'maladjusted' is stigmatising, the label continued to be endorsed as the distinction implied that there is consideration given to the environment in which the behaviour occurs (Department for Education and Science, 1978).

By 1989, however, the Elton report adopted the term 'emotional or behavioural disorders' (Elton, 1989). This term later evolved into "emotional and behavioural difficulties," with those children distinguished from "other difficult pupils" (Frederickson & Cline, 2015). The Elton report claimed that children with emotional or behavioural disorders were more likely to behave in a "disturbed and disturbing way regardless of which teacher or class they are with" (Elton, 1989, p. 150).

The SEND Code of practice published in 2001 define 'Behaviour, Emotional and Social Disorders (BESD)' as one of four areas of need encompassed by the term 'Special Educational Needs' (DfE, 2001). This area of need was redefined in the most recent SEND Code of Practice (Department for Education & Department for Health, 2015) and is now termed 'Social, Emotional and Mental

Health (SEMH)' needs. This reconceptualisation could be argued to emphasise that behaviour which may be perceived as challenging within schools is underpinned by an unmet need.

This distinction between behaviour perceived as challenging being a deliberate choice on behalf of the individual, as opposed to because of an unmet need, communication, victimisation, or exploitation persists and is implied in Just for Kids Law's (2020) discussion of the use of school exclusion in response to criminal activity. They state that a zero-tolerance approach to serious breaches of the behaviour policy can be understood if the child has decided to engage in the criminal activity independently and without coercion or exploitation (Just for Kids Law, 2020).

Literature from within the criminological discipline, discussing the use of school exclusion with relation to child criminal exploitation, highlights tensions between attributions of responsibility or accountability for behaviour deemed criminal (Arnez & Condry, 2021; Firmin, 2020; Wroe, 2021). Reconsidering the use of exclusion for only children considered to have been coerced into crime ignores the nuances of these behaviours, the lived experiences of some children, and the multiple disadvantages that some children face (Arnez & Condry, 2021).

Binary constructions of intentionality in relation to behaviour, as either intentional or unintentional, limits the understanding of the relationship between the agency of children and young people within the constraints of the contexts and environments in which they live (Wroe, 2021). The intentional / unintentional binary presents an erroneous view of children walking linear paths of endless choices (Firmin, 2020). Therefore, approaches that aim to hold children and young people accountable for their behaviour, such as disciplinary measures, can be overly simplistic and pathologising (Arnez & Condry, 2021).

An alternative understanding of challenging behaviour is seeing behaviour as communication that there is something wrong in the child's world that requires attention, or resolution (Cooper, 1999). This challenges the use of punishment as a "common-sense" approach to behaviour deemed negative or deviant (Cooper, 1999).

Therefore, understanding children's behaviour must involve a holistic approach, in the process of or after school exclusion, with consideration of the full impact of contextual factors (Ward, 2014). Otherwise, school exclusion can perpetuate the marginalisation of vulnerable young people by responding to their vulnerability punitively (Arnez & Condry, 2021). The use of exclusion as a sanction without accounting for how socio-cultural factors contribute to the perceived challenging behaviour of children and young people may therefore be recycling the child's vulnerabilities into risks (Arnez & Condry, 2021).

2.5 Interventions to reduce disciplinary school exclusion

This section will touch on research exploring school-based interventions to reduce disciplinary school exclusions, outlining two recent meta-analyses investigating the evidence base.

A systematic review of literature published in 2018 evaluated the efficacy of school-based interventions to reduce the prevalence of disciplinary school exclusion (Valdebenito et al., 2018). The review included 37 randomised control trials across all age phases of mainstream state-funded schools. The review found that some school-based interventions (enhancement of academic skills, counselling, mentoring or monitoring and skills training for teachers) saw significant positive reductions in the prevalence of exclusions over a 6 month period but that this effect was not sustained in the longer term (Valdebenito et al., 2018). The authors also suggest that the results are treated with caution due to low sample sizes. Whilst this review suggests positive short-term impacts of school-based interventions to reduce exclusions, it is a concern that these effects are not sustained over time.

Mielke and Farrington (2021) also conducted a review of literature to explore the impact of interventions to reduce 'suspensions.' Their meta-analysis included 14 studies which explored school-based interventions designed to reduce problematic behaviour by working directly with the child, as well as whole-school strategies to reduce suspensions. The findings of the review claim that school-based interventions to reduce problematic behaviour had insignificant effects. The findings of this review could be considered

reductionist, without exploring the experience of those individuals involved in the interventions, or qualitative indicators of whether the interventions were impactful.

The apparent lack of evidence claiming effective school-based interventions to reduce exclusions may relate to arguments that school exclusion reflects a complex interaction between exclusions, institutional cultures and wider societal factors (Parsons, 1999). As a result, strategies within institutions aiming to amend the behaviour of individuals towards that which is more socially accepted within those institutions are likely to be ineffective (Arnez & Condry, 2021).

Much of the academic literature focusing on school-based strategies and interventions to manage challenging behaviour and increase participation in education focus on "fixing the child," and aims to normalise the behaviour of the excluded to conform to social norms (Parsons, 2005, p. 188). Parsons (2005) argument is that reducing exclusion will rely on wider changes to school systems, not changes to people.

2.6   Disciplinary School Exclusion as an eco-systemic issue

The paucity of evidence supporting effective intervention to prevent or reduce exclusions (e.g. Mielke & Farrington, 2021; Valdebenito et al., 2018), supports Parsons (1999) argument that institutional and societal factors make up the majority of forces which promote the use of school exclusion in England.

Parsons (1999) framework to understand school exclusions identifies 27 forces which promote exclusion alongside 27 factors which promote inclusion (See Appendix B).

Cole and colleagues (2019), support Parsons' (1999) argument, with research investigating the factors within and around schools that correlate with high- and low-levels of school exclusions (Cole et al., 2019). Cole and colleagues claim that values, policy and collaborative, adequately funded and multi-disciplinary practice are important at a range of levels to minimise exclusions, including at a national policy level, local policy level and at school level (Cole et al., 2019).

Therefore, this section will consider literature discussing the influences on school exclusion at different levels. First, I will consider the excluded 'subject', exploring how the subject is construed in terms of their perceived challenging behaviour. Next, I will outline literature discussing school / institutional level factors, local and national policy and then wider societal and cultural factors.

2.6.1   Construing the child

There is a wealth of literature focusing on developmental perspectives to explore risk and protective factors leading to school and social exclusion in children (e.g. Bynner, 2001; Farrington et al., 1990; Killen et al., 2013; Schoon et al., 2000). These approaches lead to questions regarding why and how children become the way they are (Hargreaves et al., 2011). In the process of identifying risk and protective factors, the child is characterised as 'at risk,' which could promote a within-child narrative and minimise structural factors and the way discourses shape subjectivities in education (Bouhours, 2007).

Parsons (1999), in his framework for understanding exclusions from school, argues that individual factors account for only 5 out of the 27 forces he identifies as promoting the use of school exclusion and exclusionary practices in schools. He also highlights three key points in relation to the individual factors identified:

> *"first, they are few in number; second, the extent to which these pose 'problems' are matters of definition, policy and provision; third, it is arguable that institutional factors and national policy affect the extent to which these factors appear, are recognised and are addressed" (Parsons, 1999, p. 50).*

Reflexive Box 2.3: Reflections as an applied psychologist and a trainee educational psychologist

It is unnerving and disconcerting to dismiss, or at least to park, literature considering developmental perspectives and risk and protective factors relating to children likely to become at risk of exclusion. Whilst these approaches do not align with the philosophical assumptions of this research,

which reject essentialist and individualising accounts of human development, it feels very strange not to incorporate these perspectives into the account.

This particularly relates to the utility of developmental perspectives in psychology (even with regards to theories such as Bronfenbrenner's ecological model of development (1996) that are relevant within applied educational psychology practice.

This section will consider constructions of children as objects of discourse, specifically in terms of their 'challenging behaviour'. I will discuss a number of studies drawing on a critical approach to understanding constructions of challenging behaviour and the subject positions offered.

Reflecting literature previously outlined which criticises binary presumptions of intentionality with regard to behaviour, a number of discourse analytic studies explored the impacts of constructions of the child on the extent to which they were considered responsible for their behaviour and therefore how adults respond (Macleod, 2006; Stanforth & Rose, 2018).

"Young people in trouble" were argued to be constructed as either 'mad,' 'bad' or 'sad,' with each of these constructions having different implications for the attribution of responsibility and blame for the behaviour (Macleod, 2006, p. 155).

A child constructed as 'mad' sits within psychiatric discourses, identifying mental illness or conditions are the cause of the presenting behaviour, positioning the child as out of control and requiring treatment (Macleod, 2006). A child constructed as 'bad' is deemed to be responsible for their behaviour as a result of deliberate intent, and therefore should be punished (Macleod, 2006). A child constructed as 'sad' is positioned as a victim of their circumstances, who requires help and support (Macleod, 2006).

Macleod (2006) reflects on the way in which discourses of education as an unquestionable good (Allen, 2016), neo-liberal discourses of individual responsibility and meritocracy, and discourses of discipline and punishment, can be variably drawn on to construct 'bad' children. He argues that the

'education as unquestionable good' discourse within cultures which highly value formal education, make it more likely that young people who might be seen as uninterested in school are positioned as "challenging a fundamental social value, and (…) in some way 'deviant'" (Macleod, 2006, p. 158).

Macleod (2006) argues that this way of constructing the child necessitates a punitive approach, with less emphasis placed on the system or the cultural context as the problem, such as structural inequality or lack of opportunity to engage in a 'civil society' (Levitas, 1998).

Parsons (2005) argues that approaches taken to either supporting or punishing children is directly linked to whether the behaviour is related to individual responsibility or structural inequality. Moreover, construing the child as 'bad' positions them as responsible for their behaviour, and therefore irresponsible and unable to make changes to their behaviour (Macleod, 2006).

Macleod (2006) argues that construing young people as 'mad' relates to a medical model of behaviour within psychiatric discourses, which makes blame and punishment illegitimate as a response to challenging behaviour, but simultaneously limits the opportunities for the child or young person to successfully claim or resist alternative positions, thereby limiting their agency and ability to wield power (Lloyd, 2003).

Macleod (2003) discusses alternative opportunities for action when children are constructed as 'sad,' due to more emphasis placed on environmental and structural factors in the presentation of the behaviour. However, this way of talking tended to encourage pupils to "opt out of mainstream education," where the immediate environment (school) might be blamed. Macleod (2006) further argues that all three ways of talking about the child deny them agency by minimising their opportunities to effect change.

Stanforth and Rose (2018) also discuss constructing children presenting with challenging behaviour as either individually responsible for their behaviour or as victims of circumstance, with staff oscillating between the two. They interviewed school staff and children, analysing the data using thematic analysis. They argued that children and staff both used language describing characteristics of

the children, suggesting an essence within the child (such as their ability, personality, or development) as responsible for the presenting behaviour. This reduces the likelihood of considering contextual or environmental factors and left staff feeling powerless to effect change (Stanforth & Rose, 2018).

Stanforth and Rose (2018) also suggest that the behaviour is constructed in relation to an 'other,' such as through having an impact on the 'other' students or where 'others' provide an audience and therefore encourage the behaviour. The use of the 'other' to construct and define behaviour reflects findings by Waterhouse (2004) that teachers draw on the 'idealised other' as the idea of 'normal,' from which constructions of 'deviance' are compared. Waterhouse (2004) argues that this creates a 'normal – deviant' binary and teachers are recruited to monitor the boundaries between the two. Therefore, Waterhouse (2004) suggests that normalising discourses draw attention to those positioned as the 'margins' allows the construction of 'insiders' and 'outsiders' (p. 82).

Waterhouse (2004) links this directly to inclusion / exclusion, where 'normalising' discourses lead to a construction of the "outer boundaries of the 'normal' way of life" (p. 82-83).

2.6.2 Institutional factors relating to the use of school exclusion

Evidence suggests that school level factors must have an influence on the prevalence of exclusions in different schools, with the Children's Commissioner highlighting that 10% of schools were accountable for 90% of exclusions (Children's Commissioner, 2020). Rutter and colleagues, in their seminal study *Fifteen Thousand Hours* argued the importance of differences between schools reflecting their outcomes (Rutter, 1979).

Constructs such as 'values,' 'ethos' and 'school culture' are often identified as factors contributing to an inclusive culture within schools (Ainscow & Sandill, 2010). Ideas such as 'culture' and 'ethos' emphasise the impact of underpinning beliefs and assumptions shared within an organisation on policy and everyday practices (Ainscow & Sandill, 2010; Schein, 2010).

The nature of the underlying assumptions and beliefs within a school's culture will therefore impact on how staff and children view themselves and their context (Schein, 2010), thereby affecting the extent to which children and young people are enabled to participate in their education (Ainscow & Sandill, 2010; Kugelmass, 2001).

The school effectiveness literature places an emphasis on the role of leadership within schools to create diverse student environments and promote values of equality of opportunity and social justice, through the delivery and quality of teaching and learning, developing strong communities within schools, and building positive educational cultures with family members (Leithwood & Riehl, 2004). Diversifying participation in leadership functions within schools and enabling strong relationships with all key stakeholders in the school community are identified as practices supporting values of equality of opportunity and social justice (Ainscow & Sandill, 2010).

School culture is also said to have an important influence on the way teachers and staff define what behaviours should be deemed unacceptable within the classroom and within the school and in deciding how this should be dealt with (Berridge et al., 2001). The values underpinning belief systems in schools are again argued to be important in how children's behaviour is defined and understood, which is correlated with strong beliefs at leadership levels which are shared by substantial members of staff (Cole et al., 2019). This ethos impacts on the way in which policies are written and practiced, with behaviour policies reflecting restorative rather than punitive practices, and which recognise the importance of positive student-staff relationships, argued to be more effective in promoting desirable behaviours (Cole et al., 2019).

Cole and colleagues (2019) also highlighted the importance of other whole-school factors, noting flexibility and differentiation in the way the curriculum is delivered and responsiveness to the way in which different children will experience success. They discussed the importance of the way in which the structure of the provision allowed the delivery of universal and targeted support for children and young people, including the procedures set up to identify,

assess, monitor, and support children who may be perceived as vulnerable or at risk, and their families.

2.6.3 Policy: Exclusion in the context of local and national policy

Ferguson (2021) highlights the importance of understanding wider education and social policy contexts when thinking about exclusion. Cole and colleagues (2019) emphasise this view by shining a light on the tension between supporting individual schools to become more inclusive whilst they remain accountable to competing demands from the government.

Cole and colleagues (2019) highlighted factors at the local governmental level which are likely to have an impact on the prevalence of exclusion. These included, again, underlying values and beliefs in inclusive practice of local authority officers and councillors', the ability and power of the local authority to challenge school governing bodies, the amount of funding available to local authorities to provide support services to both schools and children and young people (such as alternative provisions, special schools, training and parent support) and employ a range of specialist professions (such as educational psychologists, family-link workers, social workers).

Cole and colleagues (2019) identified three key themes underpinning challenges at the local and national policy level that are impacting on schools' ability or incentive to reduce exclusions. These included: prescriptive curriculum demands and accountability systems, the redirection of power and resources to headteachers away from Local Authorities and academisations role in this, significant financial difficulties and pressures impacting on the delivery of flexible support and multi-agency working.

Mills and colleagues (2015) also emphasise the impact of the performativity and accountability measures within schools in England, which create perverse incentives for schools to 'move on' or exclude young people who do not fit within the image that they wish to project. This seems to be directly at odds with the inclusive spirit of some policies implemented in England following the Warnock report, such as the Children and Families Act 2014 and the SEND Code of Practice 2015 (Daniels et al., 2019).

Cole and colleagues (2019) discuss changes to accountability measures for schools, such as Progress 8, that create tensions between inclusive practice and performativity. For example, Progress 8 holds schools accountable for the progress that children make, with progress in different subjects (perceived as more academic) given a higher weighting, without opportunities to account for contextual factors. These 'more academic' subjects are likely to be less engaging for learners who are struggling or who do not value them in the same way. This sits in tension with the inclusive agenda.

Cole and colleagues also discussed the impact of academisation and Local Authorities' reduced leverage to challenge or improve inclusive practice in schools. They suggested that this impacts on exclusions in two ways (Cole et al., 2019).

Firstly, headteachers have more power in decision making around the allocation of resources, and therefore may decide to allocate funding away from inclusive practice and towards resources that will contribute to accountability measures (such as Progress 8) (Cole et al., 2019).

Secondly, with funding being devolved to head teachers from Local Authorities, there is less funding within local authorities for support services, such as children's centres, services to support parents, and some support services have become traded, such as behaviour support and educational psychologists. Moreover, schools are able to re-transfer the costs of children and young people who present a challenge to teach back to the local authority through exclusion, whereby the local authority becomes responsible for providing the excluded child with an education and appropriate levels of support (Cole et al., 2019).

The Timpson Review into exclusions in the UK highlighted the challenges between supporting high excluding schools to adapt their practice to become more inclusive whilst simultaneously addressing the conflicts in demands from the government (Department for Education, 2019b). The review suggested that providing increased funding, changing the way funding is given to schools and

revising accountability measures and inspections may be helpful (Department for Education, 2019b).

McCluskey and colleagues (2019), in a paper exploring the differences in policy between different UK jurisdictions, argued that the discourse used in policy has an impact on the prevalence of exclusions. They explained that Scotland has had significant success in reducing the number of exclusions and maintained this over time, and this coincided with the introduction of new guidance on exclusions in 2017 *(Included, Engaged and Involved Part 2),* which was based upon approaches within key policy documentation in 2013 *(Better relationships, better behaviour, better learning; Scottish Government 2013)* (McCluskey et al., 2019).

McCluskey and colleagues explain that policy discourse in Scotland is focussed on early intervention to build positive relationships between staff and children vulnerable to exclusionary practices. The policy discourse accentuates the importance of a focus on positive relationships, mutual respect and trust within a whole school ethos (McCluskey et al., 2019).

McCluskey and colleagues argue that equivalent guidance in England is much more punitive in the language used and emphasises the importance of a behaviourist approach using rewards and sanctions, with no discussion of alternative ways to promote positive behaviour, such as restorative practices (McCluskey et al., 2019).

This difference in policy discourse and its correlation with differences in exclusion rates between England and Scotland could suggest the impact of national policy on the use of exclusions.

2.6.4 Culture: Exclusion in the context of societal culture

Foucault defines culture as "a hierarchical organisation of values, accessible to everybody, but at the same time the occasion of a mechanism of selection and exclusion" (Foucault, 2001, p. 173). This reflects the idea of culture as a product of the selection and reproduction of dominant discourses and the exclusion of

oppressed discourses, resulting in shared assumptions deemed to be 'true' (Foucault, 2005).

This section will discuss wider socio-cultural factors argued to be important in contextualising of the use of school exclusion in England.

The neoliberal policy agenda that has been implemented within England since Thatcher's government in the 1980s, is argued to have had a significant impact on policy and practice relating to school exclusion (Ashurst & Venn, 2014; Parsons, 1999, 2018). Neoliberalism can be defined as a social, political and economic ideology based on the idea that privatisation of public services is a requirement for social progress (Connell, 2013; Davies & Bansel, 2007; Wilson & Scarbrough, 2018).

The neoliberal agenda sees the marketisation of areas of social life previously deemed to be public goods, resulting in the commodification of services which can be privately consumed (Power & Whitty, 1996). With regards to education, the introduction of neoliberal policy has led to a quasi-market (Fernández, 2009), assuming that the introduction of competition between schools will improve the quality of schooling, whilst children and their parents are considered consumers of education through freedom of choice (Wilson & Scarbrough, 2018). This transition of education as a public good into a commodity, leads to changes to whether education is seen as a right or a privilege (Parsons, 1999).

A neoliberal agenda applied to education is argued to create perverse incentives for excluding children, with inconsistencies between the values underpinning educational inclusion and the required approaches to meet the diverse needs of all (Grimaldi, 2012).

2.7 A Critical Theory of School Exclusion

The literature so far has presented an account of school exclusion as complex and multi-faceted, reflected in Hallett and Hallett's (2021) characterisation of school exclusion as a 'wicked problem.'

Education and schooling are not ideologically neutral, but instead sits within strong ideological and moral underpinnings which reproduce power dynamics, cultural control and social reproduction (Apple, 2019; Bernstein, 2000; Buzzelli & Johnston, 2014; Thornberg, 2009). Therefore, consideration of these ideological and moral underpinnings is important.

Carl Parsons (1999) provides an account of the ideological functions of schooling and their impact on exclusion within his critical theory of school exclusion.

A key element of Parson's (1999) theory argues that the aims and functions of education and schooling are socially constructed and subject to change over time. Through exploring historical perspectives on schooling in England, Parsons' (1999) identifies six ways to conceptualise the functions of schooling, which have ideological perspectives sitting at two polarities; social democratic / humanistic versus controlling / classical (see Table 2.1).

1. *Custodial Function*

Parsons (1999) highlighted custodial functions of schooling as reflective of whether school is seen as something to care for and contain children, or whether it is something to control and limit children considered unruly, by keeping children deemed at risk of engaging in crime off the streets.

2. *Civilising Function*

The civilising function of schooling reflects the extent to which schooling contributes to socialisation or teaching children how to behave within dominant socio-cultural norms (Bouhours, 2007; Parsons, 1999). Schooling, within a civilising function, is seen as one of two primary sites of socialisation of children and young people: the school and the family. The civilising function positions schooling as potentially able to combat or correct 'bad parenting' (Bouhours, 2007).

3. *National Identity Function*

The national identity function reflects the extent to which children learn to belong to the nation, which was particularly important during wartime to galvanise the population into collective action (Bouhours, 2007). Questions remain about the extent to which a national identity might support a benign sense of belonging or "malignant nationalism" (Bouhours, 2007, p. 67).

4. Skilling Function

The skilling function reflects the role of schooling in providing children and young people with the necessary skills to enter the labour force. Critiques of this function range from arguments that it trains people to be 'factory fodder' for the state to arguments that the system is unsuccessful in providing children and young people with the skills required of them in industry (Bouhours, 2007).

5. Public knowledge Function

This function refers to the selection, organisation and transmission of public knowledge and has implications for the curriculum and what is deemed important to be taught.

6. Credentialling Function

The credentialling function reflects the ability of children to gain the credentials, such as certificates, to secure their path into an occupation with privileged status. This legitimises the privileging of access to different types of education, occupations and therefore societal positions (Bouhours, 2007).

Table 2.1: Parsons' (1999) functions of schooling and ideological continuums

Function	Social-Democratic / humanistic	Controlling / classical
Custodial	Benign and nurturing	Controlling and limiting

Civilising	Democratising and humanising	Subjugating and inducting
National Identity	Open and questioning	Closed and nationalistic
Skilling	Generic and flexible	Specific and fixed
Credentialling	Egalitarian and communitarian	Elitist and competitive
Public Knowledge	Conjectural and open	Received and authoritative

Parsons (1999) argues that:

> *"On each continua, movement to the right will favour achievement of some favoured goals, e.g., high standards in basic skills and traditional subjects, a (self-) controlled population, etc. It will run counter to "inclusion," will be less tolerant of difference and will increase pressure to conform. Equally, movement to the left resonates with many of those "weak" words to do with social work, freedom, kindness. It is accepting and inclusive (Parsons, 1999, p. 13).*

More recently, Gibbs (2022) highlights ongoing questions about the philosophical assumptions which underpin schooling in England. He critically reflects on the way in which schooling has impacts on the reproduction of societal conventions and proposes a critical questioning of how we would like education to produce society in the future.

Parsons (1999) presents an account of the way in which policy developments in England and Wales had an impact on the balance between the two ideological poles. He argues that the functions of schooling saw movement to the right on

all six continua from 1966 - 1996, with significant implications on the use of school exclusion in England and Wales.

More recently, Parsons (2018) highlights significant continued impact of neoliberal agendas around education on the use of exclusion in England's schools. He argues that:

> *"Academies, deregulation, the diminished the role of local authorities and contraction of other services coupled with a dominating, punishing standards agenda have brought huge, poorly monitored outcomes, disproportionately affecting the most vulnerable" (Parsons, 2018, p. 245).*

2.8   Summary and relevance to this thesis

2.8.1   Rationale

The literature review presents a wealth of literature exploring factors that may be related to the use of disciplinary school exclusion, as well as attempts within the literature to identify "what works" to prevent exclusion and support the inclusion of individual students. Disciplinary school exclusion has been discussed as a paradox within attempts towards inclusion and with reference to the impacts of neoliberalism on exclusionary policies.

However, there is presently a gap in the literature relating to the way in which disciplinary school exclusion is constructed and legitimised within discourse within a macro social constructionist perspective.

Recognising dominant discourses, as well as the positions that shape subjectivity can be a useful first step to locate the problems within society and away from the intra-psychic domain. After the dominant discourses and alternative discourses have been critically analysed, it opens up opportunities to claim or resist the subjectivities offered and begin to effect change (Burr, 2015).

The primary rationale for this thesis is to describe, interpret and explain the implications of dominant discourses on the social / institutional practice of disciplinary school exclusion.

This research builds an understanding of the way in which children who are deemed at risk of disciplinary school exclusion (with emphasis on Permanent Exclusion) are constructed as objects and positioned as subjects within the discourses drawn on by school staff in decision making positions (such as senior leadership) in relation to disciplinary school exclusion.

Within the current study, I argue that the dominant discourses surrounding the social practice of disciplinary school exclusion must be understood as an important first step before beginning to identify alternative discourses which are able to provide opportunities for alternative actions and, therefore, alternative outcomes for children who are deemed at risk of disciplinary school exclusion.

School staff in positions of decision-making power were selected as participants for this study, due to their role in the decision-making aspects of disciplinary school exclusion, such as making decisions about the implementation of individual exclusions as well as their decision-making power at the school policy level. Illuminating and critically analysing the wider discourses drawn upon by those staff with regards to the social practice of disciplinary school exclusion (in which they are in a position of power) is useful to developing an understanding of the way in which discourse legitimises and perpetuates the use of disciplinary school exclusion as a social practice.

2.8.2   Research Questions

Primary research question:

⇒ How is disciplinary school exclusion legitimised in the discourses drawn on by staff in decision making positions in education?

Secondary questions:

⇒ How is disciplinary school exclusion constructed as an object within decision makers' talk? How do these constructions shape subjectivity?
⇒ What are the wider discourses drawn upon by decision makers to construct disciplinary school exclusion?

Chapter 3: Chronological review of education policy in England

3.1 Introduction

The purpose of reviewing policy documentation is to situate disciplinary school exclusion within the macro-political context. This is important to enable the critical examination of the emergence of discourses and how they have changed (or remained the same) within a Foucauldian perspective (Foucault, 1972; I. Parker, 1992). The following section will present a perspective on the historical origins of universal education in England.

Where possible, where documentation was accessible, I have attempted to review policy documentation to enable reflection on the political context of education over time.

Throughout this section, I will take note of wider discourses that may be drawn on. To signal to the reader where I take note of these wider discourses, I will make use of reflexive boxes.

This chapter loosely follows three key themes to present the language used in the political context of education over time. The chapter begins with consideration of education prior to the 1870 Education Act, before education was available to all. Then the transition from the availability of educational provision for all to compulsory education is discussed. The remainder of the chapter will review key policy documentation and legislation relating to what is now referred to as 'social, emotional and mental health' areas of need, and an account of the rise of the notion of discipline within education.

Reflexive Box 3.1: Reflections as a believer in inclusion

At the outset of this research, my rationale for exploring exclusion as a construct in order to look for alternatives was based on what I thought was an inclusive ideology.

As a result, when writing the literature review at the outset of this research (which I now revisit), it seemed only sensible to start by presenting disciplinary school exclusion as a challenge to the inclusive movement, based on the discourses of inclusion as progressive and relating to positive outcomes for children and young people, schools and society.

Along the way, on this journey I have been on, I have begun to believe less and less in the concept of inclusion in favour of something else altogether. The feeling of disaffection and marginalisation I had described as a teenager seemed to return but this time related to my thoughts on the education system as a whole.

Whilst I still, wholeheartedly and perhaps even more so, feel strongly that disciplinary school exclusion should have no place in our society, I have more significant questions as to whether 'inclusion' is the answer either.

Therefore, instead of presenting a description of 'the rise of inclusive education' within a pro-inclusion discourse, I will instead present a perspective on the history of 'education for all' since the 18ᵗʰ century. Later in the literature review I will present discourses of inclusion / exclusion within academic literature.

I do not endeavour to claim that this is a 'historically correct' presentation of events, rather a representation of the academic and policy discourse presented. Therefore, the historical presentation does not intend to present 'the truth' of the socio-political context, rather a presentation of policy discourse over time.

3.2   The early 1800s

Education is argued to have been a feature of English society since the Roman Empire (Gillard, 2018), having only been accessible to the middle- and upper-classes until the late 19th century (Frederickson & Cline, 2015). In the early 1800s, education seemed of little interest to "the poor" (Lawson & Silver, 1973).

In the early 1800s, communities were mostly rural and the poor law was overseen by selected members of the parish (Royle, 2012). 'Beggars' were to be punished, the 'able-bodied' poor be put to work in factories or workhouses and the 'impotent poor' cared for in alms-houses (Royle, 2012).

Royle (2012) argues that a significant feature of the 'old poor law' was the treatment of children. He claims the law was set up envisioning the care of children supported by the parish until they reached an age at which they could be apprenticed.

However, Ashurst and Venn (2014) claim that children were either regarded as criminal or as cheap labour, leading to discussion of how best to stop children from engaging in 'vagrancy' on the streets instead of cheap, apprenticed labour (Ashurst & Venn, 2014).

"Troublesome and troubled" children were excluded through policies of transportation and forced emigration (Ashurst & Venn, 2014, p. 57), with an estimated 100,000 children exported from the UK between 1860 and 1960 (Eekelaar, 1994, p. 490). Children who were transported were typically "destitute" children who were likely to be living on the streets, and were considered "always at risk of being recruited into criminal activity" (Ashurst & Venn, 2014, p. 57).

3.3   1834 – 1870

The industrial revolution in the mid-1800s led to dramatic social, political and economic change (Gillard, 2018). The population in England increased significantly, and agricultural advances released much of the labour market from

the fields (Royle, 2012). As a result, many of the working-classes moved from rural to urban areas, leading to poor living conditions, perceived increases in crime rates and the spread of infectious diseases (Royle, 2012).

The Poor Law Amendment Act in 1834 transferred administration of the poor from the parish to workhouses (Gillard, 2018). This related to a shift, from collective responsibility for the whole community, to the poor being responsible for their own condition (Ashurst & Venn, 2014).

To try and reduce crime rates and eradicate pauperism, campaigners called for the education of the poor (Royle, 2012), reflected in changes in the 1834 Poor Law Amendment Act, which introduced requirements that "apprentices" should receive instruction within the workhouses (Gillard, 2018).

Discourse around reform of 'the poor' through education met continued hostility and fear amongst the middle and upper classes (Ashurst & Venn, 2014). Mr David Ghitty, a Tory MP, in a house of commons debate in 1816, expressed early fears that educating the working classes would:

> *"… teach them to despise their lot in life, instead of making them good servants in agriculture and other laborious employments to which their rank in society had destined them; instead of teaching them subordination, it would render them factious and refractory, as is evident in the manufacturing counties; it would enable them to read seditious pamphlets, vicious books and publications against Christianity; it would render them insolent to their superiors; and, in a few years, the result would be that the legislature would find it necessary to direct the strong arm of power towards them and to furnish the executive magistrates with more vigorous powers than were now in force." Mr David Ghitty, (Hansard House of Commons 13 June 1807 Vol 9 Cols 798-9 with minor corrections).*

Other concerns around educating the masses were that criminal tendencies were hereditary, and that providing those destined to become criminals with an education would increase organised crime and worsen the 'situation' (Ashurst &

Venn, 2014). Royle (2012) claimed that 15-19 year olds made up almost 25% of people committed to trial in the UK in the 1840s, despite making up only 10% of the population at the time.

Political debate focused on the need for alternative arrangements to remove the 'destitute' children from the streets, and from the visibility of the nation (Ashurst & Venn, 2014). "Ragged schools" were set up by Lord Ashley in the 1840s, targeting "those children from the streets who were escaping the usual religious Sunday and day schools" (Royle, 2012, p. 260).

At a similar time, between the 1850s and 1870s, industrial developments and stronger militaries abroad were correlated with a better educated population, leading to political pressures to make education accessible to all towards the end of the 19th century (Ashurst & Venn, 2014; Gillard, 2018; Royle, 2012).

Reflexive Box 3.2: Reflections on the discourse

In the mid-1800s, three separate discourses around universal education seemed to emerge. First, a progressive discourse, seeing education as a potential cure for the ills of society cause by the industrial revolution, including poverty and inequality. The second is around the reform or removal of the 'destitute,' who are always considered potentially criminal.' The third is around the use of education to make the population productive for the state, particularly relating to England's slow progress in comparison to other industrialising countries.

Talk of reform of the poor through education could represent the emergence of an 'education as unquestionable good' discourse, where education is seen as a solution to the poverty and inequality that arose within the industrial revolution. This could reflect the 'civilising' function of schooling described by Parsons (1999).

The language around 'troublesome and troubled' children considered to have inherent criminal tendences perhaps reflects a discourse of criminal justice,

and essentialist ideas of human nature, legitimising their removal through policies of transportation and forced emigration. Schooling to keep troublesome children off the streets could reflect Parsons' (1999) custodial function of schooling towards a more controlling ideological perspective.

Ideas of education to make the population productive for the state could reflect Parsons (1999) skilling function of schooling to serve the needs of industry.

Ashurst and Venn (2014), in their genealogy of school exclusion, claim the political economy of exclusion, in which discourses emerging around the time of the industrial revolution, such as "diseases of poverty," "reform," "social control" and "crime and punishment" have been reproduced and transformed to uphold the stratification of society within a system based on social class.

Ashurst and Venn, (2014), in their conclusion on the prevailing discourse following the Poor Laws, stated:

> *"The dominant element of the discourses which emerged from the time of the Poor Law reforms constituted the children of the poor as always potentially criminal; thus, the issues of security and prevention were uppermost in the minds of policy-makers. Exclusion in one form or another, from transportation, 'export' and transplantation to the colonies to specialised institutions such as Industrial and Reformatory Schools and Young Offender Institutions has been the preferred strategy of containment" (Ashurst & Venn, 2014, p. 163).*

3.4   1870 – 1901

By the late 1800s, political pressure to increase England's productivity won the argument in favour of educating the masses (Royle, 2012). The 1870 'Forster' Education Act required school boards to provide an elementary education for children who were not able to access places in voluntary institutions (Warnock, 1978). There were significant changes to the education in the UK between the

1870 and 1902 Education Acts, relating to increasing state control over education (Stephens, 1998).

The educational structure was divided into public schools (for the elite), grammar schools (for the middle classes) and popular schools (for those who could not afford to attend the other two) with three separate commissions established to regulate provision relating to the different social classes (Gillard, 2018).

The period between 1870 and the early 1900s saw the beginnings of specialist provision (Gillard, 2018). Schools for the deaf and the blind had been established over the previous 100 years (Warnock, 1978). The first provision for the "so-called mentally defective" was established in the mid-19th century as an asylum for "idiots" (Warnock, 1978, p. 9).

Children involved in criminal activity or deemed as troublesome were segregated and sent to reformatory schools, before being either sent into the army or forced to emigrate to Canada as cheap agricultural labour (Royle, 2012). The quality of education, by middle- and upper-class values, was significantly different, to prevent the working classes and the poor from getting ideas above their station (Ashurst & Venn, 2014).

Reflexive Box 3.3: Reflections on the discourse

The segregated system of education could reflect Parsons' (1999) notions of schooling as having a custodial function, a credentialling function and a civilising function.

3.5 1902 – 1944

The notion of the 'maladjusted child' emerged between 1902 and 1944 (Warnock, 1978, p. 17). The Underwood Report, commissioned in the 1950s to enquire into problems of 'maladjustment,' refers to the definition of 'maladjusted

pupils' cited in the Handicapped Pupils and School Health Service Regulations in 1945, as:

"Pupils who show evidence of emotional instability or psychological disturbance and require special educational treatment in order to effect their personal, social, or educational re-adjustment" (Underwood, 1955)*.*

When talking of 'maladjustment,' the Underwood report (Ministry of Education, 1955) seemed to refer to individuals who have "failed" to "achieve any real adjustment with their environment" (p. 3).

The introduction of the term 'maladjusted' followed the establishment of the British Child Study Association in 1893, the first laboratory studying children's behaviour at University College London shortly after, the Central Association for Mental Welfare and the appointment of England's first Educational Psychologist in 1913 (Gillard, 2018).

By 1927, the Child Guidance Council was founded, with Child Guidance Clinics established from 1933 as a centre for the "skilled treatment of children showing behavioural disturbances" (Warnock, 1978, p. 17). At this time and until 1944, 'maladjustment' was not recognised as a need requiring specialist provision (Warnock, 1978). Children convicted of crime continued to be segregated into Reformatory or Industrial schools until 1933, when reformatory schools became "Approved Schools" and there was much more emphasis placed on "reformative education" (Royle, 2012, p. 260).

In the late 1920s, independent residential schools for 'maladjusted' children were established catering specifically for "nervous and difficult" children (Underwood, 1955). By 1939 there were 46 schools approved by the Child Guidance Council and the Central Association for Mental Welfare to cater for "nervous, difficult and retarded" children (Underwood, 1955).

Wartime saw further segregation of children deemed to be 'maladjusted:'

"Evacuation, however, brought to light behaviour problems in a large number of children who had not previously been found

difficult to manage in school. Some of these had been troublesome in their own homes; many others had appeared normal before both at home and school, but developed anxieties and disturbances as a result of being uprooted from their homes and transferred to strange surroundings. Hostels "for difficult children", that is for children who proved unbilletable, were set up as part of the Government evacuation scheme" (Underwood, 1955).

Reflexive Box 3.4: Reflections on the discourse

The language use within the Underwood report reflecting on the establishment of "hostels for difficult children" suggests that, although these children "appeared normal," the circumstances relating to war and evacuation had simply illuminated problems that had been underlying and were already present, suggesting within-child causes for the supposed 'maladjustment.'

Moreover, the psychologisation of children through language of assessment and treatment of behavioural difficulties locates the perceived difficulties of behaviour as within the child and requiring a cure, or treatment which requires expert involvement. These ways of talking about behaviour and difficulty reflect individualising discourses of the person.

Whilst the definition of maladjustment recognises the relationship between an individual and their environment, the language around failure and achievement seems to place the responsibility for 'adjustment' within the individual.

The emergence of the notion of maladjustment represents a potential shift from identifying children as having inherent criminal tendencies towards perspectives which give more consideration to contextual factors. The 'maladjusted' child perhaps reflects Macleod's (2006) finding that children can be constructed as 'mad,' 'sad,' or 'bad' with maladjustment perhaps reflecting

a label given to the 'mad' or 'sad' child who requires additional support or treatment.

3.6   1944 – 1954

The post-war period saw further educational reforms with the 1944 Education Act, which required the provision of secondary education for all. This replaced the qualifying examination with a selective "eleven-plus" exam to allocate children to appropriate schooling according to their performance (Royle, 2012).

The 1947 New Secondary Education Act implemented the 'tripartite school system' (Gillard, 2018). Three separate types of 'mainstream' secondary school systems remained: grammar schools, technical schools and secondary modern schools (Gillard, 2018). Wrigley (2014) argues that elitism remains in the tripartite system:

> *"Despite the rhetoric of 'separate but equal', the hierarchy of schools was never in doubt. Funding was seriously unequal, since the grammar schools benefited from extremely generous allocations attached to sixth formers. While the grammar school curriculum continued much as before ... the secondary modern curriculum was constrained by a belief that its pupils were innately limited in intellectual capacity, the earlier school leaving age (14, later 15) and the absence of a final qualification," (Wrigley, 2014, p. 8).*

The following 1944 Education Act identified that any "pupils who suffer from any disability of mind or body" should be provided with appropriate special educational treatment, to be decided by the local education authority (Warnock, 1978). There was no process by which parents could appeal the designated placement of their child and parents were required to submit their child to examination by child guidance clinics (Warnock, 1978).

The 1944 Education Act designated that the 'maladjusted child' should be assessed by an educational psychologist or a child guidance team, with the child's needs thereafter being met either with their usual teacher with specialist advice, by specialist teaching, a different day school or a specialist boarding school (Warnock, 1978). By 1955 there were 300 child guidance clinics and a significant expansion in the special school sector for children deemed to be 'maladjusted' (Warnock, 1978). Warnock (1978) clarifies maladjustment to be manifested "in passive introverted behaviour as well as disruptive or anti-social forms of conduct" (p. 24). The idea of 'anti-social' behaviour reflects a civilising function of schooling, aiming to control behaviour deemed to sit outside of socio-cultural norms (Parsons, 1999).

3.7   1953 – 1978

Post-war English society developed affluence and consumerism and led to people wanting better paid jobs through better education (Gillard, 2018). It became apparent that this affluence was not reaching all of society which began to illuminate impact of privilege (and under privilege) in the education system (Lawson and Silver, 1973).

Parsons (1999) argues that focal issues in education between 1953 and 1978 included concerns about falling standards in education, increasing challenges to teachers' professional autonomy and selective education, in which a pendulum swung between arguments for comprehensive education and selective schooling based on performance (such as grammar schools). There was also a focus on the role of education in economic decline in the late 70s, reflecting the skilling function of schooling.

As calls were amplified for reform of the tripartite system towards a comprehensive state education system, so did arguments for better provision for children deemed to be 'maladjusted' (Gillard, 2018). The 1955 Underwood report was commissioned to:

> *"To enquire into and report upon the medical, educational and*
> *social problems relating to maladjusted children, with reference*

to their treatment within the educational system" (Underwood, 1955)

The Underwood Report recommended that 'maladjusted' children should be educated in day special schools wherever possible and should only be placed in residential specialist provision if there appeared to be "no hope of treating him successfully while he remains at home" (Underwood, 1955, p. 65). The report suggested that 'maladjusted' children should be "treated" and highlighted the importance of the home environment, recommending a role of health visitors and social services in supporting the family (Underwood, 1955).

Reflexive Box 3.5: Reflections on the discourse

This way of talking suggests problems located within the child and the family that require treatment, within a medicalised discourse, necessitating a role of 'experts' and placing the onus on the individual to change, rather than the environment. However, the Underwood report (1955) acknowledges that "some environments are so unhealthy that they ought to be altered" and the need for humans to communicate discontent, suggesting that discontent can be communicated with continued "mental balance and tranquillity of disposition" (Underwood, 1955). This identifies a privileged way of experiencing emotions with rationality (Laws & Davies, 2000).

Changes in understanding of the construct of special needs and special educational provision were also afoot. The 1976 Education Act required Local Authorities to provide education to children with 'handicaps' in ordinary schools wherever possible, "except where this was 'impracticable or incompatible with the provision of efficient instruction in the schools' or would involve 'unreasonable public expenditure'" (Section 10(1) in Warnock, 1978, p. 100).

The following Warnock Report (1978) reflected on the stigma created by labels, stating that:

"… labels tend to stick, and children diagnosed as [Educationally Sub-Normal] or maladjusted can be stigmatised

unnecessarily for the whole of their school careers and beyond"
(Warnock, 1978, p. 42).

The Warnock report explored terminology identifying children as 'maladjusted,' highlighting concerns around stigmatisation, the vagueness and relativity of the concept, the implication of a permanence of 'maladjustment,' and lack of indication of appropriate specialist provision (Warnock, 1978). However, the report concludes that the term "remains serviceable" because the term implies that the maladjustment can be understood only in terms of the environment in which the child is situated (Warnock, 1978).

3.8 1979 – 1990

Royle (2012) argues that development in the education system in the 1980s and 1990s was centred around two key themes:

"on the one hand, how to ensure equality of opportunity in a
society in which life-chances were not equal and at the same
time to maximise the talents of the most able in the service of
the State and, on the other, how to direct the content and
quality of education so as to ensure that the needs of the State
(especially the national economy) were indeed being met"
(Royle, 2012, p. 428)

A conservative government, led by Margaret Thatcher from 1979-1990, saw the implementation of a number of policies reminiscent of the classical liberal era in the 19th century (Royle, 2012). These neoliberal policies were put in place alongside measures to destabilise institutions supported by political rivals and new procedures for the public management of those institutions (Royle, 2012). Jones (2003) argues that the outcome of these processes was "a form of governance in which market principles were advanced at the same time as central authority was strengthened" (p. 107).

The introduction of neoliberal policy saw a movement away from a social-democratic version of capitalism towards a capitalist society underpinned by

increasing competitiveness, individual responsibility and marketisation (Young, 2014).

The idea of "school effectiveness" became more pervasive over the course of the 1980s, with a number of research studies exploring school factors that impact on children's attainment (Gillard, 2018). One such example is the study written by Rutter, Maughan, Mortimore and Ouston entitled "Fifteen Thousand Hours" (1979), which presented evidence in contradiction with the idea that the local community of a school was the determining factor in whether the school was effective in promoting 'better' educational outcomes.

Sir Keith Joseph, Education Secretary between 1981 and 1986, highlighted his aims to raise the standards of schools to raise school achievement (Gillard, 2018). This is reflected in the 1985 White Paper *Better Schools,* which stated that:

> *"the standards now generally attained by our pupils are neither*
> *as good as they can be, nor as good as they need to be if*
> *young people are to be equipped for the world of the twenty-*
> *first century" (Department for Education and Skills, 1985, p. 3).*

Better Schools laid out the arrangements for the new General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE), to be implemented by 1988. These included a single system based on national criteria, criteria-related grades, unlimited selection for examination, graded certificates for the "ablest pupils" and independent exam boards (Department for Education and Skills, 1985, pp. 31–32).

The introduction of centralised examinations, in the form of GCSEs, refers to an increase in the credentialling function of schooling with an elitist and competitive leaning (Parsons, 1999).

By the end of the decade, the 1989 Education Act was enacted, which envisioned that schools performing well would attract more pupils, whilst schools performing badly would either have to close or improve (Forrester & Garratt, 2016). Key changes included:

- Diminishing Local Authority control by giving schools power to spend their budget as they chose,
- Enabling schools to opt out of Local Authority control,
- Aligning funding with the number of children on roll at a school where more children resulted in more funding,
- Further empowering parents to choose a school for their child,
- Enacting the national curriculum,
- Establishing SATs and GCSEs to evaluate school effectiveness and the national curriculum was enacted into legislation (Gillard, 2018).

The 1989 Education Act was followed by recommendations to implement school league tables, aiming to further empower parents in their choices by providing them with nationally published information on school performance (Gillard, 2018).

Reflexive Box 3.6: Reflections on the discourse

The emergence of discourses around standards in education, along with neoliberal policies of parental choice and the evaluation of school effectiveness via examinations altogether begin to privilege certain types of outcomes as success, highlighting further movement of the credentialling function of schooling towards meritocracy.

These policy enactments put additional pressures on schools to exclude pupils, where exam results necessitate good learning environments and create incentives to remove students who are unlikely to perform.

The 1981 Education Act responded to some of the recommendations in the Warnock report (Education Act 1981, 1981), redefining concepts of special educational needs and provision and introducing new terminology, adopting the term 'learning difficulties' and 'special educational needs' over 'handicapped.'

 A key change in the 1981 Education Act, based on recommendations within the Warnock Report, was that children with 'learning difficulties' should be educated in mainstream schools wherever possible (Education Act 1981, 1981).

The Act stated three conditions as to whether a child should be educated in an "ordinary school" which included that the child is able to receive the provision they require, that the provision for children "with whom he will be educated" remains efficient and that resources are used efficiently (Education Act 1981, 1981, p. 2).

Alongside changes to recommendations around special educational needs, the 1980s saw a significant increase in concern with regards to school discipline, alongside concerns about school standards. The White Paper *Education for All,* in 1985, focussing on driving up standards in schools, also committed a chapter to better discipline in schools (Swann, 1985). The chapter on discipline opened with the following:

"Good order in classrooms, corridors and school grounds is essential throughout the school day, including the mid-day and other breaks. All schools recognise that nothing so quickly undermines their efforts as a failure to keep in check discourtesy, disorder and disruption. There is also widespread agreement within schools that their task extends to developing high standards of conduct within the school and beyond, in the interest both of the pupil and of society. Schools recognise, too, the expectation that they will foster the shared values which underlie a free society: tolerance, consideration for others, respect for truth and respect for the rule of law" (Swann, 1985, p. 57).

Education for All also notes the perceived link between standards of behaviour within schools and "problems with the incidence of juvenile crime" (Swann, 1985, p. 57). The paper acknowledges the importance of positive school cultures and effective schools' abilities to create "an atmosphere which encourages good behaviour and self-discipline" (Swann, 1985, p. 57), whilst recommending that schools do not become over reliant on disciplinary sanctions (Swann, 1985). At the time, corporal punishment was yet to be abolished, although legislation had empowered parents to make their child exempt from corporal punishment at school (Swann, 1985).

The second 1986 Education Act also committed a section to school discipline, outlining the responsibilities of the school in:

> *"(i) promoting, among pupils, self-discipline and proper regard for authority; (ii) encouraging good behaviour on the part of pupils; (iii) securing that the standard of behaviour of pupils is acceptable; and (iv) otherwise regulating the conduct of pupils;"*
> (Education (No. 2) Act, 1986, p. 25)*.*

The act outlined headteachers powers and responsibilities with regard to school exclusion, highlighting that only headteachers should hold the power to exclude (either by suspension or expulsion).

The issue of school discipline became subject to further exploration and more reports and guidance were produced. The Elton Report produced in 1989, outlined the purpose of school as to enable children to learn and highlighted the importance of "good behaviour" for "effective teaching and learning," whilst "bad behaviour disrupts these processes" (Elton, 1989, p. 57).

The Elton Report strongly argued that "bad behaviour in schools is a complex problem" (p. 64) and highlights the influence of many different factors at different systemic levels, introducing a diagram similar to Bronfenbrenner's ecological model of development (Elton, 1989). The report "identifies a need for action" across four "levels of influence" including the classroom, the school, the community and at national level (Elton, 1989).

It's also worth noting a change in terminology within the Elton Report, in which the report highlights the responsibility of local authorities and schools to ensure that the special educational needs of pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties are assessed and met (Elton, 1989). This marks a shift in terminology from previous notions of the 'maladjusted' towards the notion of 'emotional and behavioural difficulties.'

School discipline begins to emerge as a problem within education, with increasing emphasis placed on ensuring effective learning environments through good school conduct.

The Elton Report further emphasises the problem of discipline in schools. This was the first of many policy documents focusing on discipline and behaviour in schools, with an emphasis on behaviourist approaches including rewards and punishment.

Foucault's account of disciplinary power (1977) provides an interesting perspective on the potential problematisation of discipline in schools after the 1980s (Bouhours, 2007). Corporal punishment in schools could reflect Foucault's idea of the way in which the body was the focus of punishment with the "spectacle of the scaffold" (Foucault, 1977, p. 16). With the eventual abolition of corporal punishment in schools, disciplinary techniques through the use of behavioural sciences and strategies to manage behaviour in schools, the mind appears to become the new focus of punishment (Bouhours, 2007).

This reflects an increase in concern around school discipline in schools as reflective of a movement towards a controlling and limiting custodial function of school, alongside a civilising function to manipulate behaviour towards desired socio-cultural norms.

3.9   1990 – 1996

Under continuing Conservative government, the National Curriculum testing regime was implemented from 1991, with Standard Assessment Tests (SATs) for Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 (Gillard, 2018). After the second round of SATs in 1992, the first league tables were produced (Gillard, 2018).

After the government had implemented the National Curriculum, its testing regime and the production of league tables, neoliberal policy reached Her

Majesty's Inspectorate (Gillard, 2018). With the 1992 Education Act, the school's inspectorate was privatised with the establishment of the Office for Standards in Education (though not named in the act; Gillard, 2018). Ofsted were responsible for providing regular inspections of "the quality of education provided by schools" and make an annual report (Gillard, 2018).

The White Paper *Choice and Diversity* also made recommendations aimed at incentivising and reducing barriers for schools to opt out of local authority control (Department for Education and Skills, 1992). The 1993 Education Act was wide ranging and implemented many of the recommendations within the 1992 White Paper (Gillard, 2018).

Gillard (2018) argues that the implementation of the National Curriculum, its testing regime and the league tables had three significant and unintended consequences. First, there was no incentive to admit or include pupils with learning difficulties due to the fear that their results would impact on the school's performance on league tables. Second, supporting those pupils who were on the boundaries of a better grade or performance was incentivised, rather than supporting pupils who were struggling the most. Thirdly, the delivery of the curriculum became heavily weighted towards the need to practise for the tests, impacting on its breadth.

In the same period, there was growing international pressure to include children with learning difficulties in mainstream schools over the course of the 1990s (Frederickson & Cline, 2015). Policy and guidance continued to reflect this movement, with the *Choice and Diversity* (Department for Education and Skills, 1992) recommending that children with special educational needs should be educated in 'ordinary schools' to the "maximum extent possible" (p. 43).

International pressure to progress from integration towards educational inclusion came to a pinnacle with the publication of the Salamanca statement in 1994 (UNESCO, 1994). This argued that all children have the right to be educated in mainstream settings, although this may not be the case if mainstream settings are unable to meet the needs of the child, either

educationally or socially, or the education and welfare of other children will be affected (UNESCO, 1994).

The Salamanca statement argues that inclusive school systems would be an "*effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes, building an inclusive society and achieving education for all*" (UNESCO, 1994). The UK joined the Salamanca statement in 1997 and the following 10 years saw changes to educational policy and practice in an attempt to move towards more inclusive practice (Ainscow, 2005).

3.10 1997 – 2010

The 1997 White Paper *Excellence in Schools,* the first publication following Labour coming into power, set out its aims in line with "the Government's core commitment to equality of opportunity and high standards for all" (Department for Education and Employment, 1997b, p. 3). The Labour government between 1997 and 2010 continued to be characterised by principles of consumer choice, privatisation and deregulation (Gillard, 2018), whilst also attempting to balance welfarism with laissez-faire capitalism (Parsons, 1999).

Excellence in Schools laid the groundwork for the School Standards and Framework Act, 1998. Key changes included developing *Education Action Zones* in areas with the lowest performing schools and greatest disadvantage, and making recommendations for grouping pupils in sets for part of the school week, based on ability and regularly reviewed (Department for Education and Employment, 1997b).

In 2001, the Green Paper *Schools - Building on Success* shortly followed by the White Paper *Schools – Achieving Success* set out further aspirations to promote high standards, minimise inequality, develop specialist schools, establish city academies and provide high performing schools with greater autonomy (Department for Education and Employment, 2001; Department for Education and Skills, 2001). The changes were enacted in the 2002 Education Act.

By 2003, the Audit Commission and Ofsted collaborated on a report which warned of the impacts of parental choice and preference on inequality, stating that "the weakest and least popular schools frequently serve the poorest, most vulnerable and most disaffected groups" (Audit Commission & Ofsted, 2003, p. 6). This view was also supported in a publication by the Education and Skills Committee stating that "the rhetoric on choice has, perhaps inevitably, not been matched by the reality of parental preference in the allocation of school places" (House of Commons Education and Skills Committee, 2003, p. 3).

The Green Paper *Every Child Matters* laid out plans to reform services for children and young people age 0-19 and declared aims to "reduce the numbers of children who experience educational failure, engage in offending or anti-social behaviour, suffer from ill health, or become teenage parents" (Chief Secretary to the Treasury, 2003, p. 5). *Every Child Matters* advocated for a holistic view of child development and therefore an integrated children's services (Gillard, 2018). The recommendations were implemented in the 2004 Children Act.

Excellence in schools was followed closely by the Green Paper *Excellence for all children: meeting special educational needs* (Department for Education and Employment, 1997b, 1997a), which highlighted targets to reduce long term need for specialist provision through raising standards, educating a higher proportion of children with special educational needs in mainstream schools and developing a national programme to support primary schools with early intervention for children with emotional and behavioural difficulties (Department for Education and Employment, 1997a).

Excellence for all children: meeting special educational needs demonstrates a commitment to inclusion by enrolling children in mainstream schools "unless there are compelling reasons for doing otherwise" and relates this to "a progressive extension in the capacity of mainstream schools to provide for children with a wide range of needs" (Department for Education and Employment, 1997a, p. 44).

The early 2000s saw a number of publications advocating for an inclusive agenda, such as the *Index for Inclusion* (Booth & Ainscow, 2002)*.* The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Act (2001) and the SEN Code of Practice (2001) stipulated that children should be educated in a mainstream school unless this was incompatible with parental wishes or it would impact on the education of other children, and that Local Authorities must take "reasonable steps" to prevent this incompatibility (Special Educational Needs and Disability Act, 2001, pp. 2–3).

The Special Educational Needs Code of Practice published in 2001 set out four areas of need, including communication and interaction, cognition and learning, behaviour, emotional and social development and sensory and/or physical needs (DfE, 2001). The Code of Practice defined the area of behaviour, emotional and social development as encompassing:

> *"Children and young people who demonstrate features of emotional and behavioural difficulties, who are withdrawn or isolated, disruptive or disturbing, hyperactive and lack concentration; those with immature social skills; and those presenting challenging behaviours arising from other complex special needs" (DfE, 2001, p. 87).*

The 1997 White Paper *Excellence in Schools* recommended an 'assertive discipline' approach to classroom management, based on rewarding good behaviour and a hierarchy of "sanctions which are consistently applied when the rules are broken" (Department for Education and Employment, 1997b). *Excellence in Schools* also promises detailed guidance on the use of exclusion, and states that:

> *"Schools need the ultimate sanction of excluding pupils; but the present number of exclusions is too high. We are concerned in particular about the unjustified variation in exclusion rates between schools and the disproportionate exclusion of pupils from certain ethnic minorities and children looked after by local*

Excellence for all children: meeting special educational needs also committed a chapter to supporting the needs of children with "emotional and behavioural difficulties," defining the term as applying to:

> *"a broad range of young people – preponderantly boys – with a very wide spectrum of needs, from those with short term emotional difficulties to those with extremely challenging behaviour or serious psychological difficulties"* (Department for Education and Employment, 1997a, p. 78).

Excellence for all children: meeting special educational needs highlighted the relationship between "emotional and behavioural difficulties" and exclusions, noting that children with emotional and behavioural difficulties "can present problems to which exclusion has sometimes seemed the only recourse" (Department for Education and Employment, 1997a, p. 78). *Excellence for all children: meeting special educational needs* demonstrated a commitment to shift resources towards early identification, intervention and prevention of the escalation of emotional and behavioural difficulties (Department for Education and Employment, 1997a).

Government guidance and publications focused on tackling poor behaviour to promote high standards in education became more prevalent over the course of the 2000s. The White Paper *Schools – Achieving Success* expressed a commitment to "tackling poor behaviour" and "making sure heads can exclude pupils who are violent and persistently disruptive" (Department for Education and Skills, 2001, p. 25). *Schools – Achieving Success* was followed in 2005 by the Steer Report, *Learning Behaviour,* which stated that:

> *"Poor behaviour cannot be tolerated as it is a denial of the right of pupils to learn and teachers to teach. To enable learning to take place preventative action is the most effective, but where this fails, schools must have clear, firm and intelligent strategies*

in place to help pupils manage their behaviour" (Department for
Education and Skills, 2005, p. 18)*.*

The link between school exclusion and crime also becomes more prevalent
within policy over the 2000s (Ashurst & Venn, 2014). *Schools –Achieving
Success* identified school exclusion as a "first step on a downward spiral
towards criminality and social exclusion" (Department for Education and Skills,
2001, p. 27). Ashurst and Venn (2014) highlight that school exclusion and
criminality became so heavily linked that in 2008 it became an offence for
children excluded to be out in a public place during school hours.

In 2010, the Steer Report *Behaviour and the role of home school agreements*
stated:

> *"The prime responsibility for bringing up children belongs to*
> *their parents. Schools are rarely responsible for causing*
> *problems among the young and are good at helping to*
> *ameliorate the problems of society" (Steer, 2010, p. 5).*

Reflexive Box 3.8: Reflections on the discourse

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*With the production of increasing amounts of policy and guidance in reference
to behaviour, a distinction between behaviour necessitating punishment and
management and behaviour as a special educational need becomes evident.*

*With regards to behaviour deemed deserving of punishment through school
disciplinary systems, there is an increase in individualising discourses, as well
as identifying behaviour as violating the rights of others.*

*A civilising function of schooling are also reflected in these accounts, with
schools identified as able to ameliorate societal problems (rather than
contributing to them). Moreover, children's behaviour is identified as a result
of socialisation within the family, therefore locating the problem of behaviour
within the child and family, rather than what is happening at school. These*

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ideas draw attention away from societal and cultural factors impacting on the 'problem' of discipline in school.

3.11 2010 – Present

The incoming coalition government set out its aims for education with the following opening paragraph:

> *"The Government believes that we need to reform our school system to tackle educational inequality, which has widened in recent years, and to give greater powers to parents and pupils to choose a good school. We want to ensure high standards of discipline in the classroom, robust standards and the highest quality teaching. We also believe that the state should help parents, community groups and others come together to improve the education system by starting new schools"*
> *(Cabinet Office, 2010, p. 28).*

The government implemented the Academies Bill 2010, closely followed by the Academies Act 2010, both of which made it much easier and faster for schools to become academies, furthering the privatisation of the education sector (Gillard, 2018). This led to a big expansion in the number of academies in England after 2010 (Gillard, 2018).

A wealth of policy and guidance has been produced since 2010 with regards to behaviour and discipline in schools.

The Green Paper *Support and Aspiration* discussed "tackling the causes of difficult behaviour" and recommended a focus on identifying the "root causes of behavioural issues" (Department for Education, 2011, p. 69). A difference was specified between behaviour underpinned by a special educational need such as a communication difficulty, or difficult behaviour labelled as a special educational need that actually arises from "other issues, including difficulties in [the child's] home lives" (Department for Education, 2011, p. 69).

There were also questions around the use of the term emotional and behavioural difficulties, highlighting concerns that the terminology focuses too closely on the behavioural presentation rather than the underlying causes of the behaviour (Department for Education, 2011).

The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Code of Practice marked a change in terminology from "behavioural, emotional, and social difficulties" to "social, emotional and mental health" (Department for Education & Department for Health, 2015, p. 85). The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Code of Practice highlights that "persistent disruptive or withdrawn behaviours do not necessarily mean that a child or young person has special educational needs," marking a distinction between those whose behaviour is underpinned by special educational needs as opposed to "housing, family or other domestic circumstances" (Department for Education & Department for Health, 2015, p. 85)

The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Code of Practice defines a special educational need as "a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her" (Department for Education & Department for Health, 2015, p. 15).

From 2010 onwards there was a significant increase in policy guidance focusing on school discipline, including the publication of:

- *Behaviour and the role of Home-School Agreements* (Steer, 2010)*,*
- *Support and Aspiration* (Department for Education, 2011)
- *A profile of pupil exclusions in England* (Department for Education, 2012)*,*
- *Use of reasonable force: advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies* (Department for Education, 2013b) *,*
- *Below the Radar: low level disruption in the country's classrooms* (Ofsted, 2014)*,*
- *Behaviour and Discipline in Schools* (Department for Education, 2016),
- *Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England statutory guidance* (Department for Education, 2017)*,*

- *Creating a culture: An independent review of behaviour in schools* (Bennett, 2017); commissioned by the Department for Education,
- *Case studies of behaviour management practices in schools rated outstanding* (Skipp & Hopwood, 2017); commissioned by the Department for Education,
- *Mental Health and Behaviour in schools* (Department for Education, 2018).

Most recent White Paper *Opportunity for All* published in March 2022 continues to highlight the importance of maintaining "good behaviour" (p. 31), stating that "schools must be calm, orderly, safe and supportive spaces to learn and teach" (p. 31) and goes on to state that:

> *"We fully back headteachers who have to weigh the needs of children with challenging behaviour against the needs of their whole school community, including through the use of exclusions" (Department for Education, 2022, p. 32).*

3.12 Summary

This chapter presented a chronological review of policy documentation from the early 1800s to the present, to provide an outline of the socio-political context in which disciplinary school exclusion is situated.

It seems that, at the outset of education for all, political debate in the 1800s reflected different positions relating to the custodial, civilising and skilling functions of schooling. With regards to those presenting with behaviour deemed troublesome (in society and in school), the custodial function of school argued for education for all to keep troublesome and troubled children off the streets. The civilising function of schooling argued for the reform of these children, to manipulate their behaviour to fit within socio-cultural norms. The skilling function of schooling called for better education for the masses to support the productivity of the state. These ideologies around children deemed troublesome

and troubled persisted, with the continued forced emigration of children deemed troublesome, and the segregation of children deemed troubled.

Parsons (1999) argues that there has been a shift in policy and practice in education since 1966, leaning towards a more controlling ideological pole. The policy and legislation in this review supports this view, through:

- Increases in elitist and competitive practices (both for individuals, with testing regimes, but also for schools with inspections and league tables) within a credentialling function.
- Significantly more control over the transmission of public knowledge through the national curriculum, within a public knowledge function.
- Privileging certain types of skills considered important for gaining employment (e.g., academic skills) over other life skills, within a skilling function.
- A significant increase in policy and guidance around disciplinary measures within schools, reflecting a more controlling custodial function and subjugating civilising function.

Parsons (1999) argues that these shifts will:

> *"run counter to 'inclusion', will be less tolerant of difference and will increase pressure to conform" (p. 13).*

The historical shifts in policy throughout the history of education in England demonstrate the shifts in dominance of the various discourses present over time. Universal education initially became discussed within four key discourses: First, a progressive discourse, seeing education as a potential cure for the ills of society cause by the industrial revolution, including poverty and inequality. The second is around the reform or removal of those deemed troublesome. The third is around the use of education to make the population productive for the state. The fourth is around the use of education as a way of protecting the established classes and their divisions.

Prior to universal education, those children and young people considered disaffected were dealt with as criminals, within a criminal justice discourse,

leading to policies of transportation and forced emigration. Whilst disciplinary exclusion was not a term that existed at the time, policies of excluding those who were considered troublesome were present.

In the early 1900s, the emergence of psychological and medical discourses contributed to within-child approaches and models in which children and young people are requiring treatment, or as inherently bad. This legitimises the use of punishment as well as the use of segregated settings. This could be seen as a transformation from seeing children and young people as criminal, to children and young people labelled maladjusted, whilst the outcomes are not dissimilar when transportation is compared with exclusion from school and potentially society.

As a result, although the dominant discourse around education continues to uphold a 'truth' that education is unquestionably good, there could be the argument that this is a reproduction of discourses around education as upholding the stratification of society.

In the mid 1970s, we see a further shift in the language around those who don't engage with education as expected. Here, there could be a shift from fixed and medical notions of 'maladjustment' and language begins to centre around 'failure and achievement' within the education system. We see a shift into making schools better to support better achievement, where individual responsibility for one's achievement sits within individualist notions of ability and choices around behaviour. These developments sit within 'truths' that education is unquestionably good and that punishment is a legitimate response to behaviour deemed troublesome within schools.

In the late 1970s, neoliberal ideas see the increase in dominance of notions around individualism, competitiveness, and marketisation. As these policies were implemented, government took more disciplinary control over education through the use of inspections, league tables, the national curriculum and testing regimes. As a result, school discipline became a more significant problem within discourses around inclusion and school effectiveness. With regards to behaviour deemed deserving of punishment through school

disciplinary systems, there is an increase in individualising discourses, as well as identifying behaviour as violating the rights of others.

3.13 Conclusion

The chronological review demonstrates the emergence of discourses around education being a societal good, which may have been transformed from ideas around education as protecting current social strata and reforming the poor. As education as a societal good became known as a dominant truth, those who disengaged from education in one-way or another became problematic. Before universal education, those deemed problematic in society were excluded from society within discourses around crime and punishment. As education became a means of reforming society, those deemed problematic became officially excludable from education.

Chapter 4:   Methodology

4.1 Introduction

This chapter will outline the ontological, epistemological, and methodological assumptions underpinning this research. I will first present a discussion of ontological and epistemological questions that require answers, before outlining social constructionism, discourse and key Foucauldian concepts relating to this thesis. I will conclude this section with a discussion of the strengths and limitations of discourse analysis taking a Foucauldian approach.

Reflexive Box 4.1: Reflections as a researcher

I chose to undertake a discourse analytic approach after becoming enlightened to the philosophical belief systems that we work within whilst in my first year as a trainee educational psychologist.

I had been keen to explore prevention of exclusion through my doctoral research even when I arrived in Nottingham as a fresh faced and naïve first year. As stated in my reflexivity statement at the outset, this journey has illuminated why the subject of exclusion is so important to me where, prior to undertaking this research, I was under the impression that the emotional impact relating to working with 'disadvantaged youth' within the present system was my main motivation.

My early interests in exploring disciplinary school exclusion centred around why children become 'at risk' and then remain so, why prevention of exclusion seems so difficult to implement successfully, and why our system seems to set up certain children to fail.

Therefore, a discourse analytic approach drawing on Foucauldian themes enables an exploration of the construction of exclusion to disrupt and disturb the dominant discourses at play. The following quote from Foucault has provided inspiration and guidance throughout the process:

> *"My project is … to bring it about, together with many others,*
> *that certain phrases can no longer be spoken so lightly,*
> *certain acts no longer, or at least no longer so unhesitatingly,*
> *performed; to contribute to changing certain things in*
> *people's ways of perceiving and doing things; to participate in*
> *this difficult displacement of forms of sensibility and*
> *thresholds of tolerance" (Foucault, 1991, p. 85).*

4.2   Setting the scene: Ontological and Epistemological Questions

The set of beliefs that we have about the world impact on our thinking, action (Mertens, 2014) and decision making within the research process. These philosophical assumptions include questions about the nature of reality; termed ontology (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011), and questions of the nature of knowledge; termed epistemology (Creswell & Clark, 2017).

4.2.1   Ontology

In the social world, ontological questions consider whether reality refers to a world external and separate to individual consciousness, or whether reality is the product of individual consciousness (Burrell, 2016; Cohen et al., 2017). These positions represent two polarities; realism and relativism (Burrell, 2016; Cohen et al., 2017). Realists argue that "the social world exists independently of an individual's appreciation of it" and "the individual is seen as being born into and living in a world which has a reality of its own" (Burrell, 2016, p. 4). At the opposite end of the spectrum, relativists argue that the social world is a "product of individual consciousness;" "the product of one's mind" (Burrell, 2016, p. 1).

The spectrum between realism and relativism is not as simple as it may seem. Robson (2016) identifies 'naïve realism' within social science, in which there is an external social reality existing independent from human experience, as an approach that has attracted severe criticism. Robson (2016) describes alternative types of realism, including 'scientific realism,' 'fallibilistic realism,'

'subtle realism' and 'transcendental realism' and these each have different features.

Further in-depth discussion around relativism, critical realism and constructionism can be found in Section 4.4.

4.2.2 Epistemology

Epistemology concerns the nature of knowledge (Creswell & Clark, 2017); whether knowledge can be acquired or must be experienced (Cohen et al., 2017). Epistemological questions concern how humans acquire knowledge and the ontological assumptions will closely relate to epistemological assumptions.

Epistemological questions relate to the extent to which an external reality (if it is considered to exist) can be accurately known within human perception. An objective epistemology assumes that reality can be measured objectively, through experimental methods (Robson, 2016) (see section 4.3.1.). An interpretivist epistemology, at the other end of the spectrum, assumes that reality is given meaning through subjective experience and, therefore, any knowledge is an interpretation of a constructed reality (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

4.2.3 Methodology

Methodology refers to the process of acquiring knowledge through research (Robson, 2016), and its form within research depends on the paradigms within which the answers to the above questions are situated.

Methodological assumptions relate to questions around how the world can be researched, and answers to methodological questions will be underpinned by the ontological and epistemological assumptions on which the research will eventually rest (Robson, 2016).

Section 4.3. further develops the relationships between ontology, epistemology and methodology through consideration of different paradigms.

4.3 Paradigms

4.3.1 Positivist Paradigm

A long-standing view supposes that research aims to search for and identify objective truths (Robson, 2011). This view sits within a positivist-empiricist paradigm identified by a realist ontology and an objective epistemology (Robson, 2011). Within a positivist stance, the epistemological view is that this external reality can be known through methodologies such as empirical hypothesis testing and data gathering (Kelly et al., 2008; Robson, 2016).

This traditional view aligns with a realist ontology and an objective epistemology, claiming that reality can be known and measured through scientific inquiry and is not tainted "by culture, history and ideology" (Gergen, 2001, p.7). This prevailing understanding of research became the 'standard view' of research (Robson, 2016).

However, positivism has been criticised as being reductionist and there are arguments within the social sciences that we cannot separate human perception and experience from objective reality (Kelly et al., 2008; Robson, 2016). Parker (1992) argues that physical science relies on creating "closed systems" for research, whereas within social science closed systems "exist only in the fantasies of hardened positivists" (p. 26).

4.3.2 Postmodernism, post-structuralism, and social constructionism

This criticism of the positivist paradigm within the human sciences led to a 'turn to discourse' in social psychology in the early 1980s (Bozatzis & Dragonas, 2014), when different approaches to research within psychology emerged (Burr, 2015; I. Parker, 2012). Burr (2015) suggests that the turn to language is usually related to Gergen's (1973) paper, arguing that all knowledge is historically and culturally specific. Therefore, we cannot focus solely on the individual and must consider wider socio-cultural factors within our research (Burr, 2015).

Postmodernism is notoriously vague and resistant to any one single definition (Cohen et al., 2017). Taken simply, the postmodernist paradigm could be associated with a relativist ontology and social constructionist epistemology

(Cohen et al., 2017). Postmodernism therefore rejects the positivist stance, arguing that there is not a single objective reality, but instead there are multiple realities constructed by subjective individual experience, and that research can seek to understand these interpretations and constructions of the world (Crotty, 1998; Della Porta & Keating, 2008; Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

The post-structuralist paradigm differs from post-modernism in its ontology (Cohen et al., 2017). Where postmodernism can be identified by relativist ontological assumptions which claim that there is no single objective reality, post structuralism identifies with a critical realist ontology and social constructionist epistemology, acknowledging the presence of a reality, which is socially constructed and can only be known through subjective experience (Cohen et al., 2017; I. Parker, 1992). The commonality between postmodernism and post structuralism is their social constructionist epistemology, highlighting the socially constructed nature of knowledge (Baert et al., 2011).

4.3.3 Language

Burr (2015) describes language as integral to the construction process within a social constructionist epistemological position. Our common sense (or mainstream psychology) understanding of the role language plays, fits within universalist and essentialist ideas of the person; that we use language to communicate and express the essences, thoughts, ideas, and feelings that already exist within people or within the world, but that language has no role in constructing the external or internal world (Burr, 2015).

However, within a social constructionist perspective, Burr states:

> *"language provides us with a way of structuring our experiences of the world and ourselves, and the concepts we use do not pre-date language but are made possible by it"*
> *(Burr, 2015, p. 54).*

Within this view, the language available to us has an active role in how we structure the world and exist within that structure.

Burr (2015) identifies two approaches to social constructionist theory: micro and macro social constructionism. Micro social constructionism focuses on instances of language use within interactions. Macro social constructionism focuses on the "constructive power of language … bound up with, material or social structures, social relations and institutionalised practices" (Burr, 2015, p. 25).

Micro social constructionism underpins conversation analysis (Wetherell, 1998) and discursive psychology (Edwards & Potter, 1992), whilst macro social constructionism originated in the work of Michel Foucault (Burr, 2015) and underpins Foucauldian Discourse Analysis (I. Parker, 1992; Willig, 2013) and Critical Discourse Analysis (Fairclough, 2013; Fairclough & Wodak, 1997).

4.3.4 Discourse

This research takes a macro-constructionist perspective and uses a critical Foucauldian lens. Foucault's focus on discourse rather than language is an important shift (Hall, 2001), due to the way in which Foucault's 'Discourse' produces and reproduces knowledge which becomes truth, or reality (Burr, 2015).

Foucault's concept of an individual discourse is "the group of statements that belong to a single system of formation;… [such as] clinical discourse, economic discourse, the discourse of natural history, psychiatric discourse" (Foucault, 1972, pp. 120–121). This is important, as different discourses (systems of formation, sets of meanings) have different implications for the construction of a version of events (Burr, 2015).

Foucault's definition of discourses as "practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak" (Foucault, 1972, p. 54) highlights the idea of discourse as more than language; as practice. He claims that "discourses are composed of signs," but highlights the distinction between language as a series of 'signs' and discourses that do "more than use these signs to designate things." Hall (2001) suggests that the concept of discourse "attempts to overcome the distinction between what one *says* (language) and what one *does* (practice)" (p. 72).

Discourses are not simply about language (Foucault's 'langue'); they "do not simply describe the social world, but categorise it, they bring phenomena into sight" (I. Parker, 1992, p. 5). Discourses, therefore, have material effects through their relationship with the production of knowledge (Hall, 2001). The way discourse defines and produces objects "governs the way that a topic can be meaningfully talked about and reasoned about" which, therefore, "influences how ideas are put into practice and used to regulate the conducts of others" (Hall, 2001, p. 72).

Burr (2015) argues that recognising dominant discourses, as well as the positions that shape subjectivity can be a useful first step to locate problems within society and away from the intra-psychic domain. Critically analysing dominant discourses and alternative discourses opens opportunities to claim or resist the subjectivities offered within discourses and begin to effect change (Burr, 2015).

> *"…change is possible because human agents, given the right circumstances, are capable of critically analysing the discourses that frame their lives, and to claim or resist them according to the effects they wish to bring about" (Burr, 2015, p.141)*

4.4   Revisiting questions of reality

Reflexive Box 4.2: Reflections as an emerging social constructionist and post-structuralist researcher

I feel it's important at this point to revisit the ontological and epistemological assumptions underpinning discourse analysis using a Foucauldian lens.

Whilst reading and developing this section, it struck me that there are a number of different interpretations and explanations of ontology and epistemology at the best of times.

> *This seemed particularly clear when reading around the work of Michel Foucault and I was feeling significant tension between relativist and critical realist ontological assumptions.*
>
> *I engaged with the literature and struggled with moving between the relativism of 'anything goes' and critical realism acknowledging the reality of the experience of exclusion and its effects. Parker's presentation of the ontological and epistemological traps within his Discourse Dynamics (1992) supported my understanding of the fine line found by post-structuralists engaging in discourse analysis.*
>
> *Therefore, I felt I needed to explore these ontological and epistemological questions further to appropriately situate this research.*

Foucault emphasized the way meaning and knowledge are constructed through discourse (Hall, 2001). He argues that "nothing has any meaning outside of discourse" (Foucault, 1972, in Hall, 2001, p. 73). Here lays an ontological trap described by Parker (1992). If we take this to mean that "nothing exists outside discourse," as some of Foucault's critics have posed, (Hall, 2001, p. 73) then we risk leaning too closely towards a radical relativist position; "the idea that things which become objects of discourse then exist only inside texts" (I. Parker, 1992, p. 25).

Foucault does not position himself within this absolute, radical relativism, but rather acknowledges the real existence of 'things' in the material world (Hall, 2001). Foucault's claim, instead, is that meaning can only be produced within discourse (Hall, 2001).

Returning to a relativist social constructionist perspective, Burrell (2016) argues that any claims to reality can be "traced to processes of relationship" and this position means that one construction cannot be privileged over another. He argued that this anti-positivist position was appealing to social constructionists, where 'science' had marginalised the voices of some groups and where social justice is hampered by claims to truth.

However, the relativist end of the social constructionist spectrum comes with a risk, whereby any attempt to challenge systems of power, oppression or injustice are subject to the same rules of reality; one construction cannot be privileged over another (Gergen, 2001). As a result, philosophical questions of ontology and epistemology can lay traps for discourse analysts, particularly when maintaining a critical stance towards traditional, positivist paradigms in psychology and the social sciences (I. Parker, 1992).

Having said that, discourse analysts must traverse the tightrope of philosophical assumptions, as the answers to these problems have consequences for the ability of the research to be a catalyst for political action (I. Parker, 1992).

In a post-structuralist paradigm, social constructionism collides with the realism – relativism continuum, whereby the reality that we experience is socially constructed through discourse, and that same socially constructed version of reality has real effects (I. Parker, 1992). For example, discourses construct objects, or 'things', that are "not 'really' there" and that once an object has been constructed within discourse it is "difficult *not* to refer to it as if it were real" (I. Parker, 1992, p. 5).

Parker (1992) further develops this position by explaining how objects can exist within an ontological, epistemological or moral / political realm. This framework enables us to distinguish between reality and what can be known. First, objects can have 'ontological status', sitting within the material realm and Parker argues that we cannot underestimate the autonomy of this realm.

Second, when we give objects meaning through discourse they gain 'epistemological object status.' This realm is the one within which things are discussed, given meaning and, therefore, can be known. Within this realm, objects can have both ontological object status and epistemological object status, but the key "point is that for a knowledge to exist, ontological object status is not enough" (I. Parker, 1992 p.29).

Again, Parker (1992) highlights the importance of maintaining a critical realist position, maintaining the relativism of multiple socio-culturally specific versions of events that are grounded within the critical realism of a material "world

independent of experience", without sliding into a more radical relativism in which "there are only ever competing stories" (I. Parker, 1992 p.30).

The third realm described by Parker (1992) is the moral / political status of objects. This realm exists within discourse and includes "ideologically loaded" phenomena, such as 'intelligence,' 'race,' 'attitudes' described within discourse as objects that are then "given a 'reality'" through discourse (I. Parker, 1992, p. 30).

Here, Parker (1992) argues that the relationships between the three realms are important, particularly in the discipline of psychology. In my own reading, I wonder whether this may be where researchers get tripped up and tied in circles when attempting to ground discourse analytic research in ontological and epistemological underpinnings.

Parker (1992) claims that the traditional view of science disregards the epistemological and moral / political realm by claiming "the objects it conjures into existence as real in the way everything else is real" (p.32), such as 'attitudes,' 'behaviours' and 'cognitions' which, within a discourse analytic framework, have moral / political object status and are therefore "things which are not really there" (p.32).

Once these moral / philosophical objects have been brought into being, studied and researched (giving them epistemological object status), they are treated as if they are real and given ontological object status (I. Parker, 1992).

Parker (1992) uses 'schizophrenia' as an example. 'Schizophrenia' was given epistemological status as an object of knowledge, was argued to rest in chromosome 5, giving it ontological object status, but is a concept brought into being by debates in medical psychiatry in the moral / political sphere.

Therefore, discourse analysts must acknowledge the reality of 'things' whilst remaining "sensitive to the powers of discourse" within a social constructionist position, which "develops a critical realist position for psychology" (I. Parker, 1992, p. 25).

In summary, the key assumptions on which this research rests are:

- Critical realism and relativism: acknowledgement of a material reality external to human consciousness, whilst this reality cannot be known other than through individual experience, which is always subjective
- Critical realism and social constructionism: the social world and what we know about it are constructed through discourse, and once this knowledge is applied it has real effects.

4.5 Overview of key Foucauldian themes

> *"Truth isn't outside power, or lacking in power … truth is a thing of this world; it is produced only by multiple forms of constraint. And it induces regular effects of power. Each society has its regime of truth, its 'general politics' of truth: that is, the types of discourses it accepts and makes function as true; the mechanisms and instances which enable one to distinguish true and false statements, the means by which each is sanctions; the techniques and procedures accorded value in the acquisition of truth the status of those who are charged with saying what's true." (Foucault, 1980, p.131).*

4.5.1 The Object

The object, within Foucauldian discourse, refers to 'things' which are constructed in discourse (Foucault, 1972). Objects of discourse extend further than material entities and include phenomena such as events, actions, and subjects (I. Parker, 1992). As objects are constructed with discourse, they are named, described, and categorised differently within surrounding discourses (Burr, 2015). Therefore, different discourses will construct the object in different ways, perhaps bringing different characteristics and issues into focus (Burr, 2015).

4.5.2 The Subject

Foucault was critical of essentialist notions of the human subject and argued that the subject is produced within discourse (Hall, 2001). Foucault (1982) described the subject as the person subjected to or subjugated by the discourse. By this, Foucault meant that discourses do two things to humans as subjects.

First, discourses make space for people to step into from which they can meaningfully understand the particular knowledge constructed within said discourse (Hall, 2001). From here, the reader or viewer is 'subjected to' the discourse if they step into that space (Hall, 2001). Simultaneously, discourse produces as subjects the "figures who personify the particular forms of knowledge which the discourse produces" (Hall, 2001, p.80); possibly more commonly known as stereotypes. Burr (2015) argues that the identification and positioning of subjects within discourses brings different possibilities and restrictions for the actions they are able to take.

Foucault was criticised for an inability to account for individual agency on behalf of the subject, on which he turned his focus later in his career in his works on the ethics of the self (Hall, 2001). Whilst Foucault has received criticism for potentially offering a nihilistic view of the subject, he is not an anti-humanist; again, we find him positioned somewhere along the continuum (I. Parker, 1992). Later in Foucault's work, he identified in the subject a level of 'reflexive awareness' of its own conduct through the ethics of the self (Foucault, in Hall, 2001), and identified the agency of the subject to accept or resist the subject positions available through the discourses that they draw on.

With regards to wielding power/knowledge to claim or resist subject positions within education, Watson (2005) argues that:

> *"Some privileged individuals, pupils as well as staff, are situated within the cultural array in such a way as to enable them to use this power positively and productively for their own ends" (Watson, 2005, p. 61).*

Therefore, "less privileged others," including pupils and teachers, are more likely to have to exercise power through resistance (Watson, 2005, p. 61). Watson (2005) suggests that this resistance might be self-defeating, such as through disruptive behaviour in the classroom, and further limit their ability to be legitimately heard by teachers if the discourses they draw on oppose or contradict the dominant discourses within schools.

Macleod (2006), when talking about the constructing of "young people in trouble," (p. 155) argues the importance of "holding onto the notion of individual agency" (p. 162) for three reasons. Firstly, Munn and Lloyd (2005) argue that children consistently report identifying themselves as choosing one action over another, and thereby having individual agency. Secondly, Lloyd (2003) argues that denying young people their lived experience and subjectivity will lead to lacking understanding of those children's experiences and behavioural presentation. Thirdly, Such and Walker (2004) argue that being given responsibility plays an important part in children's development over their lives.

These factors highlight the vital role of human agency within this research, and the ability of individuals to exercise power through their use of discourse.

4.5.3 Power / Knowledge

Having further explored questions of ontology and epistemology, we must now return to give further consideration to Foucault's definition of discourse and, in particular, the relationship between discourse, knowledge and power.

Moving forward with Foucault's concept of discourse, we must acknowledge the way discourse is inevitably entangled with knowledge and power (Hall, 2001; Burr, 2015). The 'common sense' tale that 'knowledge is power' is that those with greater knowledge will have greater power (Burr, 2015). However, Foucault disagrees with this notion.

Foucault's (1980) account of power relates to our ideas of 'knowledge' and 'truth.' Foucault's argument is that societies accept certain types of knowledge as 'true' and that this is historically and culturally specific. When we talk about a topic in a certain way (such as within an individual discourse), we are producing

or reproducing a certain form of knowledge within that discourse, which comes with power (Burr, 2015).

Foucault argues that the concept of 'absolute truth' is redundant, because discourse structures the world in such a way that we can never recede to a point at which we can identify a 'real event' (Foucault, 1972, p.27). Instead, the creation of 'knowledge' is governed by dominant discourses that are accepted as truth. This knowledge, when applied within the 'real world' has material consequences which, in turn, seem to prove the truth of the knowledge within those discourses (Hall, 2001).

The relationship between discourse and practice is important, because one way of talking about the world, one version of events, has implications for social practices and brings with it the possibility of acting in one way and not another (Burr, 2015). Therefore, dominant discourses can bring forth or marginalise different ways of acting; different social practices (Burr, 2015). "What is possible for one person to do to another, under what rights and obligations, is given by the version of events currently taken as knowledge" (Burr, 2015, p.80).

Power/knowledge is therefore located within dominant discourse which function as true, rather than locating power within someone's possession (Burr, 2015). Foucault acknowledges that power passes through individuals in certain positions, or those who are important in the "field of power relations" (Foucault, 2000, p.356) but claimed that "power needs to be considered as a productive network that runs through the whole social body" (Foucault, 1980, p. 119).

This is important, as it highlights the way power works at all levels of social life (Hall, 2001). Rather than power exercised by the powerful to dominate the powerless, power can be exercised through the way in which we draw on discourses to change the possibilities for action (Burr, 2015). The concept of discourse itself brings forth the necessity for there to be alternative discourses offering different versions of events and each bringing alternative opportunities for action (Burr, 2015). These alternative discourses can challenge, contest or resist the dominant discourse of the time, which opens up hopeful opportunities for empowerment (Parker, 1992).

The critique of Foucault as a pessimist, or nihilist, whose methods are unable to provide solutions or positive alternatives was something I was unconcerned about at the outset of this research.

When initially writing this section, prior to becoming immersed in the analysis and discussion, I found his work hopeful due to the power we each hold within every interaction, to struggle against subjection and subjugation. I felt this provided hope for us as individuals working within such powerful and overwhelming systems.

However, perhaps this hope reflected the positions I am able to claim successfully, particularly due to my ability to wield knowledge/power in my role as a researcher, as a trainee educational psychologist, and a person who benefits from a number of privileges in today's society.

4.6   Discourse analysis using a Foucauldian lens

> *"These pre-existing forms of continuity, all these syntheses that are accepted without question, must remain in suspense. They must not be rejected definitively of course, but the tranquillity with which they are accepted must be disturbed; we must show that they do not come about of themselves, but are always the result of a construction the rules of which must be known, and the justifications of which must be scrutinized: we must define in what conditions and in view of which analyses certain of them are legitimate; and we must indicate which of them can never be accepted in any circumstances." (Foucault, 1972, P.28)*

Discourse analysis was identified as an approach enabling the analysis of language to explore the social practice of disciplinary school exclusion.

'Disciplinary school exclusion' is called into being as an object within discourse, researched and therefore treated as if it is really there. As a result, disciplinary school exclusion is known through its effects. Therefore, a critical response within a discourse analytic framework enables us to study 'disciplinary school exclusion' as an object of discourse which can therefore be 'deconstructed' (Burr, 2015; I. Parker, 1992).

Identifying discourse as the site of change opens opportunities to offer alternative understandings, moving away from causation of school exclusion towards developing an understanding of the construction of the phenomenon (Parker, 2013).

There are several approaches within discourse analysis, including discursive psychology (Potter & Wetherell, 1987), Foucauldian Discourse Analysis (Foucault, 1982) and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA; Fairclough, 2013).

An interest in macro social constructionism and issues of ideology and power differentiate Foucauldian Discourse Analysis and Critical Discourse Analysis (Fairclough, 2001) from discursive psychology, which focuses on the performative uses of language in natural talk (Burr, 2015).

As a result, Foucauldian Discourse Analysis and Critical Discourse Analysis were closely considered. Critical Discourse Analysis seems to be aligned with analysing discourse with an emphasis on social change (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997). Critical Discourse Analysis is primarily concerned with exposing power inequalities and ideology through exploring the relationship between language and power (Burr, 2015).

Critical Discourse Analysis (Fairclough, 2001), based on Foucault's ideas, aims to identify power relations that are embedded within and simultaneously reproduced by discourse (Burr, 2015). Fairclough (2001) proposed a systematic analytic method within critical discourse analysis, with possibilities for analysis of the structure of the text itself (micro) as well as the discourses drawn on by participants (macro) (Burr, 2015).

Foucauldian Discourse Analysis, whilst interested in the implications of language on power relations, focuses more closely on subjectivity and positioning within discourses (Burr, 2015). Foucauldian Discourse Analysis also explores how discourses have implications for social practices within the context of social structures (Burr, 2015).

Parker (2013) highlights crucial questions around the position of the researcher and agency of the subject to distinguish between Foucauldian Discourse Analysis and Critical Discourse Analysis. Parker (2013) notes that, in Critical Discourse Analysis, the political position of the researcher is outlined at the outset in order to ensure the analysis is critical (Fairclough, 1989), rather than to inject the subjectivity of the researcher into the interpretation through reflexivity an in Foucauldian Discourse Analysis (Finlay & Gough, 2003).

A distinguishing feature between Fairclough's (2001) critical discourse analysis and Foucault's approach to discourse analysis is their concept of power and agency in a debate around humanism and anti-humanism (I. Parker, 2013).

Critical Discourse Analysis typically identifies with a top-down conception of power relations, with power exercised (through language) by dominant elites over subordinates, creating social inequality (Pomerantz, 2008a; Van Dijk, 2001). This contrasts with Foucauldian perspectives on the power/knowledge nexus, with power seen as a network of relations throughout the social body and subjects able to wield power through the discourses we draw on (Burr, 2015).

Reflexive Box 4.4: Reflections as a researcher

> *"There are forces of institutional disadvantage and division, for example, which do not flow from individual intentions, and the phenomena of power and ideology need not be traced to conspiratorial machinations. To understand the powers and dynamics of discourse here we do not have to go outside the texts to hidden authors"*
> *(Parker, 1992, p.28)*

> *The concept of power as residing in discourse and language rather than in individuals is important for me in terms of the intentionality within this research. I firmly believe that people are doing the best they can with the resources they have at the time. During my professional position as a TEP, this could be termed maintaining "unconditional positive regard" for the people I work with, which is useful to maintain ethical practice such as being respectful. This belief also holds true in my personal life.*
>
> *This has ethical implications for me in the position of researcher. Exclusion is a sensitive topic and decision makers around exclusion hold responsibility for making the call. Therefore, I'm not trying to uncover the power dynamics between decision maker and child as if there is any ill-intention there, but rather institutional structures and 'regimes of truth' within which decision makers are bound and constrained.*
>
> *It was important for me that this work does not lay blame or judge but instead highlights what is possible and impossible within the 'common sense' and taken for granted truths dominant today.*

In addition, Pomerantz (2008a) highlights the utility of Foucauldian Discourse Analysis with Educational Psychology practice due to the reflexivity required on behalf of the researcher. She is a proponent of an awareness of the approach, not only within research, but within EP practice "to understand how we influence the way in which the problems we encounter daily within our practice are constructed within the discourses of which we are a part" (Pomerantz, 2008, p.14).

Therefore, Foucauldian Discourse Analysis was selected as the most suitable approach as it is more closely related to the research aims and to my personal and professional beliefs (see Reflexive Box 4.4: Reflections as a researcher).

4.7   Criticisms of a Foucauldian approach

Foucault's work is not without criticism. In this section, I will outline some of the critiques around Foucault's ideas and Foucauldian discourse analysis.

Foucault's methods have been criticised as being inherently vague with no clear systematic analytic method (Burr, 2015; Garrity, 2010). As a result, some consider the use of Foucault's ideas to analyse discourse as potentially dangerous or resulting in vague and ambiguous research (Graham, 2005; O'Farrell, 2005).

A further criticism of Foucault's methods is raised by those who question his distinct critical position, in which he resists any claims to 'truth' (Mills, 2003). As a result, critics might say he is vulnerable to a relativism impeding any possibility of critique (Mills, 2003; Parker, 1992). However, Foucault himself argues that one can be critical without the promise of solutions; that by deconstructing taken-for-granted knowledge, or 'regimes of truth,' there opens opportunities for change (Foucault et al., 2003).

> *"Under no circumstances should one pay attention to those who tell one: 'Don't criticize, since you're not capable of carrying out the reform'. That's ministerial cabinet talk. Critique doesn't have to be the premise of a deduction that concludes, 'this, then, is what needs to be done'. It should be an instrument for those who fight, those who resist and refuse what is. Its use should be in the process of conflict and confrontation, essays in refusal. It doesn't have to lay down the law for the law. It isn't a stage in a programming. It is a challenge directed to what is" (Foucault et al., 2003, p. 256).*

Chapter 5:   Questions of Method

5.1 Introduction

This chapter will present an account of the procedures used to conduct this piece of research. The research questions are reiterated, followed by an account of my sampling strategies, data collection, ethical considerations, data analysis and reflexivity.

5.2 Research Questions

Primary research question:

⇒ How is disciplinary school exclusion legitimised in the discourses drawn on by staff in decision making positions in education?

Secondary questions:

⇒ How is disciplinary school exclusion constructed as an object within decision makers' talk? How do these constructions shape subjectivity?
⇒ What are the wider discourses drawn upon by decision makers to construct disciplinary school exclusion?

5.3 Research design

Consistent with my philosophical and theoretical orientation, I have adopted a flexible, qualitative research design to enable me to reflexively revisit the research design throughout the process (Robson, 2016).

My social constructionist perspective aligns itself with qualitative methodologies, whereby versions of reality can be explored through constructions (Burr, 2015; Robson, 2016). Qualitative research is concerned with meaning, a focus on understanding phenomena within the rich detail of its context and explored through the perspective of those involved (Robson, 2016).

I constructed this thesis through a reflexive process (Robson, 2016) within the theoretical orientation and my interpretation of Foucauldian methods, and I acknowledge the significance of my role in the process from beginning to end

(Robson, 2016). Therefore, I am a part of this thesis as opposed to an observer, and the influence of my personal and professional history is considered from the outset (Allan & Slee, 2008) and illustrated through Reflexive Boxes throughout.

5.4   Procedures

5.4.1   Identifying and accessing participants

I identified my participant criteria at an early stage within the decision-making processes around this research. I used a purposive sampling strategy (Robson, 2011) in which my sample was selected with the specific needs of the research in mind. As I am focusing on power / knowledge, it seemed appropriate to identify those in decision-making positions with regard to exclusion and school policy around exclusion as my participants.

Initially, I considered including solely Head Teachers in my sample due to their decision-making position with regards to disciplinary school exclusion. However, I decided to expand my inclusion criteria to include senior leaders within schools and multi-academy trusts due to the power passed through them in their ability to 'will-to-truth' their version of events within educational institutions. In addition, I acknowledged the possibility that head teachers delegate responsibility for decisions around disciplinary school exclusion.

The literature presents conflicting views regarding the required number of participants. Langridge and Hagger-Johnson (2009) argue that a small number of participants is appropriate due to the depth of analysis required of the data. Potter and Wetherell (1987) argue that a single participant may provide enough interview data for the analysis to be detailed and thorough. However, Langridge (2004) suggests that up to ten participants can be useful to ensure that the interview data is able to capture variability within the responses. I initially aimed to identify a participant for a pilot interview and 6 further participants to be included within the analysis. This number aimed to ensure that I was able to capture variability within the responses whilst ensuring the depth of the analysis.

In my professional role as a trainee educational psychologist, I made contact with participants via colleagues in my Educational Psychology Service, to gather initial expressions of interest. Eight potential participants were contacted via the above means. All eight potential participants agreed to participate and of these, seven participants were interviewed. One of the potential participants withdrew their participation due to personal circumstances.

I interviewed one participant as a pilot, followed by seven participants in six separate interviews. The participants took up positions as head teachers of a variety of types of schools and as leadership at a multi-academy trust level. I have not detailed the specific roles of the participants within this thesis to ensure that I maintain their confidentiality.

Please see Appendix C for a flow chart for recruiting participants, including processes for providing information about the research and gaining consent.

5.4.2   *Collecting samples of language / discourse: Data collection*

I decided to employ the use of individually held semi-structured interviews to collect a sample of decision makers' language. As I am interested in a *topic* as opposed to *interactions* between speakers, I decided that it was not be appropriate to use naturally occurring talk during data collection (Taylor, 2001). Semi-structured interview situations allowed me to initiate discussion focusing on a specific topic (Robson, 2016).

I considered using focus groups to collect data. However, due to the sensitivity of the topic, I felt that it would be unethical to gather participants who did not know each other well to discuss their experiences around disciplinary school exclusion. I also considered the way the group dynamics may have impacted on the participants ability to use language more freely and how the group setting may impact on the agenda of participants (Smithson, 2000; Parker, 2004). However, I acknowledge this may have been a missed opportunity to bring attention to contradictions between speakers (Parker, 2004).

Willig (2008) argues that semi-structured interviews can be useful as there is an element of formality which aids focus within the discussion, whilst ensuring that

there is an element of informality supporting participants to respond with freedom. Parker (2004) highlights the value of semi-structured interviews over either structured or 'unstructured' interviews, whereby the interview process will include within it the traces of power relations holding things in place, with potential to reveal these traces through resistance or acceptance of the research agenda.

Therefore, semi-structured interviewing can be considered part of the methodology as opposed to a technique for collecting data (Parker, 2004). What the interviewer says can be treated with as much care and interest as that of the interviewee, whereby the pair become 'co-researchers' within the interview process (Parker, 2004).

I acknowledge my own influence within the semi-structured interviews, as my social constructionist orientation would consider semi-structured interviews as a method of co-constructing meaning between myself and the participant through social interaction (Holstein & Gubrium, 1995).

I also acknowledge concerns that participants will talk about topics raised by myself and become unduly influenced by my questions. Whilst again, my philosophical standpoint renders this unproblematic, I recognise that my skills and reflexivity were important during the interviews, whereby a developed schedule of questions and probes alongside reflexively revisiting this after each interview, supports discussion of the topic in question without affecting the freedom and flow of the participants responses (Potter & Wetherell, 1987). Reflexivity will be discussed further in Section 5.4.7.

Five of the interviews were individual semi-structured interviews, whilst one interview involved two participants. Due to concerns around power dynamics within the interview with two participants, the data from this interview has been excluded from the analysis. I also decided not to include the pilot interview data in the analysis as the pilot participant had previously been a head teacher but was no longer in a decision-making position. Therefore, the analysis included five participants who were interviewed individually.

Three of the interviews were conducted via Zoom video conferencing software. Two of the interviews were conducted face-to-face; one at the school of the participant and one at the home of the participant. Interviews were recorded using video conferencing software when held online, or audio recording equipment when in person.

5.4.3 Design of the Interview

I designed my interview questions based on the assumptions underpinned by a social constructionist theoretical position; that the interview process involves a co-construction of knowledge (Holstein & Gubrium, 1995). The interviews involved ongoing reflexive design before, after and during (Parker, 2004).

In designing the interview schedule, I felt it was important to initially focus the discussion on the topic I hoped to explore. Therefore, I asked specifically about "disciplinary school exclusion." The specific language use intended to lead the participant to initially focus the discussion on the institutional practice of disciplinary school exclusion, as opposed to other and perhaps more abstract concepts of educational exclusion, which are not necessarily identified as official institutional practices in the same way as disciplinary school exclusion. I recognise that my own assumptions informed the decisions I made about interview questions (Burr, 2015).

Parker (2004) highlights that the first interview question should concern the particular topic of interest, with a clear rationale behind why that topic is of interest. He argues that the researcher should subsequently give consideration as to whether the participants belong to a group whose voice should be amplified, or whether there should be some caution in what they may say about other groups (Parker, 2004).

Parker (2004) highlights the importance of framing the questions to build rapport, give participants freedom to develop their narrative about their experiences and the security with which they feel they're able to speak about the topic to the researcher. In addition, he discusses a further strategy to open opportunities for conflict and contradiction within the interviews by challenging or provoking interviewees, with the aim of illuminating contrasting perspectives.

Therefore, throughout the research process, before and after each interview, I reflexively revisited the interview questions and specific probes. As I moved through the interview process and completed more interviews, I felt gradually more confident in bringing Parker's (2004) concept of challenge and provocation into the interviews to begin to illuminate contrasting perspectives.

Reflexive Box 5.1: Reflections on the dual role of researcher-practitioner

During the interview process I was conscious of my dual role as both a trainee educational psychologist and that of the 'researcher' within this project. I was conscious of my skillset as a TEP in consultative approaches and the way these were at use within the interviews. I feel this supported me to develop my interviewing technique to begin to challenge participants to reflect on alternative considerations whilst maintaining rapport and the ethics of the research, including the comfort and emotional safety of the participants.

Please see Appendix D for examples of entries in my reflexive diary.

Interview questions and specific probes used within the interviews are summarised in Appendix E.

5.4.4 Ethics

Researchers are obliged to consider and follow ethical guidelines to protect their participants from harm, stress or anxiety (Robson, 2016) throughout the research process. This is considered to be of particular importance if the topic of research is socially sensitive (Robson, 2016).

I gained ethical approval (see Appendix F for a copy of the ethical approval letter) for this research from the University Ethical Review Board prior to making any contact with schools or individual participants, and adhered to the following guidelines:

➢ University of Nottingham Code of Ethics for Research (University of Nottingham, 2013)

- ➢ British Educational Research Association Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research (British Educational Research Association, 2004)
- ➢ British Psychological Society Code of Human Research Ethics (British Psychological Society, 2014)
- ➢ Health and Care Professions Council's Standards of Conduct, Performance and Ethics (Health & Care Professions Council, 2012)

Please see Appendix G an outline of the ethical considerations relating to this research and actions taken to minimise ethical risks. Please see Appendix H for consideration according to the Ethical Risks Checklist, Appendix J and J for participant information and consent letters.

5.4.5 Transcription

Transcription is an important process within DA, despite its time consuming nature (Willig, 2013), with levels of analysis occurring at the transcription phase (S. Wilkinson & Kitzinger, 2013).

Decisions made about the methodology of transcribing the data, such as how much detail to include within the transcription, can have an influence on how clear and well understood the data is at analysis stage (Walsh, 2013). Moreover, it is important to recognise that transcription of data is in itself a construction of the conversation based on the decisions made methodologically (Silverman, 2013).

A Jeffersonian system (Jefferson, 2004) is typically used for transcription within discourse analysis, as it allows the inclusion of a high level of detail such as the use of emphasis and the length of pauses. Whilst this high level of detail is useful for researchers interested in the interactions between speakers (Watson, 2007), it could be argued that this level of detail is unnecessary within a macro social constructionist approach.

During the transcription process, I initially transcribed the words before returning to the transcription to include some aspects of Jeffersonian notation (see Appendix K for an example transcript) including pauses, breaths, and laughter. These aspects of Jeffersonian notation were deemed necessary to extract the

meaning from the interviews into the transcripts, whilst the full level of detail within Jeffersonian notation was not required for the analysis. When incorporating the excerpts into the analysis section, I decided to reduce the specificity of the notation to allow the reader to draw more attention to the language, as I am not exploring the interaction between speakers (Walton, 2007). Therefore, I removed the Jeffersonian notation and minimised repetition, noting (…) in its place.

5.4.6 Analysis

Parker's (1992) 20 steps for 'discovering' discourses was used as an initial framework for analysis alongside Willig's (2013) reduced framework for Foucauldian Discourse Analysis (see Appendix L for Willig's (2013) and Parker's (1992) frameworks for analysis).

Parker's (1992) steps for discovering discourses is underpinned by Foucauldian themes and is described as 'post-structuralist' discourse analysis. Parker (1992) presents theoretical underpinnings to the approach and outlines a number of criteria for "distinguishing discourses" (p. 6). These criteria can be considered as 20 'steps,' although it is made clear within Parker's (1992) text that the steps are dynamic and may not be implemented in turn. Parker (1992) also notes that his key text, "Discourse Dynamics," does not intend to provide a model for discourse analysis, but rather an in depth exploration of the theoretical underpinnings of critical analysis in psychology.

As Parker's (1992) text does not identify itself as a framework for discourse analysis, Willig's (2013) framework for Foucauldian Discourse Analysis was used to supplement the theoretical grounding provided by Parker's criteria for distinguishing discourse. Willig's (2013) framework provides six stages to discourse analysis enabling the researcher to map some of the discursive resources present within a text, the subject positions within those resrouces and then to explore the implications for subjectivity and action.

The use of these two approaches was further supplemented by wider reading of Foucault and other proponents of Foucauldian discourse analysis (Hall, 2001; Kendall & Wickham, 2011; I. Parker, 2013; Pomerantz, 2008a). Table 5.1:

Analytic procedure used in this study based on Willig's (2013) and Parker's (1992) frameworks for analysis. outlines the analytic procedure used in this research.

Reflexive Box 5.2: reflections as an emerging post-structuralist researcher

In reading about Foucauldian approaches to discourse analysis in much depth, I was able to recognise the critiques aimed at Foucauldian approaches that the framework for analysis is vague and can lead to significant questions around the approach. I felt these criticisms were relevant to Willig's (2013) framework, where it seemed to me that the steps outlined appeared over simplistic and provided no account of the vital theoretical underpinnings required to undertake the analysis.

However, it felt necessary to me that a framework was applied to my analysis to ensure the robustness and transparency of the approach.

Therefore, I used an amalgamation of Parker's (1992) criteria for distinguishing discourse alongside the framework provided by Willig (2013). It appeared to me that Willig's (2013) steps within the framework are all applicable to Parker's (1992) seemingly more in-depth explanation of the analysis. However, some of the criteria present within Parker's (1992) 20 'steps' were considered to be beyond the scope of the present research (such as the auxiliary criteria).

For example, to explore the ways in which the discourses support institutions, I felt there would have needed to be much more work done to gather information how educational institutions function rather than injecting my own perception of how educational instutions function.

Table 5.1: Analytic procedure used in this study based on Willig's (2013) and Parker's (1992) frameworks for analysis.

Stage in Analysis	Purpose	Process
1	To become immersed in the text	Transcription, reading and re-reading. On 2nd readings, I considered the "connotations, allusions and implications" and noted these within my reflective diary (see Appendix D for examples from my reflective diary). This stage involved listening, transcribing, re-transcribing (to add notation) and multiple readings of the transcripts. I completed these readings alongside immersing myself in reading around the theory and practice of discourse analysis, particularly using Parker's (1992) text. From second readings, the "connotations, allusions, and implications" of the text were considered. These were defined as: Connotations: the idea / feeling of the text in addition to the literal meaning Allusions: what is called to mind without being expressed explicitly

		Implications: what conclusions, actions, states are present, if not explicitly stated
2	To identify objects of discourse and describe them	Thematic analysis of discourse, paying close attention to language and identifying 'objects' of discourse. The thematic analysis of the discourse involved coding text which referred, either explicitly or implicitly, to: • exclusion, • the child, • and the decision maker. The purpose of this was to highlight all instances within the text in which exclusion is referred to, and in which subjects are talked about in relation to exclusion. This stage involved coding using Nvivo software. I then printed off the codes to sort into themes and identifying objects. I described the objects that emerged from the data, alongside excerpts. Please see: Appendix M for early coding using Nvivo Appendix N for an outline of objects identified during analysis

| 3 | Identify and describe wider discourses | I related the objects described with wider discourses. This stage involved consideration of the different ways in which exclusion was constructed and locating these within wider discourses.

This involved identifying a number of discourses, with reference to historical shifts in discourse, and considering what to name them, in discussion with supervisors to aid reflexivity. |
|---|---|---|
| 4 | Identify subject positions available within the discourse | I described the subject positions available within the discourses by identifying what types of person are implicated and with what rights to speak (I. Parker, 1992).

This process involved identifying what types of person are talked about within the wider discourses in reference to exclusion, as well as the types of person that can take positions as speakers. |
| 5 | Identify where the discourses emerged | I completed the chronological review of policy to explore the emergence of dominant discourses in education, particularly relating to behaviour, discipline and exclusion. This was completed alongside the analysis and supported in the identification of wider discourses. |

6	Describe ways discourses overlap or contradict one another	I engaged in an iterative process of identifying the way in which wider discourses relate to each other and differentially produce objects of discourse.
		Within this stage, I considered the ways in which the discourses interact to produce different constructions of exclusion and therefore different opportunities for action. This process was completed visually.
		I completed a number of concept maps to clarify my thinking. Please see Appendix O for an example.

5.4.7 Evaluating the quality of the research

Discourse analytic research aims to generate interpretations without making claims that the findings will be generalisable (Powers, 2001). Based on critical realist and social constructionist philosophical assumptions, discourse analytic research does not aim to claim its findings as universal truths, nor as reflecting a single 'reality' (Lupton, 1992). Instead, the goal of discourse analytic research is to develop an understanding of the conditions in which meaning is produced within accounts (Powers, 2001).

Therefore, evaluating the quality of discourse analytic research steers clear of concepts such as reliability, validity and generalisability, which aim to evaluate the extent to which research findings can be considered as reflective of reality (Burr, 2015). However, Madill, Jordan and Shirley (2000) argue that constructionist research should still be subject to quality evaluation.

Ary, Jacobs, Irvine and Walker (2018) argue that concepts such as credibility, transferability, dependability / trustworthiness, and confirmability can be useful to evaluate the rigour of qualitative research (see Appendix P). However, again, these concepts presuppose a claim to truth and aim to directly replace the reliability, validity and objectivity criteria used to evaluate the quality of positivist research. Therefore, these concepts are not applicable to evaluating the quality of this research.

Yardley (2017) proposes alternative criteria for assessing the quality of constructionist research. These criteria include: sensitivity to context; commitment and rigor; transparency and coherence; and impact and importance (Yardley, 2017).

Sensitivity to context involves the ability of the researcher to demonstrate their sensitivity and awareness of the context, including the perspectives and context of the participant, the socio-cultural context of the research and the way in which these may impact on what is said and its interpretation (Yardley, 2017).

Commitment and rigour involves demonstrating an in-depth and rigorous engagement with the topic and the method, through the methods of data collection, expertise and skills in methods chosen and depth and detail of analysis (Yardley, 2017). Transparency and coherence reflects the extent to which the interpretations made are visible and coherent to the reader, whilst impact and importance reflect the extent to which the knowledge generated is useful (Yardley, 2017).

5.4.8 Reflexivity

Reflexivity acknowledges the subjectivity of qualitative research, as well as the inevitability of contribution of the researcher to the construction of meaning within the research (Willig, 2001). Therefore, it is important for the researcher to remain mindful of their role in the construction of meaning within the research process, maintaining a reflexive and critical stance throughout the process about the approaches, decisions and interpretations made (Burr, 2015).

Parker (2002) highlights reflexivity as an issue across all research, highlighting the "absent centre where we would expect one of the key actors in the story to be," making it difficult to evaluate the claims made in research. He notes that qualitative research has identified this absence and encourages the researcher to make themself known as a key actor within the research (Banister et al., 1994; Davies, 2000).

Scheurich (1997) argues that researchers should make clear their position within the piece of research at the outset, acknowledging the influence of their background and experiences (see Section 1.3). Willig (2008), therefore, suggests that it is important for researchers to remain reflexively aware of their role within the research.

For the Foucauldian discourse analyst, reflexivity is not only important in recognising the way the researcher has co-constructed the research, but also in enabling the researcher to take a 'theoretical distance' from the discourse (Parker, 1992). Therefore, reflexivity is considered key within Foucauldian discourse analytic work (Parker, 1992; Pomerantz, 2008).

"To identify a discourse is to take a position, and the ability to step outside a discourse and to label it in a particular way is a function of both the accessing of dominant cultural meaning and the marginal critical position which the researcher takes" (I. Parker, 1992, p. 33).

Parker (1992) emphasises the point that we cannot escape discourse. For the discourse analyst, attempts to 'step outside' discourse open us up to ontological and epistemological traps that we considered earlier. "Reflexivity is necessary but does not dissolve discourse" (Parker, 1992, p. 21). The researcher must, therefore, acknowledge and make explicit their subjectivity; the subject position(s) they take up and inhabit, and the vantage point from which the discourse is explored, both in space and in time (Parker, 1992).

As a result, I acknowledge that I am the author of this research, drawing on the discourses available and attempting to take a critical and theoretical distance from these to illuminate alternative possibilities. I do not claim to have

'discovered' discourses, that I will have illuminated *all* available discourses or that the claims I make within this research represent the truth. Instead, I consider this research to be a journey culminating in the transformation and reproduction of discourses as well as my own subjectivity.

Reflexive Box 5.3: Reflections on the position of researcher

Throughout the process of writing this 'methodology,' I have encountered questions and tensions about the way in which I'd like to present this text, this discourse. Some of these decisions have seemed simple, such as deciding to write this text within the 1st person. It seemed untenable to present an account as if I am separate from this text.

Some decisions, however, have not been as simple. I have been feeling considerably uneasy about terminology usually encountered within academic writing: 'methodology,' 'procedures,' 'data,' 'research,' 'literature,' 'sample.'

In writing this chapter, I have felt considerable tension between wanting to avoid the concept of research altogether in favour of referring to this endeavour as the construction of a text. The power of the academic institution draws me back in wanting to ensure that my 'research' is still considered robust, important, academic, and therefore taken seriously.

Here, my position as a critical and marginal psychologist is at tension with my position as an ambitious middle-class academic, worrying about throwing the baby out with the bathwater.

To give a thorough, clear, and explicit account of this, I have kept a reflective diary to record my thinking and decision making throughout the research process from conception to completion, including the design and completion of each interview, the transcription process, the analytic process, and reflections on my interpretations. I also engaged in critical and reflexive discussions within supervision throughout the research process.

I have considered the impact of this research on my own subjectivity throughout and have included many of these reflections throughout the research within 'reflexivity boxes.'

Chapter 6:   Presentation of Analysis

6.1 Introduction

This section will present my analysis of the data in answer to the research questions:

Primary research question:

⇒ How is disciplinary school exclusion legitimised in the discourses drawn on by staff in decision making positions in education?

Secondary questions:

⇒ How is disciplinary school exclusion constructed as an object within decision makers' talk? How do these constructions shape subjectivity?
⇒ What are the wider discourses drawn upon by decision makers to construct disciplinary school exclusion?

In Section 6.2, I will discuss the ways in which exclusion was constructed in decision makers' talk. In Section 6.3, I will present an account of the way in which exclusion is situated within wider discourses, either legitimising or subverting its use.

6.2 How is disciplinary school exclusion constructed as an object within decision makers' talk?

There were a number of ways of constructing exclusion that emerged from the analysis of the decision makers' talk. These included:

- Exclusion as protection
- Exclusion as a punishment
- Exclusion as a weapon
- Exclusion as a bad thing.

Each construction will be discussed in turn, before I provide a summary of the ways these constructions contradict and overlap.

6.2.1 Disciplinary school exclusion as protection

One construction that emerged from the analysis is disciplinary school exclusion as protection. Exclusion as protection explicitly referred to protecting the welfare and/or learning of the other children and staff. This relates to constructions of the other child as the 'normal other' in comparison with the child on the edge who presents a danger or a risk.

Excerpt 6.1: Interview 4, lines 169-170

> it's about making sure other children feel that their safety and learning is important

Exclusion as protection of the welfare of others and of the learning environment draws on discourses of 'human rights' and 'education as an unquestionable good'. A 'human rights' discourse constructs a taken-for-granted assumption that we all have a right to be safe from physical and emotional harm, as well as a right to accessing education. Interestingly, exclusion as protection considers the human rights of 'everybody else,' without necessarily considering the rights of the excluded child to accessing their education.

Excerpt 6.2: Interview 2, line numbers 662 - 666

> how do we keep staff safe, how do we keep pupils safe, how do we keep everybody safe (…) in general I believe exclusions are about safety not punishment like (…) if you just think ah I'll exclude you well good luck with that

An 'education as an unquestionable good' discourse constructs a taken-for-granted assumption that education is inherently good, valuable, and therefore should be protected. Implicit in the construction of exclusion as protection

could relate to the extent to which exclusion protects the education system from those who challenge the assumptions on which it's based.

The construction of exclusion as protection drawing on discourses of human rights tended to subjugate children to marginal positions in which they present a danger to others. Behaviour considered out of control, and dangerous, does not necessarily challenge the assumptions of 'education as an unquestionable good' discourse, but impacts on the rights of others (to feel safe, to learn) and thereby challenges the 'human rights' discourse.

In contrast, exclusion as protection drawing on discourses of 'education as an unquestionable good' tended to relate to the idea of a child as deviant, whereby the child's perceived disengagement was seen as disruptive to the learning of others, but also implicitly challenges the values and assumptions on which education is based through their disengagement and resistance.

The child as deviant perhaps reflects Macleod's (2006) claim that children can be constructed as 'bad,' legitimising approaches that assume their responsibility for their behaviour.

Children considered to be deviant were talked about within a metaphor of a 'child on the edge,' which could represent the marginal position available to children who are not able to successfully claim the position of an 'ideal student.' As a result of unsuccessful attempts to claim this position, or resistance to the position, the child ends up at the edge of the cliff and perhaps over the edge. This construction of 'the child on the edge,' amongst language such as exclusion being 'on the horizon,' with the child on 'pathways to support packages,' calls to mind the image of a child making their way up a path towards a cliff over which they might fall off.

This was illustrated in Excerpt 6.3, in which the participant reflects on the situation of a child "*at that point where they're at that level at risk*" and "*when they get to the edge*" or "*even when they're on that track upwards.*"

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Participant	unfortunately I think when they get to the edge (…) even when they're on that track upwards (…) once that pattern starts very easy for kids to get branded (…) as a troublemaker and (…) even if they do try and rein it in (…) they've always got that writing on their back (…) but very few very few teachers would have been at the brink of permanent exclusion
Katie	[yeah]
Participant	and been in that situation so a comment that people pass by (…) well our kids wouldn't have reacted like that
Katie	[yeah]
Participant	but might tip 'em over dunno

The participant talks of a hypothetical group of children "on that track upwards," referring to this group as "they." He reflected on it being easy for them to be "branded (…) as a troublemaker," later suggesting staff might compare them with "our kids" who "wouldn't have reacted like that." This way of talking positions the child on the margins of taken-for-granted socio-cultural norms of behaviour within schools, again reflected in claims by Waterhouse (2004) of the use of a 'normal / deviant' binary positioning "our kids" children as 'insiders' and "troublemakers" as 'outsiders.'

The term 'branded' is an interesting use of language, drawing on discourses of punishment from before the 19th century (Robinson, 2021). Branding leaves a permanent mark, historically used to either signal that the branded person should be transported to a colony or put to work in a workhouse, to ensure they are recognised and captured in the event of an escape, and/or to warn others of the dangerousness of the branded person (Robinson, 2021).

The participant reflects on the way teachers might contribute to this way of constructing a child as a "troublemaker," using a characteristic label to describe the child's character, therefore restricting the child's ability to legitimately resist that position, even through instances of or attempts at conformity. Labelling a child as "a troublemaker" has a permanent impact and might eventually lead to school staff "tipping 'em over," again drawing on an image of a child teetering over the edge of a metaphorical cliff.

Describing the child as "*likeable*" and "*remorseful*" has a humanising effect, which sits in tension with the idea of a "*troublemaker*" who needs to be "branded" to warn of their danger. The participant perhaps acknowledges this tension when he says "*this is awful, might not want to say it but (…) he was likeable*" when talking about why he felt "*bad*" about excluding this child, compared with having "*no qualms*" about excluding another child who was "*awful.*" (Interview 3, lines 60, 95, 411 - 412).

Children constructed as 'out of control' bought into the values and purposes of education (and 'mainstream' society), therefore attempting to employ dominant discourses through their actions but inevitably failing due to the danger they posed to the other children. Where it seemed the child was unsuccessfully attempting to claim the position of the 'normal other,' or the 'ideal student,' decision makers' tended to express guilt or shame.

An unsuccessful attempt to claim the position of the 'ideal student' is illustrated in Excerpt 6.4, in which the participant had acknowledged the child and his family as "*doing things properly*" when they arrived at the exclusion hearing, despite the child needing to be excluded due to incidents in which they were considered to have harmed peers.

Participant	*that was probably the hardest one I've done because usually when you do the permanent exclusion hearing (…) the child is there sometimes parents are there sometimes (…) most of the time and I've been doing them I've (…) just presenting to either the head or the panel erm and (…) the parents and the kids haven't turned up but on on this lads, he turned up in full uniform, his parents were there, dad was in shirt and tie, they did it all properly*

The phrase 'doing things properly' is interesting, because it suggests that there is a proper way of doing things including attending the hearing, wearing 'proper' dress, and having familial support. These actions present as resistance to being positioned over the edge through attempting to draw on dominant discourses of 'civil society' and 'education as an unquestionable good' to try to claim the position of the 'ideal student.'

The construction of exclusion as protection, drawing on discourses of human rights, civilised society, and education as an unquestionable good, enables the decision makers to position themselves as a 'protector,' responsible for protecting the welfare and learning of 'everybody else,' as well as protecting the status quo in terms of socio-cultural norms of behaviour.

6.2.2 Disciplinary school exclusion as punishment

A second construction of disciplinary school exclusion that emerged from the analysis was exclusion as a punishment.

This construction reflects the way in which exclusion was used either as a response to unacceptable behaviour, or as a message to the wider school community to demonstrate the limits to behaviour that is considered acceptable within the school.

we have to draw a line in the sand there has to be a punitive punishment

but we also do have to send the message sometimes, perhaps I shouldn't say that because sometimes that's frowned upon, but actually you know (…) if a large group of children have seen (…) another child hit someone erm there does have to be (…) for the supporting of the wider ethos in the school there does have to be a robust response to that

Exclusion as a punishment related to children constructed as 'deviant,' reflecting deliberate choices to behave in a way that challenges or disagrees mainstream society's values and culture. The construct of exclusion as punishment also relates to ideas around discipline, where the punishment of the child excluded exerts discipline over everybody else.

The construction of exclusion as punishment positions the decision makers as authoritarian and responsible for the regulation of the behaviour and conduct of those in school.

However, when talking through examples, decision makers were reluctant to explicitly construct exclusion as punishment, preferring to construct exclusion as protection.

Reluctance to construct exclusion as punishment is illustrated in Excerpt 6.7, in which the participant uses 'rape' as an example of situation in which the child must be removed from school. In this example, the participant oscillates between language implicitly constructing exclusion as a punishment and explicitly constructing exclusion as protection.

The participant constructs exclusion as protection, when he states that "*what no one would want is for 5 more children to be raped in a new school*," implying that excluding the child (as opposed to implementing a managed

move) would protect the school community at any future school. The participant also reflects on the potential risk of harm to the child excluded as well as 'other' children.

However, the participant also draws on language from within a criminal discourse, such as "*perpetrator and victim*." The use of 'rape' as an example is also interesting, as it has criminally deviant implications. The example of rape, alongside language identifying the child as the perpetrator and the assumption that the child might engage in the same behaviour in a different school, constructs the problem as within the child. The reflection that the police have been unable to move forward with the CPS (Crown Prosecution Service) implies that justice hasn't been served and there has been no punishment for the behaviour. As a result, the implicit construction is that exclusion is a punishment.

Excerpt 6.7: Interview 1, line numbers 274 - 325

I mean it would be it would be so you know problematic you know (…) lets go to the extreme option. You got a child that's raped 5 children in their year group (…) and for whatever reason the police have not been able to move forward with the CPS (…) that it absolutely has happened (…) I think to not be able to remove that child from that setting, I mean, a massive failure in our duty of care to those 5 other children (…) I mean that is an extreme example but to be honest with you (…) I've embellished it slightly but it's a real example

(…)

It's untenable to keep a child in a school for <u>them</u> and others. So if we take that example, which as I say I have slightly exaggerated it, but (…) they potentially wouldn't be safe (…) and would potentially be ostracised, potentially experience quite massive amounts of bullying and potential intimidation or physical assault (…) the other children wouldn't feel safe and probably would stop coming to school (…) and (…) everything (…) relating to that ending up you know home schooled or lost in education or

you know (…) having to try and access services from county, which we all know they struggle to support. (…) it's just an untenable situation for both perpetrator and victim so without the option to permanently exclude…

(…)

yer can't just blindly move a problem or a risk from one .heh one school to another erm I'm a great believer in second chances I'm a (…) great believer in looking at everything on a case by case basis but if we take that really extreme example (…) what no one would want is for 5 more children to be raped in a new school

6.2.3 Disciplinary school exclusion as a bad thing

A further construction of exclusion that emerged from the analysis is that it's something that should be prevented, or something unspeakable, constructing exclusion as a bad thing.

Reflexive Box 6.1: Reflections as a researcher and a believer in education

On conducting the analysis, I became aware that 'exclusion as a bad thing' was implicit in my questioning, reflecting the way I positioned myself as not just a researcher but also a TEP within this research, striving for inclusion. Reminding me of early conversations with Steve regarding the role of an EP as an 'equal opportunities officer,' tasked with the job of including all children in education so as to increase equality of opportunity.

A return to the conception of this research, which was underpinned by a discourse of 'education as an unquestionable good' illuminates the journey that I have been on through the process of the research, and the way in which dominant discourses (at least for me) have been disrupted and disturbed. It was at this point that I noticed the depressive nature of Foucault's methodology as mentioned in Reflexive Box 4.3, as I became aware of the way in which the educational psychology profession is

> *complicit in furthering a potentially insidious agenda underpinning the*
> *educational institution as it stands today.*

The construction of exclusion as a bad thing, and therefore something that should be prevented involved three key elements:

- The negative impact on the child excluded
- School effectiveness
- Alternative placements (specialist or managed moves).

These will be discussed in turn.

Part of the construction of exclusion as something to be prevented relates to it being described as a risk to the child, which is reflected in labelling children "*at risk of exclusion.*"

Part of the construction of exclusion as a risk related to the impact on the individual and their wider family, illustrated in Excerpt 6.8. The participant's reflection that exclusion "*is literally [his] least favourite topic to talk about*" and that he has "*sleepless nights*" over it seems to communicate a sense of shame, guilt, or anxiety around the use of exclusions.

Excerpt 6.8: Interview 1, line numbers 325 - 336

Participant	The process of permanent exclusion and the things that happen alongside that in terms of accessing other support services (…) can be good in a sense but I do understand and that's why you know I said at the start this is literally my least favourite topic to talk about because no one becomes a teacher because they want to permanently exclude children and it's a thing that keeps me up at night, it's a thing that means I have sleepless nights about because I understand (…) the impact on the individual can be immense and the impact on their family actually sometimes is even greater, particularly on their parents,

	sometimes on siblings, especially if siblings happen to be in the same school

The impact of exclusion on the individual was acknowledged through the child's lack of access to education, as well as whether exclusion as punishment is effective. This was illustrated in Excerpt 6.9.

Excerpt 6.9: Interview 1, line numbers 15 - 10

Participant	fixed term exclusions were used very heavily erm to a point that I think at one point the [redacted] which was interesting because it was largely portrayed in the press at the time as a good thing because it was seen as you know that schools got standards (…) was it a good thing? (…) every time a child is not in school they're not learning, they can't access the same support mechanisms that they normally would, if there's lots of repeat offences, I'm talking 10 years ago, is it working just to keep doing the same thing?

The sense of exclusion as a bad thing was expressed through its construction as something to be prevented. In this way, exclusion was constructed as a 'bad thing' through participants' reluctance to speak about exclusion at all, instead talking about how to try to prevent exclusion, including prevention through school effectiveness or prevention through alternative placement.

Talk of preventing exclusion focused on aspects of school functioning such as culture and ethos (see Excerpt 6.10) and builds a picture of exclusions as within a school's control, by persuading students that the existing culture within schools is a good thing to be a part of. There was a sense that there's an expectation for children to be incorporated, or included, within the culture rather than making a change to the culture to fit the child.

I think it begins with the absolute basic level that we offer to all of our pupils in terms of, rather than intervention when we're talking about pupils at risk of (…) exclusions and permanent exclusions because (…) it's school culture, it's school expectations, it's (…) selling our culture and our community to people (…) to the pupils (…) that come to us because (…) if we can do that, if they can feel like they belong, then they're less likely to chuck the chair across the room no matter (…) whatever's going on in their mind, if they feel like they belong they are less likely to treat property and people and their environment in that way

Alternative placements, including managed moves or placements at specialist settings, were considered alternative solutions which can be useful to prevent disciplinary school exclusions. There was an assumption that some children cannot have their needs met within mainstream schools, with decision makers' referring to the lack of specialist placements contributing to the problem of disciplinary school exclusion.

if it was to disappear today, it would need to be replaced with (…) an easier route to pupil referral units erm there would be some means of children whose behaviour (…) is not acceptable or beyond the control of a mainstream school (…) would end up in different settings.

we managed not to permanently exclude anybody for the (…) two and a half three years that I was there (…) they did after I left unfortunately (…) but in general we managed to either meet needs, (..) or find the right provision elsewhere to make sure they met need.

Discussing school effectiveness relates to the ability of the school to incorporate the 'deviant' child into their culture, whilst identifying a child's unmet needs as a reason for their behaviour relates to the child 'out of control' who requires an alternative setting to meet their needs.

Exclusion as something to be prevented, and as unspeakable, draws on a discourse of 'education as an unquestionable good' (Allen, 2016), with a taken-for-granted / common-sense assumption that education is a potential cure for societal ills (such as poverty and inequality) through concepts such as social mobility, equality of opportunity and inclusion.

The construction of disciplinary school exclusion also draws on a 'human rights' discourse. This construct reflects the human rights of the excluded child to access an education, which is assumed to be of value to the child to enable them to be socially mobile and achieve better outcomes later in life.

6.2.4   Disciplinary School Exclusion as a Weapon

A further construction of exclusion that emerged from the analysis was that of disciplinary school exclusion as a weapon. This was illustrated subtly through metaphor which crept into the decision makers' talk.

Excerpt 6.13:

Quote A: Interview 3, line numbers 196 - 197	all schools need to have that exclusion in their armoury
Quote B: Interview 6, line numbers 263 - 264	the perception is that you are (…) effectively fighting them
Quote C: Interview 3, line numbers 361 - 363	we still have some schools that (…) can be quite trigger happy

Quote D: Interview 3, line numbers 97 - 99	he'd gone right up to the edge of permanent exclusion and then reined it all the way back in and disappeared right under the radar again

This construction of exclusion as a weapon draws on notions of war and violence, which calls to mind images of schools defending themselves from resistance within, such as in a civil war. This construction could position the child at risk of exclusion, or children excluded, as attempting to resist a dominant regime through either their disengagement and/or violent behaviour. This discourse particularly relates to the 'deviant' child deemed to deliberately disengage from and challenge the assumptions on which school is based.

Decision makers described children being either on or under the radar, reflecting their monitoring as potential enemy forces, whereby the child's deviance from the 'normal other' leads to them being 'on the radar' of the school disciplinary processes which gather intel and information about the child.

Drawing on a discourse of war and violence to construct exclusion enables critical reflection on the use of exclusions, with decision makers perhaps more explicitly constructing exclusion in other ways (such as protection) to resist positions as authoritarian dictators. The child and their behaviour can also be constructed in an alternative way, with the behaviour deemed unacceptable alternatively construed as an appropriate resistance to an oppressive regime. The child can therefore be seen to be persecuted and victimised by education as an oppressive regime, and subject to inhumane and violent methods of domination.

The emergence of discourses of war and violence was subtle within metaphorical language used by the decision makers. This suggests that discourses of war, constructing exclusion as a weapon, reflect the presence of an oppressed discourse of education as an oppressive regime.

In Excerpt 6.14, the participant perhaps touches on the discourse of education as an oppressive regime, in which he reflects on a "narrative" that children or their parents might subscribe to, that the purpose of schools is social control. His reflection on this discourse as a "narrative" could hint that this discourse opposes dominant 'truths' and is therefore a story, rather than 'reality'. However, at the same time he notes that there may be some 'truth' to his narrative when he acknowledges that 'it is a bit imposing your culture on others.'

Excerpt 6.14: Interview 4, line numbers 317 - 322

Participant	children or (…) parents who sort of subscribe to a narrative that (…) schools are that kinda like repressive state apparatus where they're tryna bash children into just submitting to what the state wants and that kind of compliance model (…) yeah so I spose it is a bit erm imposing your (…) culture on others

This is perhaps also illustrated within another participant's comment (see Excerpt 6.15) that removing the ability to exclude through structural change would be a "nuclear option." Again, this use of language sits within a discourse of war and violence, where the metaphor of a nuclear bomb, which is a weapon of mass destruction, perhaps calls to mind images of the complete annihilation of the current education system.

Excerpt 6.15: Interview 3, line numbers 561 - 562

Participant	but if it forced a structural change to ensure that there was additional places additional resource to be able to scaffold (…) to put the support and scaffolding around those children so they could meet the erm behaviour thresholds then perhaps it'd be possible although it's a bit of a nuclear option [through laughter] that's a brave secretary of state to say that.

6.2.5 Summary

The four constructions of exclusion presented above provide insight into the wider discourses that are drawn upon by decision makers to legitimise exclusion.

The construction of exclusion as protection draws on discourses of 'education as an unquestionable good,' 'human rights' and 'civilised society,' whereby 'others' education and welfare should be protected from the child excluded. This construction positions decision makers as protectors of both the community and of the educational institution. This construction impacts on the child 'out of control' who presents a 'danger' to others, as well as the 'deviant' child who challenges the assumptions on which education is based.

The construction of exclusion as punishment draws on discourses of 'criminal justice,' civilised society' and 'essentialist' discourses of the individual, whereby children are considered to be 'deviant' based on their behaviour, wilfully engaging in behaviour that 'breaks the rules' or violates dominant socio-cultural norms within a civilised society and therefore deserving of punishment.

The construction of exclusion as a bad thing also draws on discourses of education as an unquestionable good, human rights and essentialist discourses of the person. This discourse enables decision makers to consider the rights of the child on the edge of exclusion or the child excluded, whilst essentialist discourses of the person locate the problem behaviour within the child and necessitate a different type of education.

The construction of exclusion as a weapon enabled critical reflection on the wider dominant discourses mentioned above. This construction draws on a discourse of education as an oppressive regime, opening space for questions and challenges to the purposes of education and the assumptions underlying the educational institution. The construction of exclusion as a weapon

positioned children as victims of violent tactics to protect the dominant regime.

6.3 What are the wider discourses drawn upon by decision makers to construct disciplinary school exclusion?

There were six key wider discourses that emerged from the analysis. This included five dominant discourses, and one discourse that could be considered oppressed. Figure 6.1 illustrates the wider discourses that emerged from the data as well as their relationship with the constructions of disciplinary school exclusion. This section will discuss each of the wider discourses in turn, including:

- Education as an unquestionable good
- Human rights
- Civil society
- Criminal justice
- Essential nature of humans.

Figure 6.1: Concept map to illustrate the relationship between constructions of exclusion and wider discourses
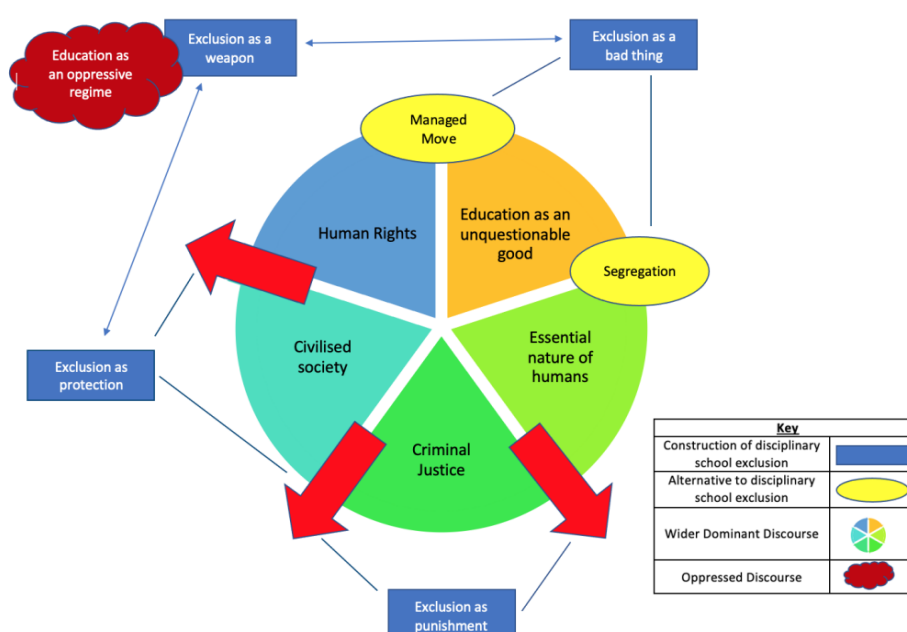
6.3.1 Education as an unquestionable good

The 'education as an unquestionable good' discourse constructs the purpose of education as providing individuals with the necessary skills, knowledge, and opportunities to better their position in society.

It maps a picture of the world in which structural inequality affects different types of persons' ability to access the opportunities on offer within education, which are inherently and incontestably good. The discourse implies that those who are able to access the opportunities are therefore able to 'better' their position in society, and better performing schools with more inclusive practices can reduce barriers presented by structural inequality.

Schools which 'perform' and enable their subjects to 'better' their position in society, through inclusive practice and higher standards, subsequently prove that education can be a cure to society's ills. When these agendas are considered to be working well, individuals, within individual schools, are able to access and take hold of the opportunities on offer within school, they are therefore able to pull themselves out of 'poverty' or 'disadvantage' and provide proof that education can reduce disadvantage, and cure poverty. This inherently good quality of education implies that those unable to take hold of those opportunities are doing something wrong, or are deficient or deviant, legitimising the use of within-child explanations for behaviour and the use of exclusion.

The 'education as unquestionable good' discourse may have emerged from progressive calls for reform in the 1800s, based on hopes for education to cure society's ills through providing a solution to the poverty and inequality which became more visible and prominent after the industrial revolution. Moreover, religious practices which had previously governed what it meant to 'live the good life' were secularised, where modernity called for the nation to be productive for the state (Allen, 2016).

Reflexive Box 6.2: Reflections as a previous believer in the inherent goodness of

The taken-for-granted assumption that better outcomes at school will lead to better positions in society relies on value judgements about what is 'better'. Within education, neoliberal policies have privileged high levels of academic attainment, places offered at universities and better paid jobs as 'better outcomes,' taking emphasis away from outcomes based on community cohesiveness, emotional and social wellbeing, or work life balance, which could be considered equally as valuable.

Parsons (1999) also raises questions about what it means for a school to be 'effective,' and whom is this effectiveness important to. He argues that there are currently taken-for-granted assumptions in government and research that effective schools produce good academic results, whereby learning therefore must have taken place. He questions whether a 'good' school could be understood differently, with an emphasis on caring and supporting children without impacting on academic performance, whilst perhaps a 'very good' school could reflect moral development of children and young people.

What if school were, instead of academic attainment, focused on learning about yourself and the world, managing conflict, taking part in democracy, caring about others rather than competing against them. But are these still culturally privileged ways of being in the world?

In discussions about what has emerged from my analysis amongst my team, I can feel myself being positioned as radical when questioning and critiquing the common-sense understanding.

Questioning this challenges many of the assumptions on which the educational psychology profession rests, therefore subverting the institution of educational psychology as it interacts with education.

6.3.2 Criminal Justice

A 'criminal justice' discourse closely links with an essentialist discourse, presenting the regime of truth that individuals should be held responsible for behaviour that challenges dominant socio-cultural norms, and that punishment is an effective means of holding people responsible (Macleod, 2006; Stanford & Rose, 2018).

The discourse is based on assumptions that punishment should prevent further instances of behaviour that deviates from socio-cultural norms, either committed by that individual or by the message sent to others preventing their engagement in said behaviour.

The criminal justice discourse could reflect civilising and custodial functions of schooling, with the use of punishment representing more controlling, limiting, and subjugating ideologies as opposed to open, democratic, and humanising approaches (Parsons, 1999).

Reflexive Box 6.3: Reflections as a trainee educational psychologist

The use of disciplinary approaches in school seems to be effective for a high proportion of the school population, where only a small percentage of the school community present challenges that lead to exclusion (Department for Education, 2020). The disciplinary approach is also strengthened by psychological discourses of behaviourism, which claim that rewards and punishment can control behaviour.

However, I wonder whether discipline and punishment are proven effective because the majority of students' discourse habits already fit into the dominant discourses at work in schools.

The reproduction of discourses by dominant cultures, where subcultures are in their minority, lead to the 'will-to-truth' of dominant discourses, such as criminal justice. Therefore, the mere presence of a majority whose discourse habits already fit within the dominant discourses together provide

proof that the practices and techniques within those discourses to regulate the conduct of others are effective.

As a result, the disciplinary and punitive practices in schools are proven effective due to their effectiveness on the masses, suggesting that discipline and punishment help create a safe, orderly, and civilised society by regulating the conduct of the masses.

6.3.3 Human rights

A 'human rights' discourse presents taken-for-granted assumptions that we each have a right to feel safe, both emotionally and physically, and to have a protected learning environment. Education is also considered a human right, connecting the human rights discourse to the education as unquestionable good discourse.

With regard to exclusion, a human rights discourse assumes that rights such as safety and education should be protected and will be breached without this protection. This legitimises the protection of the majority's rights from those who violate the rights of others, without necessarily considering potential structural violations of human rights.

As a result, there is tension between prioritising the protection of the rights of the majority over the rights of the few (Gillett-Swan & Lundy, 2022), perhaps resulting in the violation of the rights of the few (such as through exclusion) in favour of protecting the rights of the many.

A human rights discourse may reflect a vision of schooling as have a custodial function to care for and contain children; to keep them safe (Parsons, 1999). Interestingly, this challenges a controlling and limiting custodial function of schooling within a criminal justice discourse.

Reflexive Box 6.4: Reflections as a mainly law abiding and morally reflective citizen

Analysing 'rape' as an extreme example of a breach of human rights stopped me in my tracks during the analysis, raising massive amounts of discomfort in trying to take a critical distance in analysing the example. Rape is a highly emotive concept, and its use in the interview is calling on me as a woman, a feminist, a human, to view 'rape' as an inherently deviant behaviour, one which all citizens, individuals, should be protected from at all costs.

As part of the interview, the use of rape called on me to understand where exclusion is legitimate. However, 'sexual misconduct' is consistently cited as the reason for fewer than 2% of permanent exclusions year on year since the 2015-16 academic year (Department for Education, 2021).

As I'm writing this, as a woman, a law-abiding and morally reflective citizen, I am questioning how we could possibly live in a society in which 'rapists' and 'murderers' are not removed to keep everyone else safe, constructing them as 'bad.' As a psychologist, I try to contextualise the behaviour, drawing on psychological discourse to try and understand why someone has become a 'rapist' or a 'murderer'' – what happened to them? Thereby constructing the 'rapist' or 'murderer' as victims of circumstance, or a psychiatric discourse looking at psychopathology, constructing them as 'mad.'

A trap is laid for me in the role of critical researcher, whereby it is phenomenally hard to step back and identify 'rape' and 'consensual sex' as socially constructed moral/political objects within discourses of sexual deviance. The strength of the 'regime of truth' within the discourse calls to me so strongly that I cannot think of an alternative, other than that 'rape' is one of the worst things a human can do to another.

6.3.4   Essential nature of human beings

A discourse of the essential nature of human beings, or an essentialist discourse, is based on the regime-of-truth that humans, as individuals, have an independent, enduring essence, character, or soul. The essentialist discourse is heavily entrenched within the psychology discipline, with the individual a major focus of psychological study.

Essentialist discourses legitimise within-person explanation for phenomena, through processes looking for the differences between people, rather than accounting for these differences in the structure of the environment.

With regards to education, essentialist discourses in the psychological discipline contributed to the categorisation of individuals and the studies of their development and difference. These discourses perhaps emerged from ideas of hereditary criminality, eugenics and Darwinism. Some argue that the discipline of psychology emerged at the conception of education for all, where schools act as laboratories to study the functioning of the individual (Allen, 2016).

Reflexive Box 6.5: Reflections as a psychologist and an emerging post-structuralist

Essentialist discourses also present difficulties in my ability to critically distance myself from the discourse. An essentialist idea of myself allows me to feel that I am a morally reflective, inherently good person who can make mistakes sometimes. It allows me to feel as though I am 'working on myself' and developing as a person, that I am consistently good and that my goodness is attributed to something inside of myself, something akin to a soul.

If we refute essentialist ideas of the person, anyone could be capable of being 'dangerous' or 'deviant' dependent on the positions available to them at the time. This is challenging to the ideas I have about myself, whereby the thought of me being a 'danger' to others is both upsetting and terrifying.

> *However, when attempting to distance myself, anti-essentialist discourses open opportunities to consider situations dangerous, rather than people dangerous. This could propose a collectivist response to issues such as 'human rights' violations, where all agents within a situation could together account for the 'danger' and enable all agents to feel safe.*

6.3.5 Civilised Society

A discourse of civilised society presents a regime-of-truth that a privileged set of behaviours, discourse habits, reflect a 'civilised' way of doing things and therefore the 'right way.' This discourse was reflected in the decision makers' talk about 'doing things properly,' and judgements about whether the behaviour of children and parents fits within the discourse habits of 'civilised society' perhaps reflect the extent to which the child is able to legitimately claim the position of an 'ideal student.'

A discourse of civilised society particularly privileges a lack of emotional expression through behaviour and the communication of emotions either verbally, not at all or in private. This communication of emotions is considered 'rational,' rather than an alternative view of rationality as a privileged form of emotional expression or experience that fits the discourse habits of a civilised society (Laws & Davies, 2000).

Therefore, emotional expression or experience that sits outside of the habits of a civilised society discourse is constructed as irrational, reducing the ability of the individual to successfully be heard and the cause of the emotional experience being taken seriously. Instead, the individual is more likely to be constructed as either deviant, or out of control, and their ability to wield power to claim a position for themselves is reduced.

This takes the emphasis away from what might be causing some children to respond with strong emotional experiences or legitimate resistance, and instead focuses on removing the individual creating the problem and threatening the discourse of civilised society (Stanforth & Rose, 2018).

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6.3.6 Education as an oppressive regime

An 'education as an oppressive regime' discourse emerged from the analysis. This discourse sits in direct contradiction with the 'education as unquestionable good' discourse.

Education as an oppressive regime presents a view of the world in which education uses coercive and violent tactics to establish social control and maintain an unequal society, such as within a dictatorship. This calls into question the structure of the education system as it stands today.

Education as an oppressive regime draws on discourses that may have been marginalised since the conception of education in the early 20th century, when education for all was implemented to ensure that the population had the necessary skills and knowledge to further the industrial development of the country.

In the 1800s, education for all was hotly contested, due to concerns that it would disrupt the social stratification in place at the time and would train criminals to commit crime more efficiently and effectively. The eventual implementation of education for all was based on the need for productive workers to further the industrial development of the country.

Progressive discourses calling for the reform of an unequal society through education have prevailed, and become dominant, oppressing discourses which construct education as an oppressive regime.

This discourse opens wider questions about education and its purpose and perhaps opposing taken-for-granted assumptions around ideas of success, discourses of social mobility and discourses of education as an unquestionable good. This enables critical reflection on 'the way things are' and the type of behaviour deemed 'acceptable' or 'good' within a school.

6.4 How do the wider discourses interact, overlap, or contradict one another?

This section will explore and reiterate the relationships between the discourses to exemplify how they work together to legitimise and maintain the use of exclusion. The concept map exemplifying the relationships between discourses is represented here for the reader (See Figure 6.1).

Figure 6.1: Concept map to illustrate the relationship between constructions of exclusion and wider discourses
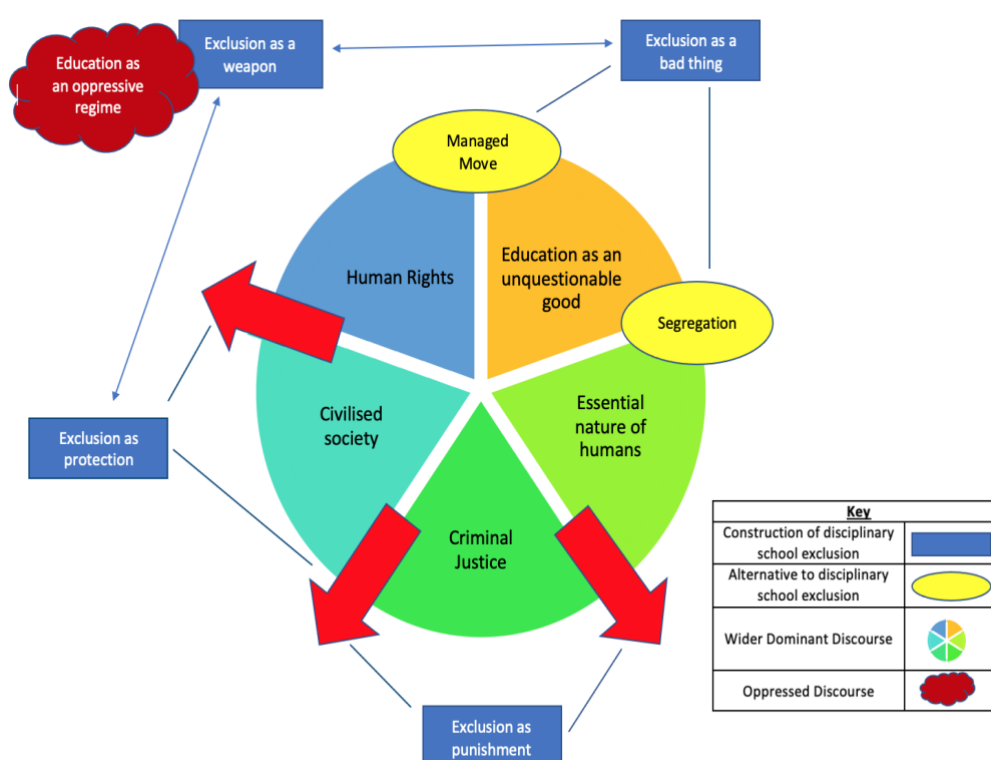
The 'education as unquestionable good' and the 'human rights' discourses are related to ideas such as 'equality of opportunity,' 'inclusion,' 'social mobility' and 'social justice.' Taken together, these discourses highlight the unshakeable importance of education in promoting 'good' in the world, through enabling individuals to reach their potential and become 'socially mobile,' therefore elevating the way that people live and enabling them to 'live the good life.' These discourses also position the educational institution as enabling the elevation of society by having the power to reduce inequality

and therefore cure the ills of society, such as poverty, inequality, and criminality.

The 'education as unquestionable good' and the 'essentialist' discourse together appear to present a view of the world in which individuals respond differently to the education system based on within-person characteristics (even if these characteristics abdicate them of responsibility for behaviour deemed challenging). These discourses, taken together, appear to legitimise the segregation of different categories of people into different types of educational provision, whether through the use of exclusion or other means.

The 'essentialist' and 'criminal justice' discourses construct individuals as responsible for their behaviour, based on individual characteristics, traits or essences. Taken together, these discourses seem to legitimise the 'doing something' to the individual to prevent or reduce behaviour deemed to be deviant. When both these discourses are paired with discourses of human rights and civilised society, it makes sense that the individual responsible for violating, or challenging, the norms of civilised society or the rights of others should be removed to protect human rights and civilisation.

At the intersection of these discourses, exclusion appears to be seen as a necessary and legitimate tool used to protect education, human rights and civilisation.

Excerpt 6.16: Interview 4, lines 367 - 378

Int:	what would need to happen if exclusion wasn't an option (…) if they did just take it off the table toda- you know right now they said right you can't exclude in practice (…) what do you think would happen
RES:	I think it er so- in ten or fifteen years we'd be in a new stone age of [through laughter] (…) people taking what they wanted, where they wanted, order breaking down, heh heh (…) [through laughter] I would see it as horrific (…) break down of law and order coming our way erm at the risk of sounding like a daily mail reader

> [indeterminable, though laughter] but yeah it would be like the
> collapse of civilisation as we know it would be my sort of (…) gut
> reaction to that would be (…) yeah where would that slippery slope
> end er clubbing each other over the head

This final excerpt perhaps reflects the extent to which decision makers consider school exclusion to be necessary in current education systems in England.

Chapter 7: Conclusions, Implications and Personal Reflections

7.1 Introduction

This chapter will present an overview of the research followed by a summary of key findings. The chapter will subsequently consider the implications for educational psychology practice, ideas for future research and the strengths and limitations of this research. I will conclude the chapter with my personal reflections.

7.2 Overview of the research

This thesis presents a discourse analytic study exploring the construct of disciplinary school exclusion using a Foucauldian lens. The choice of topic was influenced by my strong personal commitment to the inclusion of children excluded or considered at risk of exclusion. At the outset of the research, my aim was to explore the way exclusion is constructed in the discourses employed by decision makers, so as to identify the ways in which the use of exclusion is legitimised.

The next section will discuss the key findings in more depth.

7.3 Key findings

The wider, dominant discourses that emerged from the analysis included 'education as an unquestionable good,' 'civilised society,' 'human rights,' 'criminal justice' and 'essential nature of human beings.' Together, these discourses construct an incredibly strong 'regime-of-truth' that appears to legitimise the use of exclusion to protect the education system, the human rights of the majority and civilisation as we know it.

A marginalised discourse that emerged from the analysis was that of 'education as an oppressive regime.' This challenges the taken-for-granted assumptions underpinning discourses of civilised society and education as an unquestionable good. The marginalised discourse appears to construct

students who are excluded or at risk of exclusion as resisting a dominant and oppressive regime, which uses tactics of coercion and violence to maintain power.

I feel the contradiction between discourses of 'education as an unquestionable good' and the 'education as an oppressive regime' is key. An education as unquestionable good discourse perhaps reflects common-sense assumptions that the function of schooling leans towards the social-democratic ideological perspectives proposed by Parsons (1999). For example, by:

1. Providing a place of safety and containment for children within a custodial function.
2. Enabling the transfer of knowledge deemed useful and valuable within a public knowledge function of schooling.
3. Enabling individuals to access opportunities based on their performance on exams that are equal and fair, and therefore provide a level playing field for children and young people to claim privileged societal positions, within a credentialling function of schooling.
4. Providing children and young people with the necessary skills for later life, again considered unquestionably valuable, within a skilling function of schooling.
5. Enabling children to feel a sense of belonging within their community, if they can adapt to the school culture, within a national identity function of schooling.
6. (Re)producing a 'better' version of society by enabling children and young people to learn how to behave in a way that supports human rights and civilisation, within a civilising function of schooling.

However, the 'education as an oppressive regime' discourse perhaps reflects an oppressed or marginalised discourse identifying education as leaning more closely to the controlling ideological pole, which seems to be reflected in policy and legislation discourse since the 1980s (Parsons, 1999).

Whilst previous research has identified the complex nature of disciplinary school exclusion, situated in a network of factors from individual level to policy and societal level, this research highlights the way disciplinary school exclusion appears to be closely interwoven with the fabric of society as we know it. If this knowledge were taken as truth, then any attempts to prevent disciplinary school exclusion must also involve a critical questioning of the education system as a whole.

This view is shared by Hallett and Hallett, (2021), who argue that the problem of exclusion is profound, requiring the gaze of the researcher to conceptualise the problem within a frame of reference that abstracts assumptions of equity and the benefits of education for all, rather than education benefitting those whose discourse habits enable them to navigate the system with success. They conclude by asking the question, what would happen to the education system if no school could use disciplinary school exclusion?

7.4   Implications for Educational Psychology Practice

The key findings of this thesis present a number of implications for educational psychologists. I will frame these implications at different levels of educational psychology work, starting with individual casework, organisational and strategic work with schools, and work at a national policy level.

Finally, I present some reflections on the impact of the critical discourse analytic work that was undertaken within this thesis and its relevance to educational psychology professionals.

7.4.1   Individual Casework

The findings of this research have important implications for the ways educational psychologists conduct assessment of individual children. Educational psychologists become involved to 'assess' an individual child often to build an understanding of the strengths and difficulties of that child and advise the school on how best to adapt to meet the child's needs. This is

based on essentialist notions of the person, although may end up in recommendations for the environment, or educating the child in a separate or alternative setting.

The construction of the child as an object is therefore closely related to the ways educational psychologists contribute to the building of a shared narrative around the child (Billington, 2006). This research has important implications for the ways educational psychologists contribute to this shared understanding, where educational psychologists may need to increase their awareness of the constructions of children that reduce the agency and power of the child.

Therefore, educational psychologists should be aware of their own language use, as well as the way in which the language used by others impacts on the construction and subjectification of the child and those working with the child.

Secondly, the voices of educational psychologists are privileged due to their position within the knowledge/power nexus. Therefore, educational psychologists could be perfectly poised to enable the amplification of marginalised and oppressed discourses, particularly relating to the ways children construe themselves (Billington, 2006).

These considerations particularly relate to the ways in which children are constructed within the assessment process, and the shared narratives that are built around the child. First and foremost, this research highlights the importance of considering how children and young people may be employing discourse (through their discourse habits) and what positions they may be attempting to take up or resisting. I feel this should be considered essential when gathering child views and enabling them to share their views (with consent) with key adults in their life.

When considering how educational psychologists can effect positive change for children considered 'at risk of exclusion,' I would argue the importance of exploring whether the child is being construed as 'deviant' or compared with the 'ideal student' and the discourses within which these constructions sit. Educational psychologists, within individual assessment, could aim to bring

about a reflexive awareness in the adults working around the child as to the wider discourses and the ways in which these discourses can be questioned and reflected upon in terms of their impacts on the individual child.

This argument highlights the importance of educational psychologists maintaining a reflexive awareness of their practice (Billington, 2007; Pomerantz, 2008b), considering the implications of their work for the individuals they work with.

7.4.2 School organisation and strategic level

The findings of this research have implications for the ways that educational psychologists can work with schools as organisations. Educational psychologists might be well placed to enable school leadership and decision makers to reflect on their values and belief systems, how these are effected through policy, implemented in practice, and the way their values and beliefs might differ from the communities they serve. Perhaps educational psychologists could be perfectly positioned, as professionals external to the culture of schools, to enable critical reflection on policy and practice to enable schools themselves to challenge the assumptions on which they are based.

An important part of the work of an educational psychologist, in this area, could be to enable critical reflection of school staff groups on the ways in which children are talked about, as well as the ways in which education and issues within education are talked about. A critical reflection around the language used to describe and discuss children could lead to significant positive change by enabling children to take up alternative subject positions, rather than subjecting them to a limited range of positions, particularly those that are marginal.

7.4.3 National policy level

The findings of this study could provide compelling evidence for educational psychologists to have a role in influencing policy at a national level. The key findings of the way in which disciplinary school exclusion, an identified problem within governmental policy over the past 20 years, is part of a

network of relations that are implicated at a national policy and societal level. The chronological review of policy presents evidence that policy has significant implications on the functioning of the education system, with policy initiatives having impacts on incentives for inclusion and exclusion.

This research also presents uncomfortable reflections on the educational psychology profession as implicit in the ways that education appears to sanction oppression. This has implications for the ongoing critical reflection of educational psychologists with regards to the aims and purposes of the profession, and the way in which the profession relates to other policy (such as the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Code of Practice).

As succinctly put by Simon Gibbs (2022):

> *"Here I ask if educational psychologists can catalyse debate about the role and functions of education and schools in ways that minimise and deconstruct barriers, or shall we persist in colluding with segregation? What do we want education to do; what will we do tomorrow?"* (p. 9).

7.4.4 Personal reflections on the use of a critical macro social constructionism discourse analytic approach

Excerpt 7.1: reflections as a trainee educational psychologist who has experienced this thesis

The experience of completing this thesis has permanently altered the way that I perceive and understand the world around me. I hope that this will bring with it a more robust criticality that can effect positive change for those around me, as well as providing me with the personal sense of agency to effect positive outcomes for myself, through narrative exploration.

On completion of this thesis, I felt extremely passionate that all those working with children and young people through whom power travels should experience the chaos within which reality can be constructed

through language, and the significant implications this has for those who are unable to effectively wield power through discourse.

The journey has made me significantly more cautious about my language use and the way in which I work with others. An awareness of the discourses within which we talk, and the skills / knowledge that I have developed that enable critical reflection of these discourses, feels like a powerful tool within our work that could make a real difference. I also feel as though this is a tool that needs constant use and discussion, to stop us from becoming bogged down with what feels like undeniable 'truth.'

7.5 Strengths and limitations of the research

This section will consider the quality of the research with reference to Yardley's (2017) framework for evaluating the quality of constructionist research. I will then discuss some limitations of the research alongside potential ideas for future research ideas.

Assumptions within the positivist-empiricist paradigm necessitate the evaluation of the quality of research via concepts such as validity, reliability, objectivity, and generalisability (Brinkmann and Kvale, 2015). However, these concepts are based on philosophical assumptions that there is a reality which can be measured with some objectivity (Robson, 2016). Social constructionist and post-structuralist research challenges these assumptions and therefore radically question concepts such as these that are deemed to be able to judge the quality of research (Burr, 2015). Social constructionism argues the presence of socially constructed and multiple realities, in which all knowledge is constructed through social relations and there is no way of objectively 'knowing' material reality (Burr, 2015).

Social constructionism therefore rejects concepts used to evaluate quantitative research, based on the idea that research aims to identify an

objective truth (Madill et al., 2000). However, qualitative research should still be open to scrutiny (Madill et al., 2000).

Yardley (2017) proposes that constructionist research can be evaluated by the extent to which the research maintains sensitivity to context, commitment and rigour, transparency and coherence, and impact and importance.

I have endeavoured to demonstrate sensitivity to context by a commitment to reading and evaluating a wide range of literature and policy to understand the context in which schools are situated. The extent to which this thesis accounts for sensitivity to the context of each individual participant could be questioned. Due to ethical dilemmas, I limited the information about each participant provided within the account to ensure to maintain the confidentiality and anonymity of the participants. Therefore, I have not provided information regarding their individual characteristics, or specific information about the settings within which they work, which could be considered a limitation of this study.

It is also important to acknowledge the impact of the social interaction between myself and the participants with regards to sensitivity to context of the interview situation. My dual role as researcher and as trainee educational psychologist presents dilemmas which cannot be resolved. This particularly relates to the way in which my discourse habits (for example within a discourse of education as an unquestionable good) may open subject positions for the participants to claim as also believers in the value of education. Having said that, can it be assumed that teachers who currently take up positions of senior leadership within schools would also subscribe to this discourse, and would have done so with an interviewer taking up different positions themselves? These questions present limitations within the research, where the social construction of knowledge reflects the specific interview scenarios, cannot be generalised further and does not aim to make any claims to truth.

To ensure commitment and rigour, I have thoroughly immersed myself into the literature and theory, particularly relating to using a Foucauldian lens

within the analysis and developing an in depth understanding of the ontological and epistemological underpinnings of the research. I also immersed myself in the data over a period of roughly 6 months to ensure that the analysis was conducted with rigour.

To enable the reader to assess the transparency and coherence of the research, I have endeavoured to inject and make clear, through the use of a reflexive diary and the reflexive boxes throughout this thesis, my own subjectivity into the account. I hope that this will enable the reader to evaluate the journey on which this research has taken me. I have also included examples of analysis in Appendices D, M, N and O to enable the reader to evaluate the claims made.

I would argue that this research adds an important and impactful contribution to what is known about disciplinary school exclusion, highlighting the wider sociological, political, and ideological questions important to our work as educational psychologists.

7.5.1 Research and marginalised / oppressed groups

I am conscious that this research involved participants who were already in privileged positions and were able to wield power in their use of discourse. A limitation of this research is that it may not have enabled the capture of oppressed discourses through interviewing participants in marginalised positions.

Future research could take this forward by exploring discourses employed by other stakeholders in the education system, including children and young people (both included and excluded), parents, staff including teachers and teaching assistants, local authority representatives, peripatetic professionals (such as behaviour support), educational psychologists.

7.5.2 Criticisms of Foucauldian approach

First, Foucault's critics question how he accounts for agency and humanism (Hall, 2001). Hanna (2014) argues that discourse analytic approaches fail to account for the way some individuals and not others maintain consistency in

their constructions of their experiences, their sense of self and their actions (Willig, 2001).

Specifically, Foucault's work is accused of lacking the attribution of any meaning to individual experience, with no theoretical explanation for the way in which individuals resist subject positions within discourse (Hanna, 2014). Some readings of the Foucauldian approach argue that the power / knowledge nexus leaves no room for human agency (Arribas-Ayllon & Walkerdine, 2008).

Some authors have argued that a combination of micro- and macro-constructionist approaches can alleviate some of these concerns by exploring the agency of subjects through the performativity of their language within a micro-constructionist approach (Wetherell, 1998). However, as explained in Reflexive Box 4.4: Reflections as a researcher, my interest was not in the agency of the decision makers through performative language use. It was important to me that I did not lay blame on decision makers, rather explored the discursive resources available to them in constructing the topic in question.

A potential for future research could be in exploring how agents involved in the disciplinary exclusion process construct themselves as ethical subjects. This thesis touched on aspects of this, whereby decision makers had a tendency to draw on discourses of human rights and education as an unquestionable good, when justifying the exclusion, positioning themselves as protectors of the community and of education.

A further criticism of the Foucauldian approach is that it provides no recipes for social change, and instead presents only problems.

Reflexive Box 7.1: Reflections as an emerging post-structuralist and a wannabe do-gooder

Interestingly, roughly halfway through the analytic process, when I was fully immersed in the analysis and my tutor, Victoria, described my current state as 'in chaos,' the criticisms of the Foucauldian approach as nihilistic and as

offering no recipes for social change significantly affected me. I found myself feeling hopeless, not only in my work as a researcher in the midst of this thesis, but also in my work as a trainee educational psychologist attempting to 'do good' whilst on placement.

I found myself somewhat paralysed in both my analysis and in my work on placement, where I found the discourses disrupted to such an extent that I felt unsure as to how to do my job anymore.

This reminded me of having come across 'the anaesthetic effect' in my reading of an interview of Foucault (Questions of method). The interviewer highlighted that Discipline and Punish might have an anaesthetising effect on the social worker working in prisons, because of the logic of the critique but also the lack of room for initiative.

To this question, Foucault responds:

> *"… it's true that certain people, such as those who work in the institutional setting … are not likely to find advice or instructions in my books that tell them 'what is to be done'. By my project is precisely to bring it about that they 'no longer know what to do', so that the acts, gestures, discourses which up until then had seemed to go without saying become problematic, difficult, dangerous. This effect is intentional … Critique doesn't have to be the premise of a deduction which concludes: This then is what needs to be done. It should be an instrument for those who fight, those who resist and refuse what is" (p. 84).*

7.5.3   The presence of the researcher

The philosophical assumptions on which this research rests acknowledge the inevitability of my influence on the research, as I have been present and active in the construction of knowledge in this thesis. I have completed this

research within a reflexive process, using a reflexive diary and illustrated through the use of reflexive boxes throughout.

7.6 Personal Reflections

Reflexive Box 7.2: Reflections on the completion of this thesis

*The construction of this thesis has taken me on a journey in which I have been totally transformed. This reflects Foucault's '*livre-expérience*'– the idea that his writings are experience books. I can only sum up this experience through his words:*

> *"my problem is … to construct myself, and to invite others*
> *to share an experience of what we are, not only our past*
> *but also our present, an experience of our modernity in*
> *such a way that we might come out of it transformed.*
> *Which means that at the end of a book we would establish*
> *new relationships with the subject at issue: the I who wrote*
> *the book and those who have read it would have a*
> *different relationship with [the subject], with its*
> *contemporary status, and its history in the modern world*
> *(Foucault 1997, p. 242).*

Reflecting back on my positioning statement at the outset, has this piece of work really been about transforming my understanding and experience of my resistance?

This has involved a number of areas, including my understanding of the world, of myself and of my role as a trainee / future educational psychologist.

First, having delved into reading Foucault's works among a wide range of his supporters and critics, and in particular the work of Parker, my understanding and view of the world has been completely transformed. I now find myself perhaps even more critical, but this criticality sits within a frame of reference that enables a questioning of how else things could be,

rather than attention to what is wrong. This might seem ironic, considering critiques of Foucault discussed earlier.

This was reflected in the many, many, seemingly small decisions to make regarding this thesis. For example, do I use language such as 'data gathering' or 'sampling strategy' signifying positivist assumptions? Do I refer to the educational psychologist as a proper noun?

This level of questioning has also entered my practice. How does the way I dress to go to work discourse habits, whilst also showing respect and professionalism? What does this communicate? How does it reproduce power relations?

The thesis, however, has also taken me on a journey of asking more significant questions.

One of these reflections, which I feel is of critical importance and relates to the implications of this thesis, was around the extent this work has disturbed my understanding of the way I, as a psychologist, collude with the system in its exclusionary practices. How much do I, in my efforts to reconstruct narratives around children in an attempt to implement change, still end up colluding with the oppressive forces limiting the child's agency and opportunity for action?

Another related to the doctoral process to become an educational psychologist. Are we proving that we can successfully engage with the most challenging parts of the education system, and thereby prove our commitment to it? Why is it the way it is? Are we implicitly sanctioning oppression through demonstrating our buy in to the education system, through a requirement for educational psychologists to successfully complete a doctorate in order to practice? Does this ensure that educational psychologists have demonstrated, with their discourse habits and their practice, their commitment to the 'education as unquestionable good' discourse?

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Appendix A: Summary of process used to strategically search for literature

Initial scoping searches were used to explore topics around discourse, challenging behaviour and school exclusion.

Search terms were refined to focus more closely on the topic area in question. Advanced searches were used to search the title and abstract for key terms in the following databases: Web of Science, SCOPUS, and ERIC.

Search terms included "school exclusion," "disciplinary school exclusion," "discipline," "disocurse," "discourse analysis," "analysis," "behaviour," "challenging behaviour."

Articles found from searches were screened for duplicates and then for abstracts / titles to review for relevance.

Reference harvesting occurred for articles deemed relevant after screening for abstracts / titles.

Appendix B: Parsons (1999) Framework for understanding school exclusions

Table 7.1: Parsons' (1999) framework for understanding school exclusions (p.45)

Forces promoting Exclusion	Forces promoting Inclusion
Socio-economic and cultural factors 1. Law: punitive orientation 2. Poverty 3. Poor living conditions 4. Unemployment 5. Diminished finance for education nationally 6. Education as a personal 'good' and for international competitiveness 7. Rigid national curriculum 8. Cognitive emphasis of the curriculum 9. Separate, professionalised managerialist welfare services 10. Punitive attitude to troubled and troublesome young people 11. Excessive attribution of personal and troublesome young people 12. Anti-school, non-stakeholder, criminally inclined local youth sub-culture	*Socio-economic and cultural factors* 1. Supportive, interventionist, restorative law 2. Affluence 3. 'comfortable' living conditions 4. Steady income 5. Priority protected funding for education 6. Education for community building and democratic participation 7. Flexible curriculum 8. Space for personal and social education 9. Humanistic, integrated and community sensitive welfare services 10. Diagnostic and ameliorative attitude towards troubled and troublesome young people 11. Acceptance of some societal responsibility in the creation of deviance 12. Socially 'adjusted' stakeholder youth subculture
Institutional factors: 13. School policy implicitly supportive of competitive and conflictual relationships 14. Ineffective recognition and confrontation of racism 15. Lack of school effectiveness, leadership and staff skills 16. Limited initial and inservice training in class management and interpersonal skills 17. Inadequate individual attention to, and recognition of, learning needs 18. Over-emphasis on school competition in the local area 19. Excessive concerns over local management, and limited resources 20. Insulation, friction and conflict in relationships with parents 21. Lack of locally available support to maintain pupils in school	*Institutional factors:* 13. School policy promoting positive school ethos, consensus and negotiation 14. Effective steps taken to address racism 15. An effective school with skilful staff 16. Quality training at initial and inservices levels in classroom management and interpersonal skills 17. Considerable individual attention to, and recognition of, learning needs 18. Schools cooperate in local area 19. Local management and resource issues regarded as no more than moderately worrying 20. Inclusive and cooperative relationships with parents 21. Locally available support to help maintain pupils in school 22. Debate characterised by seeking the

22. Debate dominated by legal/administrative concerns	best solution for the young person
Individual factors: 23. Significant family and social problems 24. Presence of pupils with psycho-social disorders 25. Decision making influenced by deviant peers 26. Undetected or uncorrected sight or hearing problems 27. Low self-esteem	*Individual factors:* 23. Few family and social problems 24. Absence of pupils with psycho-social disorders 25. Pupils insulated from influence of deviant peers 26. Sight or hearing problems routinely screened and appropriate follow-up measures taken 27. High self-esteem

Appendix C: Flowchart of recruitment

Figure 7.1: Processes in relation to recruitment and gaining informed consent.

I identified potential participants to be approached for participation in the research, alongside practice placement colleagues

I made contact with potential participants with information regarding the research such as: the research question, the aims of the research, levels of involvement and requirements of participants.

Following expressions of interest in the research, I sent further information through information letters and consent forms to potential participants and arranged the practical elements of the interviews via email.

I offered opportunities for questions prior to the commencement of the interview and ensured consent forms had been sent and completed.

On the day of the interview, I provided further information to ensure that participants had given their informed consent.

Appendix D: Examples from reflective diary

Figure 7.2: Example from reflective diary at transcription

> Research Diary   25 October 2021
>
> . Transcribing interview 2.
>
> → talking of 'People' excluded in care where
> it's a one off / accident ... difference between
> child and people / person?
>
> → "had to permanently exclude" → choice?
>
>
> . Transcribing interview 3
>
> - he'd been in trouble but wasn't a prolific
> trouble maker.
>
>
> 26 October 2021
>
> Transcribing interview data – Interview 4
>
> . discourses —→
>   heightened State
>   talking about danger / safety – disregulated
>
>   then talking about consequences, being
> in charge – not taking any instruction
>
>   excursion about maintaining order and
> society
>
>   - talked about parents subscribing to narrative
> that school is state apparatus to bash
> children into what State want.

22/11/21

transcript One - contradictions of the / community

- the inclusive head, the protector...
- distancing self from past exclusive
policies → the helpless enforcer?!
⮡ but within headship - also
the helpless enforcer
⮡ once of other peoples rules
⮡ new of government policy
— the rule follower → ∴ opposite to those
being excluded who are rule breakers.
⮡ But also the Strategic head. ~?
⮡ ethos

child - either conscious rule breaker
or helpless - not helpless but
'not their fault' - cause of other
needs.
⮡ dichotomous view → who is choosing?
⮡ BINARY BLAME
"Significant element of choice" - not an SEN
child. - significant behavioural issues

⮡ positioning child as either in control/choosing
or out of control - not choosing
⮡ does this lead to difference between
an exclusion or or strategic movement
to somewhere 'better equipped'??
⮡ still excluded.

→ positions - protector
⮡ head enforcer of rules - helpless?
(or policy?)
child - choosing ⟷ choose to be in or out?
SEN /mental health
dangerous (eg rape, drugs)
(a danger to others)
→ contract
discourses - of ethos, discipte order - social/comm.

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Analysis - Parker Stage 2.

What objects are referred to - describe
them.

Exclusion.

A process   A message
A tool   At a point - not fixed.
A decision ⟹ A decision maker
One option ⟹ A last resort
A weapon -- Armoury   · explosive!
            · trigger happy · hard hitting
Something in control of itself
    · treadmill
    · cycle
Something with an edge -   — distinct
    masses   verge   about
                        brink   exclusion
                                   (no more
A lever   chances
                                   (severed
A threat   lost.

A safety measure.

A consequence / sanction + to control
    (to reflect that in society.   behaviour.
    (hold the line
    (Maintain authority

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Figure 7.5: Example from reflective diary at stage 2 and 3 of analysis
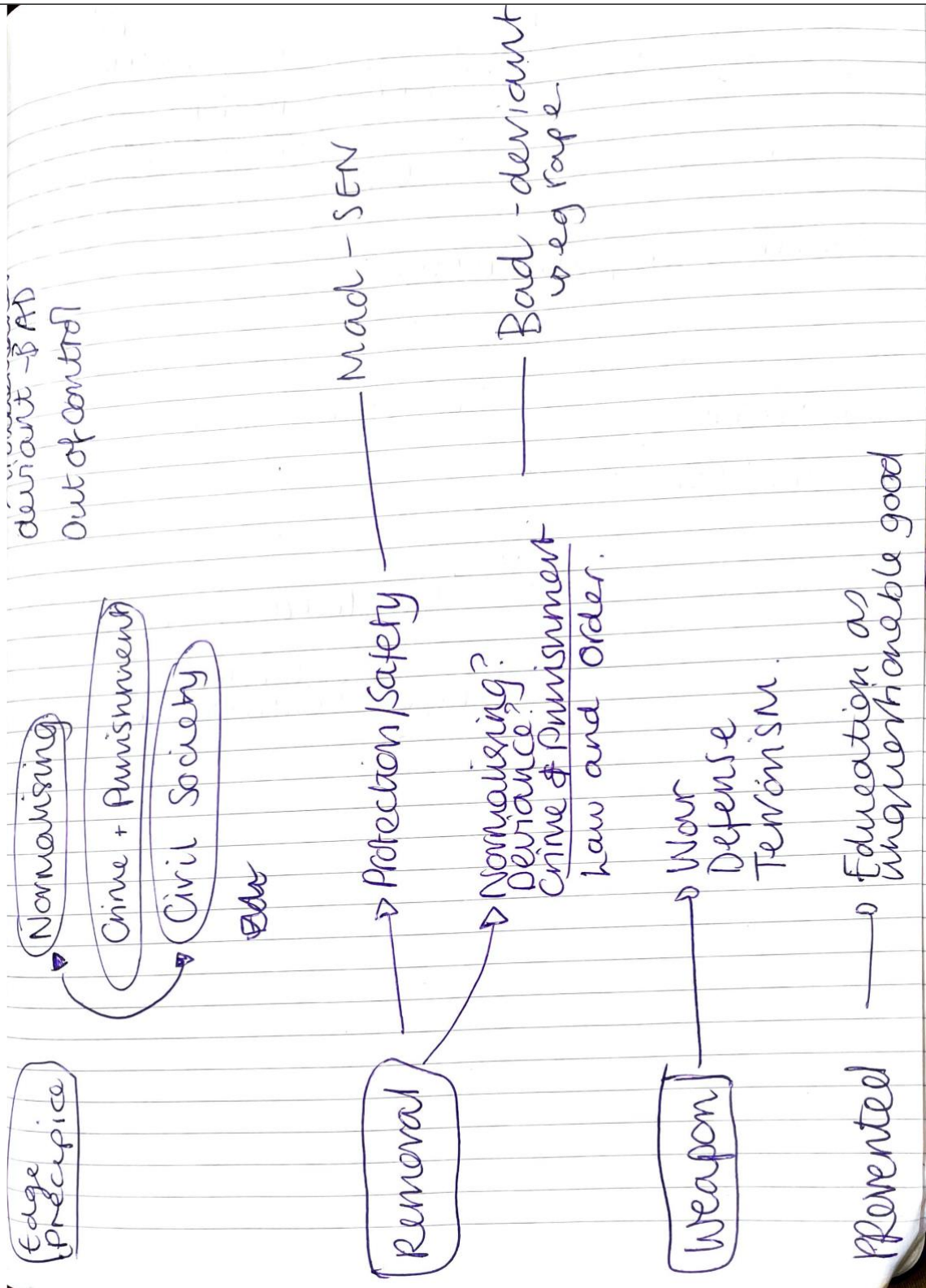
Appendix E: Interview questions

Table 7.2: Semi-Structured Interview Questions and Probes

Introductory question	Can you tell me about your experience of disciplinary school exclusion?
Specific planned probing questions	How does your school/setting/organization/trust approach disciplinary school exclusion? Can you take me through one of the scenarios / the situation of one of the children/young people you're thinking of? What did you feel was the cause of the disciplinary school exclusion? What do you think needed to change for the situation to be improved? In cases of disciplinary school exclusion, what do you think is the role of the school / organisation / setting / trust? What alternatives are there to disciplinary school exclusion? What if disciplinary school exclusion didn't exist / wasn't an option?
Specific Unplanned Probing Questions and statements	What is it about your setting that means you don't have many exclusions? I'm wondering about your experience of children who are excluded for persistent disruptive behaviour? What is it about your thinking and your decision making that's prevented exclusions from happening?

What is happening to prevent you having got to the point of either an exclusion or a managed move?

What are zero tolerance behaviour policies trying to do?

How does working with different Local Authorities impact on how things turn out?

[In specific cases], what was the purpose of the exclusion?

What do you think about children who are excluded who don't have a kind of identified [need]? How do you think that happens? Why do people get excluded who aren't SEN?

How do we know which values and culture is the right one?

When you look at the data around exclusions, the characteristics of the children that are most widely excluded tends to be children from afro-Caribbean descent, children from Gypsy-Irish Traveller backgrounds, and white working-class boys as well. I wonder about the culture and values around that?

[spoke of boundaries of tolerance] what do you think the schools role is in setting the boundaries / where they end up?

[you said you reduced exclusions] What did you put that down to? How did you do that?

Do you think disciplinary school exclusion has an impact on the way you do your job? Has it in the past?

Once a child is described at risk of exclusion, what does that mean for them? How do they bring it back?

I'm wondering if you've ever known a child who was at risk and then is no longer? What do you think that's down to?

	You said school has a big role in that change; what is schools role in that bit of it?
	You spoke about children not being school shaped and I was interested to know what you meant by that?
	Has there ever been a permanent exclusion whilst you've been in that wider role?
	You spoke about permanent exclusion seems to be that really last point where it's making it clear that this child needs additional, something else, so if exclusions didn't exist how else could that happen?
	One of the things I find interesting about that thing you're talking about is when we look at schools and teachers and people who are making decisions in schools and where they come from in terms of their community and culture compared with the community and culture of some of the kids that they see… and I guess the way that schools are said up…

Appendix F: Ethical approval letter

SJ/tp

Ref: **S1308**

Tuesday 9th March 2021

Dear Katie Taubman and Nathan Lambert,

Ethics Committee Review

Thank you for submitting an account of your proposed research 'Deconstructing 'disciplinary school exclusion': A Foucauldian Discourse Analysis'

That proposal has now been reviewed by the Ethics Committee and I am pleased to tell you that your submission has met with the committee's approval.

Final responsibility for ethical conduct of your research rests with you or your supervisor. The Codes of Practice setting out these responsibilities have been published by the British Psychological Society and the University Research Ethics Committee. If you have any concerns whatever during the conduct of your research then you should consult those Codes of Practice. The Committee should be informed immediately should any participant complaints or adverse events arise during the study.

Independently of the Ethics Committee procedures, supervisors also have responsibilities for the risk assessment of projects as detailed in the safety pages of the University web site. Ethics Committee approval does not alter, replace, or remove those responsibilities, nor does it certify that they have been met.

Yours sincerely

Professor Stephen Jackson
Chair, Ethics Committee

Appendix G: Ethical considerations

Table 7.3: Ethical Considerations to maintain research with integrity (MacFarlane & Woolfson, 2013).

Ethical consideration	Action / Consideration
Informed Consent	Prior to recruitment and gaining consent, prospective participants were provided with information sheets and the opportunity to discuss the research with the me. Participants completed consent form prior to participation. Please see Appendix I and J for a copy of information letters and consent forms provided to participants. Please see Appendix C for processes in relation to recruitment and gaining informed consent.
Right to withdraw	Participants were informed of their right to withhold information and their right to withdraw from the research prior to giving their consent. I reinforced this right prior and following each interview. Participants were informed that there would be no consequences to withdrawal from the research and any data gathered would be deleted and removed from the research.

Respect	All processes of the research were conducted with sensitivity and respect to all stakeholders. Interviews were conducted in a sensitive and respectful manner.
Data protection	Data was stored anonymously so that individual participants and schools cannot be identified within the data. Consent forms were stored securely away from any other research information. Audio recordings and interview transcripts were secured on a password-protected computer.
Anonymity and Confidentiality	Details on individual participants were not and will not be shared. Audio recordings, interview transcripts and the final report maintain anonymity and will not be linked to any identifiable information.
Stakeholder recruitment and engagement	See Appendix C for a flow chart for recruiting participants, including processes for providing information about the research and gaining consent.
TEP / Researcher dual role	The research took place in schools local to my personal and professional positions. I acknowledge my dual role as TEP and researcher. Prior to completing processes relating to consent and continually throughout the research project (e.g. prior

	to each visit), I clarified the distinction between the position of TEP and researcher.
Reduction of potential risk	I have a responsibility to reduce potential risk to participants. I was conscious of the potential that participants may be caused unnecessary stress or anxiety through identification or realisation of concerns regarding their practice. I conducted the interviews with sensitivity and vigilance to the wellbeing of the participants, and was prepared to terminate or adjourn the interviews supportively and providing the participant with information and encouragement in accessing support.

Appendix H: Ethical risks checklists

<u>Items from the Ethical Risks Checklist.</u>

1. Co-operation of a gatekeeper for initial access to the groups or individuals to be recruited (e.g. students at school, members of self-help group, residents of nursing home, prison inmates). See Guidance Notes on Educational Psychology applications.

The researcher is currently on placement as a Trainee Educational Psychology within an Educational Psychology Service. The Principle Educational Psychologist (i.e. the manager of that service) will act as a gatekeeper for initial access to Head Teachers, using their existing relationships with Head Teachers in the local area. The purpose of this will be to ascertain *initial expressions of interest* and therefore to introduce the researcher to *potential* participants. The researcher will then contact *potential* participants in writing, with an invitation to take part in the research. Where Head Teacher's indicate an interest in taking part in the research, a full explanation of the research will be offered and written consent sought.

2. Prolonged testing or multiple sessions with the same participant.

Interviews will be limited to a maximum length of 90 minutes with clear guidelines that provide breaks as required.

3. Procedures likely to change participants' mood, be aversive or stressful.

The interview process may change a participant's mood. Participants will have the right to withdraw or withhold information at any stage of the interview process. The researcher will follow the interview by a 'debrief' to ensure the wellbeing of the participants.

The interviews will be conducted with sensitivity by the researcher, who will be vigilant to the wellbeing of the participants throughout.

4. Lack of 'backup' / counselling / follow-up arrangements in cases where participants may be distressed or embarrassed.

Interviews will be followed by a 'debrief' to ensure the wellbeing of the participants.

5. Recall of personal memories.

Participants may recall memories in relation to children they have worked with who have been exclude or personal experiences of exclusion. Participants will have the right to withdraw or withhold information at any stage of the interview process. The researcher will follow the interview by a 'debrief' to ensure the wellbeing of the participants.

The interviews will be conducted with sensitivity by the researcher, who will be vigilant to the wellbeing of the participants throughout.

6. Information-gathering on sensitive issues, such as sexual, racial, religious or political attitudes.

Issues around school exclusion may be identified as sensitive and/or political. Participants will have the right to withdraw or withhold information at any stage of the interview process. The researcher will follow the interview by a 'debrief' to ensure the wellbeing of the participants.

The interviews will be conducted with sensitivity by the researcher, who will be vigilant to the wellbeing of the participants throughout.

7. Discussion or investigation of personal topics (e.g. relationships, feelings of success and failure) or any other procedure in which participants may have an emotional investment.

Participants may discuss personal topics around their involvement with a child who was excluded, personal experiences of exclusion or personal experiences and contributions to school culture. Participants will have the right to withdraw or withhold information at any stage of the interview process. The researcher will follow the interview by a 'debrief' to ensure the wellbeing of the participants.

The interviews will be conducted with sensitivity by the researcher, who will be vigilant to the wellbeing of the participants throughout.

8. Possible disclosure of confidential information (e.g. to other participants).

The researcher will adhere to strict codes regarding confidentiality and anonymity to ensure that confidential information is not shared and participants remain anonymous. All data will be anonymized from institutional to individual level.

The researcher will request that participants do not share identifying information during the interview, and stress that if they discuss a particular case they should do so without sharing identifying information -for example, using a pseudonym.

No identifying information will be recorded in the transcripts.

9. Possible identification of participants (e.g. when reporting results).

The researcher will adhere to strict codes regarding confidentiality and anonymity to ensure that confidential information is not shared and participants remain anonymous. All data will be anonymized from institutional to individual level.

Any other reason(s) for possible ethical concern that you can think of.

There are potential ethical concerns about the nature of discourse analysis and its aim to highlight issues of power and ideology. The purpose of the research, the research questions and analytic methods will be explained to participants prior to gaining consent to ensure that consent is fully informed.

The researcher has decided not to engage in a micro-constructionist discourse analysis alongside macro-constructionist discourse analysis, due to the possibility that examining the participants performative use of language will have implications for the appropriation of blame. The researcher is deliberately positioning this research within a societal context of discourses that are available and not available to head teachers and the impact of this on possibilities for action.

Appendix I: Participant information letter

School of Psychology Information Sheet

Title of Project: Deconstructing 'disciplinary school exclusion': A Foucauldian Discourse
Analysis

Ethics Approval Number or Taught Project Archive Number: **S1308**

Researcher(s): Katie Taubman (katie.taubman@nottingham.ac.uk)

Supervisor(s): Nathan Lambert (nathan.lambert@nottingham.ac.uk)

This is an invitation to take part in a research study which is investigating discourses available
to head teachers around disciplinary school exclusion. Before you decide if you wish to take
part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will
involve.

The purpose of this study is to explore discourse around exclusion in schools – that is, to try
and understand how exclusion is talked about in schools and how that talk might influence the
use of exclusion.

At this stage, we are particularly interested in Head Teachers' talk about exclusion.

Please take time to read the following information carefully.

If you participate, I will visit the school to conduct an individual semi-structured interview (or
interviews) with you. It is more likely this will be completed in a single interview. These
interviews will be arranged and agreed at the beginning of the research. The interview(s) will
be recorded with audio-recording equipment and should last 45-60 minutes, with an upper
limit of 90 minutes. The focus of these interviews will be your experiences with regard to
disciplinary school exclusion. The audio recordings will be transcribed by the researcher and
analysed using Foucauldian Discourse Analysis procedures.

Participation in this study is totally voluntary and you are under no obligation to take part. You are free to withdraw at any point before or during the study. All data collected will be kept confidential and used for research purposes only. It will be stored in compliance with the Data Protection Act.

If you have any questions or concerns please don't hesitate to ask now. I can also be contacted after your participation at the above address.

Katie Taubman

Trainee Educational Psychologist University of Nottingham

If you have any complaints about the study, please contact: Stephen Jackson (Chair of Ethics Committee) stephen.jackson@nottingham.ac.uk

School of Psychology Consent Form

Title of Project: Deconstructing 'disciplinary school exclusion': A Foucauldian Discourse Analysis

Ethics Approval Number or Taught Project Archive Number: **S1308**

Researcher(s): Katie Taubman (katie.taubman@nottingham.ac.uk)

Supervisor(s): Nathan Lambert (nathan.lambert@nottingham.ac.uk)

The participant should answer these questions independently:

- Have you read and understood the Information Sheet/Letter? YES/NO
- Have you had the opportunity to ask questions about the study? YES/NO
- Have all your questions been answered satisfactorily? YES/NO
- Do you understand that you are free to withdraw from the study? YES/NO (at any time and without giving a reason)
- I give permission for my data from this study to be shared with other researchers provided that my anonymity is completely protected. YES/NO
- Do you agree to take part in the study? YES/NO

"This study has been explained to me to my satisfaction, and I agree to take part. I understand that I am free to withdraw at any time."

"I agree that I wish for my school take part in classroom observations completed by the researcher and that notes can be taken during these observations."

Signature of the Participant:

Date:

Name (in block capitals):

I have explained the study to the above participant and he/she has agreed to take part.

Signature of researcher:

Date:

1   Interview 2: Participant 2

2   INT: so the first question I had erm was around your experience of disciplinary

3   school exclusion erm can you tell me a little bit about that?

4   RES: t-.hhh er in personal or in my working life

5   INT: in your working life yeah

6   RES: ok cool good I haven't been excluded in my own life so that's okay erm

7   so I erm t- quite early in my career I ran a specialist provision erm for

8   young people with erm tut .hhh on the autistic spectrum but who were

9   academically average or able so they wouldn't be for example .hhh erm

10   they wouldn't necessarily have needs catered for them in a special

11   school (inaudible) erm but had behaviours that perhaps were would have

12   been challenging in mainstream settings so quite a lot of the young

13   people that came to m- that came to the erm were in the unit it was a unit

14   based in a mainstream school or n- or attached to a mainstream school a

15   3-19 school (.) it was brand- it was new so .hhh it was all set up with a

16   kind of ide- erm idea .hhh sort of an ideal view of what a kind of specialist

17   setting you know with a mainstream etcetera .hhh erm and quite a few of

18   the young people that I worked with had been permanently excluded

19   from primary school erm or had been excluded at least th- the vast

20   majority had over the time been excluded even for fixed terms etcetera

21   hence coming to the specialist unit erm and we didn't have to exclude

22   really erm .hh (.) so I- it was .hhh I think it was probably there that I erm

23   my experience was or h- I felt my experience was that erm people beha-

24   you know people behave differently depending on the the environment

25   and if the environments right they don't necessarily have to erm express

26   their er- communicate .hhh erm in a way that means perhaps they would

27   in other circumstances be excluded etcetera (.) so .hhh m-my experience

28   is i- we shouldn't ha- .hh th- the vast majority of the time but not all of the

29   time the vast majority of the time we shouldn't have to exclude young

30   people if we're meeting their needs in the way that they needs to be met

31   erm that doesn't mean to say that there's in my experience no exper- no

32   times when actually in order to give yourself some time to look at what

33   you're doing to put in place things to keep people safe make sure
34   everybodys safe you wouldn't have to exclude erm but my experience is
35   it doesn't work as a punishment erm or a deterrent so actually erm use it
36   wisely erm and I went from there to- and that was outstanding in the end
37   so I decided I would test out my theories in £circumstances where it was
38   less than outstanding£ so I went- I was approached by- (inaudible) so I
39   went to a different county different just worked for a secondary school
40   that had erm was one of the lowest performing secondary schools in the
41   country and was at risk of going into category- or be closed .hhh erm and
42   actually again erm we well (.) yeah we managed not to permanently
43   exclude anybody for the three-two and a half three years that I was there
44   erm they did after I left unfortunately .hhh but in general we managed to
45   either meet needs or or find the right provision elsewhere to make sure
46   they met need so i- so I think (.) t- I still was able to hold my opi-my- what
47   my experience was kind of to I basically was a self-fulfilling prophecy I
48   decided £that's what I felt and therefore I'll make that happen
49   somewhere else basically£ .hhh erm and then I went to the local
50   authority and supported them again worked-i- and I erm worked- was
51   seconded to sort of SEMH special schools if I use any acronyms that
52   you're not familiar with please let me know because I they're different in
53   differ-different counties sometimes and so .hh in education we use a lot
54   of acronyms £it's really annoying£ erm .hhh so I worked in SEMH special
55   schools and again we managed to have fairly significantly lower kind of
56   exclusions than perhaps they had been doing .hh and I came to this trust
57   and we've got this trust we've got 39 primaries probably over about 7000
58   .hh erm pupils and we haven't permanently excluded a child in the last
59   nearly 4 years and so the permanent exclusion rates are significantly
60   below the national as in zero .hhh erm exclusions depending on the
61   school are reducing although this- although this year they have gone up
62   erm fixed terms have gone up erm and I think that's something im not
63   happy about heh heh £particularly£ erm but I think at the moment there's
64   that safety element of where children .hh the provision they would usually
65   have in place is restricted by not being able to move around not being
66   able to break bubbles etcetera so that's really limited people's flexibility

67		.hh erm and I would say patience. (hh) erm so that's yeah so then they're
68		the settings where I kind of h- erm and I don't necessa- I don't have to
69		agree every fixed term but if children are at risk are increasing numbers
70		of fixed term or are at risk of permanent exclusion everybody has to
71		come to me .hh erm and we talk it through and look at provision and wor-
72		work out what we do .hh and at the moment I'm kind of liaising with quite
73		a few local authorities because they are saying ah yeah but you're doing
74		really well with them .hh and we haven't really got anywhere else we
75		know they should be at special school but .hh erm and then actually then
76		it leaves schools with very relatively little they can do if actually they're
77		putting in all the provision that they can but actually we know and
78		everybody knows the experts know th- that they would be .hh
79		somewhere much more therapeutic or smaller or whatever is the right
80		model .hhh hhh. And I'm not h- I'm not erm (.) I would say my beliefs on
81		permex are that it shouldn't really ever be necessary (.) I don- don't see
82		why it should ever be ever be necessary. Erm but that's been tested I
83		would say over the last year particularly .hh because provisions not in-
84		not there so actually parents are starting to believe more that I- you need
85		to permanently exclude them so that my child gets to go to somewhere
86		they should be at (.) it's actually not true like the reality is that they just
87		end up being pupils end up being tutored at home and if you've not got
88		the school pushing and constantly pushing the local authority actually it
89		stalls and they tend to be there for really long periods of time erm but
90		that- yeah that's sort of my in brief my belief I don't believe in permex
91		.hhh doesn't mean there will- there will come a time I know in this trust
92		where I ha- where there has to be a kind of ok this is the one we have to
93		say it's not working i-it came closer than I've ever been it came to that a
94		month ago erm and actually the local authority therefore got on board
95		with us and managed to sort it out but .hh in general it shouldn't be a
96		need in practice erm in in in general the I would like to see fewer fixed
97		terms as well but we're working on it
98	INT:	yeah that's so interesting thank you erm so interesting to hear how
99		people how people have experienced it and and how different that is erm
100		for different people so thank you that's so so useful.= erm the next

101		question actually followed on quite nicely I wont probably stick to my list
102		religiously because I'm too nosy erm but the next question does follow on
103		quite nicely so you spoke about you've spoken a little bit about your
104		approach erm and I so I guess the question is how does erm the trust
105		approach disciplinary school exclusion
106	RES:	so hhh. I would say it's not consistent yet .hh erm we encourage most of
107		our schools to erm use erm I don't know if you've heard of it STEPS .hh
108		so cambridgshire steps Norfolk steps erm it will be cambridgeshire and
109		Peterborough steps .hhh erm which is a sort of term it's an offshoot or a
110		erm I don't know if you've have you ever heard of team teach?
111	INT:	not team teach I think I might have heard of STEPS if it's the same thing
112		[I'm thinking of-
113	RES:	[okay] so most schools used to have a kind of manual handling training
114		called team teach and the and the founders of it erm I'm really really bad
115		with names so you'll see this throughout where I can describe things but
116		I'm really really bad with names erm but but Charlie and angela waddon
117		sort of set up (inaudible) but actually one of the founders angela waddon
118		felt that it was becoming more a kind of you just use it because you've
119		gotto restrain that child and lo- losing that therapeutic approach so she's
120		kind of gone off on her own .hhh and I think probably about 6 or 7
121		counties are sort of bought into this notion and it's about looking at the
122		causes of behaviour so what is it what are the reasons what are the
123		underlying kind of .hhh erm causes to work out how to .hh erm meet
124		those needs therefore thereby the kind of by product the behaviour erm
125		needi- le- needing to be there less and no-not needing to be an outcome
126		.hhh erm it's an interesting one it's probably (.) I've done the training and
127		ov- I'm very m- like-y- there's-she's sh-w-she-she's a very sort of
128		bombastic deliverer and (.) she I've gone off on a bit a tangent a bit but
129		I'll just explain .hhh she it-y- I will get to the answer the question bu-but
130		she believes for example a behaviourist approach and then a purely I
131		forgot what the other opti- the opposition one is are kind of both child
132		abuse and that actually you've got to kinda come and fit in the middle
133		.hhh and we as a school er as a-er-a trust really encourage so my team
134		we've got an inclusion safeguar- we've got an inclusion team basically

135	.hhh erm encourage schools to sort of buy into the that principle but what
136	we've said it not to just go all in yes everything they say everything they
137	do because they're like you don't need rewards you don't need
138	consequences and actually what we say as a- so our education team
139	and I link up is that for the vast majority of pupils that's what they know
140	that's what they understand and that's what they'll live with in life that
141	actually you get a beha- you get kind of very behaviourist approach to
142	actually there's nothing wrong with having you know in- rewards and you
143	know people working towards things and feeling- feeling like their ah
144	that's amazing I'd got that or whatever .hh erm and and having you know
145	your basic sanctions or consequences erm and that will for the vast
146	majority of pupils be perfectly acc- perfectly sort of erm (.) positive you
147	know that'll be a perfectly reasonable erm management but there will be
148	a few .hh where this pure cause effect or you know behaviour
149	consequence or behaviour reward doesn't work for lots of different
150	reasons and that's when we would look at that therapeutic why let's
151	understand why and lets put- let's not lower our standards lets not just go
152	oh we don't really have to listen in class and it's all right no no no what
153	structures and what support do we need to be put in place to make sure
154	they can meet those standards or ha- or what does- or what does
155	meeting those standards look differently they don't have to look at me
156	necessarily when I'm talking because that might be uncomfortable but I'll
157	know they're listening because when I do so and so he responds with X
158	that kind of so that's so we're not consistently there at all and it's
159	something we've been talking about erm over the next kind of few years
160	trying to get a more consistent approach we actually applied for .hh erm
161	to be one of the kind of schools in the behaviour hubs the national
162	behaviour hubs unfortunately they don't have any decent schools to or
163	trusts to £be the lead£ heh heh £in our area£ so what we're probably
164	going to do is try and work on it ourselves and then in a couple of years
165	we'll be the lead and it'll be you know the other way around .hh erm but it
166	was v- it's inconsistent at the moment I would say and I think and I
167	started here 3 and a half years ago and there was no inclusion there was
168	nobody doing it so w- so for the first probably two years before I got

169   anybody in my team it was about the- the extreme behaviours how do we
170   stop that this is happening and and with 40 schools you get sucked into it
171   erm and then my- I got an inclusion lead and an SEMH person who's
172   mental health first aid trainer so now slowly we're kind of getting to right
173   we're getting to the next tranch down and then with the education team
174   we'll be working on that kind of everybody bit so you're probably not
175   going to see somebody standing on a roof screaming at you when you
176   arrive at one of our schools but when you go into a class .hh you
177   probably will see ch-ch-ch a bit of low level nonsense that's affecting
178   learning and that's where we are kind of now .hhh so the answer is
179   inconsistent but on the whole we believe high standards and
180   expectations and then we d- and we all need to get better at being clear
181   what they are and helping children achieve those high standards not just
182   punishing if they don't that's the- .hh that's the kind of feeling that we're
183   trying to get through slowly we erm in a- in the- (.) training day at some
184   point in the last heh heh >couple of months< .hh all time and space is a
185   bit irrelevant to me but .hhh erm tsall gone but we ha- Tom Bennett did a
186   bit of a did a s-t of morning with e- all of our staff so ha- 1000 however
187   many 200 staff erm and- and it was interested because people were
188   really enthused by it .hhh but what we haven't seen yet is where they've
189   taken it away and kind of really (.) kinda gone with (.) yeah we gotta do
190   this erm we're not really one of the mats that says right in this school you
191   must all sit facing the front and you must d- we're not a-be- we're- we're
192   not that erm centralised erm (.) so it will be kind of adapting it for each
193   individual context and how it works but whilst having high standards
194 INT: Mhm (.) yeah (.) that's really interesting thank you [indeterminable
195 RES: [if I'm not actually answering
196   your question you should just say ri-
197 INT: No no really really you are and actually sorry erm I need to fiddle things
198   I'm fiddling with blu tac so I dropped it
199 RES: Fair enough I'm fiddling with a pen so that's alright heh
200 INT: Erm (.) no i- you- you really are answering the questions an- and actually
201   the point of this- this type of interview is that you know- tell the story that

202		you n- that you feel is relevant and then it is relevant and then it's my job
203		to kind of –
204	Res	[pick through the nonsense(h)
205	INT:	[Well no it's my job to I
206		guess find out how th- that feels relevant to you but actually I think you
207		did answer the question so I don't need to do that heh heh heh .hhh erm
208		y- you mentioned that (.) quite recently there was an example of a y- of a
209		time where you were quit- yo- you said th- you were quite close the
210		closest that you've felt you've been erm (.) to a permanent exclusion and
211		I just- I wondered if you could take me through the s- the situation of that
212		of that young person or that child?
213	RES	Yeah so to give you context I've had in this trust three time where a
214		head's said I'm going to permanently exclude as in it's done. .hhh but-
215		but actually having really quickly spoken to them .hhh it was clear that
216		actually if we could find a different solution it would be okay and that they
217		would be on board with a different solution? And it took a bit of lik- you
218		know- it took time. Don't get me wrong it did but. But actually I also knew
219		that that local authority because we go across four that local authority at
220		a push we could get to get on board with a kind of joint model? So that's
221		probably the actual closest as in they did permex an- or they said well it's
222		done an- no no no it's not rrr whereas this one (.) the LA were aware
223		different county the local authority so the little one who'd actually been in
224		the school and that's unusual we usually have- it's usually explosive
225		when they've moved into a school and so we've not had cause cause ive
226		got members of my team and I can do work with people going forward it's
227		really unusual that .hhh it's somebody who's been there a long time? But
228		he'd actually been .hh fairly settled not massively but fairly settled and
229		manageable in a very small school and then over the lockdown erm
230		paren- they'd struggled to get him in even though they'd kind of given
231		him a vulnerable kind of place so to speak .hhh erm so when he came
232		back he really really was struggling .hhh and very quickly it escalated to
233		significant aggression and so kicking pushing punching full fist punching
234		(.) and even though he's probably he's year 4 so he's not .hhh you know
235		I've (h)been punched in the face by someone bigger than me(h) but .hhh

236   i- erm it was it was regular it was day in day out fo- so the Local Authority
237   were aware and they were fundin- you know they were on board they
238   were funding some 2 and a half days at an alternative provision, there
239   was lots of wrangling so yes but we can't pay- we can't pay transport so
240   the school have to pay that, and the school were already paying you
241   know erm for ye- erm two member of staff to be with him when he was in,
242   he was on a reduced timetable, .hhh mum and dad were not happy at all
243   with the kind of reduced timetable they didn- you know this is [ruining]
244   our lives kind of thing, .hh just permanently exclude him then he'll get to
245   go to a spe- special school full time-that was mum and dads absolute
246   kind of this is what'll happen. .hhh the local authority were like yeah- it
247   wont I said ok well then you need to get on board with us to meet with
248   parents to explain it wont because actually at the moment they believe
249   that is their their erm way of leveraging you into extra support? And even
250   when we then met with them sh- they were saying oh you know and I
251   said can I ask really honestly (.) is there a place at a special school for
252   him right now- no. so what would happen-oh well he'd be at home being
253   tutored w- then actually that was quite helpful because parents then were
254   like ooh ok heh let's see what we can do. Erm (.) and the vi- the
255   aggression was increasing and unfortunately sso was it from one of the
256   parents so they were quite intimidating on site et cetera so we were
257   trying to manage that .hhh erm (.) and actually we weren't getting any
258   further so w- parts of the local authority were saying cause I- my theory
259   was erm even quite extreme behaviour it's manageable or it feels more
260   manageable or our reactions to it are perhaps calmer if we know this isn't
261   just forever. .hhh if this is just a fortnite or this is just a- whatever we can
262   put in place things that perhaps we wouldn't be able to manage for s- for
263   sort of the next year and a half so w- so we were trying to get a kind of
264   what's the medium term plan and what's the long term plan for this young
265   person in place and we just weren't getting anywhere the local authority
266   were saying well .hhh you know that's not right place for him because
267   you know that's for autism that's not right d-d- and actually in the end
268   erm I said well let's meet with them and I'll explain to them that I'm going
269   to ok it if that you're going to permanently exclude if X Y and Z behaviour

270   occurs again erm because by that point the school are doing everything

271   I've my team have checked they're doing what they should be doing

272   we're putting in place all the things that should be put in place .hhh all th-

273   you know everything's been done that everybody involved thought

274   should be being done erm and it was still escalating on a daily basis to

275   being pushed down the stairs and various different things .hhh (.) so we

276   had this meeting basically called this meeting and (.) I explained that this

277   was what was going to be the case and actually the local authority said

278   well wh- a- well you know we could agree to this and we could ag- so

279   we've now got a package around it the child doesn't come on site though

280   so it's not anyones- bu-but the agreement was n- the school keep

281   pushing for the educ- ha- the hed- educa- the changes in the education

282   health care plan they still keep pushing for getting .hhh erm you know so

283   they hold responsibility just because somebody's not on their site

284   anymore they can't abdicate responsibility for that? .hhh so actually we're

285   it think its next week we're reviewing it to make sure actually everybody

286   is ok with it .hhh and get the local authority back on e-w-to discuss what

287   the long term plan is? Because we this shouldn't be in place for

288   September .hhh erm (.) so he now yeah goes to the alternative provision

289   three days a week I think and is tutored at home and has check ins and

290   th- th- alive and well-alive and well checks and all that kind of stuff to

291   make sure everything's .hhh going as it should. Which is nobody's vision

292   of great education, .hhh erm but it erm gives the gives the time for the

293   education health care plan to come through, .hhh and therefore hopefully

294   have written in his education health care plan that a specialist provision

295   is what he needs

296 INT: hmm that's interesting .hhh and and right at the start there you spoke

297   about working with different local authorities and how and it sounds like

298   that then has an impact on how things turn out? So I wondered if you

299   could talk a little bit more about that?

300 RES: [yeah- well I'd say it's not even just

301   different local authorities its different areas in different authorities? So we

302   work across [redacted for confidentiality] and actually (.) mm- it's a bit

303   different now but actually if we have a child that was really really

304	struggling erm in the [redacted] we had far greater chance of being able
305	to get a package in place .hhh than we did in the [redacted] .hhh and
306	that's very unusual because usually it's the other way around. The
307	[redacted] is much better funded and there's fewer erm there's less
308	demand on the services whereas [redacted] and and the [redacted] is
309	much heavier social care demand et cetera erm so its really inconsistent
310	and and they have different processes so (.) erm in (.) [redacted] for
311	example they have a fair access panel which er-all of them do in in a
312	different way slightly different way but [redacted]'s I've been to several
313	times and although it's (.) erm (h)entertaining(h) well let's put it like that
314	.hhh erm they do actually (.) there an then say where does this ch- where
315	have we got a place wherever it needs to g-d-d-d- yn- and it's quite
316	erm it's not necessarily how I would run it but actually y- at least you can
317	sit and go here's the thing d-d-d- and because the school we're working
318	with's got quite a good reputation in terms of actually they try really hard
319	and they do quite put a lot of things in place .hhh they listen and then
320	they say ok right if y- if you're not managing then obviously and those-a-
321	you know a-er-s-s- specialist services essentially not managing .hhh
322	brilliant ok so where are we looking at then d-d-d- .hhh i-it's (.) erm less
323	(.) errr (.) it's not done like that in different counties so w-w- so for
324	example if a child was permexed in [redacted] .hhh then actually it
325	becomes sort of SEN services job to try and wrangle go and talk to
326	schools and things but it's not massively overt i-it tends to be behind
327	closed doors and sometimes erm (.) yeah it's not as transparent .hhh
328	erm but erm as I say the services differ d- m-asin what's available to put
329	in place.- [redacted] actually .hh have got one of the highest exclusion
330	rates in the coun- permanent exclusion rates in the country .hh as a
331	county erm so they are changing their services rapidly trying to work out
332	how they respond to that? So it's a- it's a complete moveable feast you
333	know you might get money thrown at you in one school I mean all of our
334	schools in [redacted] it's there 12 of them are really right at the kind of
335	[redacted] side of the county so they're spread a bit but they're this end
336	.hhh and there's no provis- there's no- at the moment there's no s- sort of
337	der- erm (.) cabins or whatever you wanna call them like speciali- primary

338   specialist provisions they're a- like the nearest might be [redacted] or
339   [redacted] erm miles away or whatever [redacted] (.) erm s-i- so
340   geography makes a difference as in how far it is to the nearest specialist
341   provision, .hhh funding or the model they've set up so in the [redacted] of
342   the county in [redacted] they used to have an access and inclusion
343   team.-which would be kind of if you're gunna get excluded we'll help .hh
344   that didn't exist in the south but now they're trying to move that model
345   down, .hh [redacted] (.) [redacted] sort of a (.) inless you agree to take
346   that child to the PRU (.) for a little while i- there's nothing available and
347   actually we've had some really de- very very difficult experiences with the
348   PRU there.- erm so it's erm (.) an incredibly mixed picture.
349 INT: Yeah yeah that's really interesting and- it just it's yeah so iguess er one
350   of the questions which is a little bit further down my list actually but I'll
351   come to it now is (.) so we've spoken just a little bit there about the role
352   of the kind of bigger systems or the wider systems not bigger systems
353   but those kind of wider systems erm and and the geographical nature of
354   it as well and erm and I guess so with all of that in mind what dyou think
355   is the role of the of the school or the trust in in that that process that kind
356   of exclusion process
357 RES: I mean I think (.) the role of the school is to (.) try the best they can to the
358   ne- the needs of all- all of their children including being .hh flexible, and
359   being sometimes imaginative, erm I think one of the things (.) I was
360   gunna say what frustrates me some- on a day to day basis obviously
361   there's a sort of lack of provision in the wider context but sometimes I
362   gen- I genuinely get a bit frustrated that (.) schools perhaps don't think oh
363   we could do something a bit differently here (.) and if that's not working
364   let's try and change it up a little bit.- now some of our schools do.-they're
365   brilliant at that. Absolutely brilliant but with 40 you're always gunna an-in-
366   a-a sort of (.) a differing because er- there're forty different heads or 30-
367   something different heads becase we've got execs but .hh and they've
368   got their different backgrounds and they come from.- so one of the things
369   we've been tryna do is get really (.) smart about just because you're a
370   good head in X type of school or X geographical area doesn't mean you
371   can just automatically be transferred to Y .hhh because you know I

372   probably wouldn't be erm the best person to put in a kind of leafy high

373   performing school because I'm used to working in areas where you've

374   basically just got to think on your feet like I got very very good very

375   quickly in .hh in kind of erm (.) duno what the word is sort of rapid risk

376   management you know just like chkchkchkchk right quickly let's just rick-

377   i-risk assess this work out what the answer in. and so some of our heads

378   are really kind of right let's look at this how do we change this up what do

379   we do whereas others I've sat in a meeting once and they were saying- I

380   said but okay if y- if you need to change that then just .hh have lunch at a

381   different ti- he could have lunch at a different time cause he's not in the

382   class so it doesn't- might be- yeah but he has school dinners (.) mmh

383   okay heh (h) but (.) you know they could keep it warm for him or they –

384   you could ask them to prepare something a little bit earlier or he could

385   have a different- you could-you know you could .hh we could pay for him

386   to have packed lu- .hh whate- like ch- ou-ar- now ar-I in the end er-i-a-I I I

387   I said I mean I'd order him a pizza per day if (h)necessary(h) .hh (h)

388   whatever we need to do to make this work(h) so I think at the school

389   level it's very person dependent it's context dependent .hh even the size

390   of the school makes a difference so I've got some of my most .hh

391   inclusive thinking head teachers are really limited by the fact they

392   physically have not even a cupboard where s- where somebody could

393   just go and sit and calm down.-it lit- you know they are so incredibly tight

394   for space.-old Victorian buildings where there's not even a kind of (.) a-

395   office where they can come in or what have you. (.) so that-they're limited

396   but I would say their job is to try and work with what they've got and try

397   and find ways to optimise everything they have and be a bit flexible. .hh

398   erm whilst making sure the quality of education for everybody (h)isn't

399   effected(h) hhh so that's a tough job.-er in terms of a trust I think (.) we're

400   working on the theory cause this is how we've set up is that actually if

401   people need support extra support so you know m-more than the local

402   authority services can offer because actually they're being reduced .hh

403   we have specialists so I have a senior leader an ex senior leaders from

404   primary schools who's also been executive .hh SENCO and SENCO. .hh

405   so she devises I've I've said run specialist provisions and- you know erm

406	leadership in mainstream special and er specialist in mainstream and
407	things so we advise on h- you know how to support and I think over time
408	it will be setting those helping set those joint standards and erm quality
409	assuring you know that everythings in place .hhh erm (.) and also I think
410	.hh one of the things it's interesting what I get asked a lot is (.) .hh can
411	we have speech and language therapists (.) can we have in house EPs,
412	yes I'd love one I've I could get the funding if (h) when you've finished
413	your training if you would like to come and work for us please let me
414	know (h) I've literally I've got them I've got- I've got the bidding process
415	for ac- for a- for a full time and a trainee EP for in house but actually I've
416	tried to be really really clear with schools that that is not just to come and
417	work with an individual child all the time cause what we'd like is i-if an EP
418	come and work- comes to work for us want to make sure they can do th-
419	the-the sort of full areas of of EPness you know you know the kind of the
420	strategic bit as well as just because actually local authorities are
421	statutorily responsible for some of that provision if you need a speech
422	and language therapist for an individual child (h)they're legally
423	responsible for providing that?(H) so I don't think it's fair to use public
424	money to just do what actually local authorities are sta- statutorily
425	supposed to do? But what actually an EP and I and my team try to do is
426	make sure that those statutory things do happen and that we erm u-use
427	our services to really optimise how that's im-implemented and ac- .hh so
428	if they've got a child that's got you know er- speech and language is a
429	good example- concerns .hh they're having tha-that input b- but actually
430	there are other people in school that are trained and the whole school is
431	trained to make sure that that the-the- curriculum that the language rich
432	sort of .hh erm (.) planning and everything happens so that child and
433	another 20 children who have got that kinda lower level .hh erm need .hh
434	w-their needs are met.- so I think it's that tension between often people
435	just go oh well just cut the LA completely you may as well they're rubbish
436	anyway-no they're not actually some people do some really really good
437	work but sometimes it requires us to help schools insist upon high quality
438	and the right you know the right provision.- .hhh erm I once got told erm
439	(.) well no there isn't a replacement for that speech and language

440		therapist er maternity leave well why not well because no one
441		complained so they just thought it wasn't needed (.) say what heh so part
442		of our- part of our job is trying to make sure (.) what happens should
443		happen and then actually getting the provision the strategic provision to
444		make sure it's not just a one off that actually helps you know ongoing
445	INT:	yeah yeah it's so interesting. I'm enjoying listening to you erm (.) okay so
446		in terms of I'm just loo- having a look at my questions
447	RES:	[indeterminable it's fine
448	INT:	aheheheh erm (.) I think you've spoken- you've already spoken about
449		this (.) erm quite a lot actually but I will ask it to make sure just incase
450		there's anything in-a-in addition .hh erm but what do you think in in your
451		opinion is the best way to approach kind of the the process of disciplinary
452		school exclusion or within you know within your role. Does that question
453		make sense
454	RES:	yeah er think so i- for my role it is (.) erm over time it's being clear so
455		getting schools to be clear (.) what their behaviour policy? Their
456		approach not policy as in the piece of paper [indeterminable] but .hh
457		secondary but what their approach is .hhh how that's communicated how
458		does that work in practice how do they keep erm working on that cause
459		it's not a one off we've written that now and we've told people how is that
460		embedded. And if you know we're all in agreement that it's the right thing
461		and that we've all worked together to say that that's how it was th-that it's
462		followed and how that is then followed so .hh if for example a child is
463		excluded (.) the expectation at a trust level and that's filtering through to
464		schools and the vast majority of schools in fact I'd say all bar a couple
465		.hh this is absolutely systematic .hhh when they return from an exclusion
466		you look at their plan or you c- if it's a one off because accidentally you
467		know whatever s- sometimes you know people are excluded because
468		something .hh out of the blue you'd never saw happening happened .hhh
469		erm rarely though.- but actually look at the plan and say okay how- how
470		are we going to erm (.) ensure this doesn't happen- try and help that you
471		know this just doesn't happen again one o- when I talk to all of our heads
472		and I speak to them really regularly and I I'd say I've probably said this
473		said this to most is we can't just rely on people's self-discipline. So just

474   having a chat about well don't do that again is not good enough. Change

475   something or put something in place or discuss you know how

476   something's guna work better .hh to mean that this doesn't keep

477   repeating itself the definition of insanity and all that. Don't just keep doing

478   the same thing and expecting a different outcome .hh erm so that's

479   slowly getting through to our you know th-that message is with most of

480   our heads erm not all thought and when there's only one or two of you

481   and there's 40 schools heheh it's i-and there's all lots of different

482   messages going in I'd say that's inconsistent erm so we're trying to find

483   different ways of making it more consistent so one of the things is erm

484   we're guna have exclusion meetings as in I'm going to be meeting with a

485   head over the next you know years where you know actually I'm

486   monitoring exclusions and then they have to come and chat to me about

487   what the process is and we talk through those erm processes and how

488   can we do it differently what can we do to help how's that gunna work

489   .hhh erm and similarly .hh because the goal can't just be keeping

490   exclusions down it's not about the exclusion it's about the behaviours an-

491   and the kinda needs being met so I for example worked with one school

492   really intensively and exclusions went down exponentially .hhh so h- I

493   then had to spent the time monitoring that the behaviour wasn't just

494   happening in school and they were just not excluding for it? We had to

495   then make sure (.) so speaking to my colleagues who work in the in kind

496   of the policy of education team and and erm other colleagues an-and

497   speaking to the school and staff about are you seeing behaviours that

498   just are erm continuing to happen no because actually the conversations

499   that were happening instead have helped reduce the behaviours (.) but

500   you can't just assume cause there's no exclusions behaviour's fine heh

501   so part of that is monitoring that as well? So .hh simple answer (.) trying

502   to get a more consistent approach, (.) but embedding what we believe

503   about actually meeting needs, making sure we're monitoring plans in

504   place and structures in place to support young people who are struggling

505   if you're getting repeated exclusions we want to know why and look at

506   that and then also look at the .hhh the erm as a as a as a joint team the

507   education and inclusion safeguarding team looking at the at the

508		behaviour of everybody to make sure that we're catching it lower? The
509		universal approach to it .hh erm (.) cause all of the things I think when
510		.hhh (.) hhh. We talk about behaviour often a-so when we do the tom
511		bennet training (.) it was really interesting and it was all about in class
512		low level how you get good listening good concentration all of those
513		things but when it came to the q and a after (.) person said what do you
514		do if a child's biting-no spitting it was spitting cause of covid spitting and
515		it was really interesting because he did at no point touched on what I
516		would call higher level behaviours he was talking about .hhh erm (.) what
517		I believe is actually you get fewer behaviours if you sort out everything
518		early? You get into those you know people train people into those .hhh
519		erm what's the expectations are and an-and knowing how to succeed
520		earlier (.) but people still focus on the kind of one or two erm forgetting
521		that there'll be fewer one or two high level if actually you get this bit here
522		right so that's where w-we're trying to focus now and I think probably
523		when (.) historically (.) I think it was necessary but I just think it's (.) it
524		would in-in my ideal be the wrong way the other way round we focussed
525		on the high level behaviour and tried to make sure that was kind of
526		managed .hhh and theref- and therefore people thing behaviours great
527		and you're like (h)no heheh cause actually ninety nine percent is this bit
528		here an- so yes on- ongoing it will be the focus on the ninety nine
529		percent we'll still always help with the one percent and we'll still always
530		do that but the training and the conversations and the .hhh what we put
531		on as a whole trust training would be around the ninety nine percent
532	INT:	yeah yeah and that's interesting cause actually in the data erm across
533		the country the most common reason for exclusion is persistent
534		disruptive behaviour so I that's really interesting
535	RES:	[ye- and
536		if you don't know so I think amid fascinated by this that in really like in
537		really decent schools so you know on paper outstanding or whatever and
538		actually you walk in and they're lovely but they're having a really difficult
539		time with class 4 for example year 4 is always the one .hhh you're having
540		a really difficult time with year 4 and you observe year 4 and think okay
541		but I don't know what you want from them like I know what you wan- the

542   job you want them to do I know what task I know what work you want

543   them to do but I don't now what behaviours or erm (.) conduct is probably

544   a better way of looking at it I don't know what you want from them I don't

545   know what your .hhh like he's slouching on his chair or rocking on his

546   chair or he's just got up and moved around right I don't know if they're

547   allowed to do that in that class or not cause you've not been overt about

548   it erm and so I think that's definitely the (.) it's interesting because tom

549   bennett a-you know erm it's not like erm oh I love everything he does I

550   love you know and I and I really believe in quite a lot of the things he said

551   not all of them like most behaviour specialists or people repor-reporting

552   to be I don't think there's anyone where you go yeah what he said e-

553   everythings a y-y- you know it's a .hh a really divisive topic .hhh erm but

554   actually he's been really attacked in the media and one of my colleagues

555   erm who runs another MAT .hhh was talking about something to do with

556   he was talking about and he got really very strongly attacked on twitter

557   and he wasn't suggesting anything absurd it's just that peoples fear is

558   that you're suddenly guna get really dict- and you never let them go to

559   the toilet and you never this and you never that no like I was once

560   described as cause I was always an outstanding teacher and al-in the

561   end therefore ended up because I enjoyed it so nobody el- people didn't

562   so I ended up with the classes where everybody else was really

563   struggling or they'd got the children that had been permanently excluded

564   or whatever .hhh so even when I was a classroom teacher I always had

565   the most difficult classes (.) and I was once described as like a

566   magnanimous dictator which I thought was so harsh but the m- (h)over

567   the years(h) I've thought mmmh I- probably right like I'm super nice about

568   it (.) but you but im really clear the behaviours I expect to see-nobody

569   criticises somebody else when it's their turn to talk nobody talks over

570   somebody when it's not their turn to talk .hhh that you know you le-

571   nobody laughes at anybody if they don't get it righ- you know .hhh really

572   cle- and I was really clear.- I used to say I've only got w- two rules one is

573   (.) don't rock on your chair or whatever e- and two is (h) whatever else w-

574   heheh and actually id got about a million rules but we trained them into it

575   .hhh but you see that less actually because and I'm imagining it's

576		because people feel like they can't waste time on .hhh erm the conduct
577		the learning behaviours because they've gotta get through .hhh you
578		know it used to be they believed they've only gotta do English and maths
579		cause ofsted wanted it an now of course tha- it was never the case but
580		it's really clear that it was never the case .hh but actually we care about
581		all of the different subjects English maths science erm pe art dance all of
582		those .hhh so people feel like this pressure to get through everything we
583		can't waste time on talking about how people should behave yeah you
584		can you have to spend to save and my colleague [redacted] who's the
585		head of educa- the director of education .hh she- and she's obviously the
586		one driving you know the curriculum and all that- she believes you should
587		spend time on (.) y-you know so it's not- it's not like .hh inclusion and
588		safeguarding are coming at different e- inclusion and education are
589		coming at things from different.- no we believe that actually you spend ti-
590		even if at the beginning of your lesson you have to reiterate and how do
591		we know we're listening how do we know that we're being kind to people
592		how do we know that we're showing respect to people when they're
593		talking because that really bugs me when people talk about respect
594		when w- we don't actually know what that means in practice and things
595		like that .hhh so (.) yeah I would say like you say that's the the- in this
596		trust I would say most people aren't excluded for low level behavio- er-
597		low level di- it's it's for things have escalated but they probably weren't
598		caught earlier in- early enough in some circumstances (.) and therefore
599		things did escalate out of control (.) when they didn't need to
600	INT:	mmm yeah it's interesting. Im conscious of time but there's one question
601		I'm desperate to ask you because erm earlier on- earlier- I think right at
602		the beginning of our conversation you mentioned something about there
603		may be an occasion where an exclusion might be needed erm but that in
604		your view actually if you're doing everything right beforehand then it
605		shouldn't be necessary so I guess I was wondering what might happen if
606		sch- if exclusion just wasn't an option it didn't exist
607	RES:	erm (.) w- in a sort of dystopian .hh type of w-
608	INT:	[yeah heheheheh]

609	RES:	erm (.) you'd well you'd have (.)
610		a significant turnover of staff (.) you'd have unions going absolutely (h)
611		mad heh because in those really rare cases a- I don- I don't think it is a
612		blon- blanket you shouldn't have to exclude if you're doing everything
613		right.- sometimes and particularly in when you've got a limited provision a
614		specialist provision so we've got a number of children where the local
615		authority have said you're right they should go to a special school but (.)
616		now we're going to start as a trust trying to open specialist provisions (.)
617		so [indeterminable] mitigate that but in the meantime-but even then
618		you're not necessarily just going to be able to move people around a-
619		you know it won't always work like that .hhh but actually if you've got as
620		an example two or three of our pupils at the moment (.) they're coming in
621		and often home life is challenging and things are chaotic often and so
622		come in perhaps heightened and school will do what they've got written
623		down you know they were gunna d-go and play football with them
624		outside or they'll do some cooking with them or s- play some lego or go
625		and do X Y and Z. .hhh but can't get this young person because they
626		were at home when some domestic violence happened the night before
627		and all this kind of stuff and they're kicking punching hitting spitting biting
628		shoving hair pulling doing those things if there's no way of stopping that
629		and the answer isn't we're guna have to ring and get mum to collect you
630		becau- y- an-ye-o-or or get mum to calm you down and then see what
631		we can do and if that doesn't work cause .hhh we've got two
632		circumstances where when parents come in to try and calm them down it
633		continues and they get punched and they get (h) kicked in the
634		[indeterminable](h) so we have to find different solutions but if it didn't
635		exist erm (.) erm you'd get head teachers quitting and staff quitting and y-
636		people would be injured there'd be a-a-a safety issue and that's from
637		somebody who (h)genuinely believes(h) in the vast majority of cases we
638		shouldn't have to exclude and hasn't ever really have to- had to exclude
639		particularly in their life .hhh so (.) even I believe if the if itdidn't (.) if they
640		couldn't legally exclude erm you would find yeah dangerous situations

641 INT: Mmh a-and that's interesting actually because I've just remembered as
642   well that earlier you said sometimes that space and time is needed to
643   think right well what can we- what is the plan what can we do
644 RES: [yeah yeah yeah yea]
645 INT: erm yeah that's really interesting
646 RES: [cause (.) cause you might for example say okay we
647   haven't got any staff we've like we've literally run out of staff or that
648   member of staff's just got injured we can't put- they-they are literally now
649   saying (.) I can't- I can't work with him a-I you know've gone off sick or
650   whatever you've gotta find somebody else you've gotta move somebody
651   else you've gotta move something else there're gunna be times when
652   you actually physically need .hh time to-to get a better solution because if
653   you bring that child up you're setting-back in th-the next day you're
654   setting them up to fail (.) because if- like you said if you just bring them
655   back in and expect a different outcomes mm? good luck. Erm so I think it
656   is (.) it is a necessity yeah that I would like to see rarely used but
657   sometime- like we have genuinely got four children across the trust who
658   are .hh are doing those behaviours .hhh and we're tryina-yn- end up
659   reducing time down but what we're finding is in one of the circumstances
660   mum n- mum's saying no I don't wanna be on a reduced timetable
661   because actually I want him excluded so that he gets to go to special
662   school. .hhh and you're like okay but (.) hhh. .hh how do we keep staff
663   safe how do we keep pupils safe how do we keep everybody safe .hhh
664   erm I think it's -a-i- in general I believe exclusions are about safety not
665   punishment like it th- if you just think ah I'll exclude you well good luck
666   with that (.)
667 INT:
668   mmmh yeah
669 RES: cause .hhh not least because in lots of circumstances A so the
670   little on-er-a- an example I'm not suggesting this is a real example .hhh
671   erm you know little ones seen significant domestic violence .hhh and
672   wants to be there to protect mum so you exclude happy days he feels
673   like he's protecting mum .hh you've just put him back in a dangerous (h)
674   situation though so heh thanks for that (h) but actually (.) so if you're

675	doing it as a punishment you're not getting anywhere (.) erm (.) and
676	there's a lot of rese- you know there's a lot of research you'll know better
677	than me but there's a lot of research to suggest that erm exclusions as a
678	pure consequence cause and effect doesn'- don't work we wouldn't have
679	prisons full of people that (h) reoffend if they if it worked(h) but in terms of
680	safety (.) we've even had situations where social care have said but
681	you've said we think they're unsafe how can you exclude do you think
682	they're unsafe well I think they're better at school then you need to do
683	your job because actually you can't just expect school to .hhh erm put
684	themselves in danger and other pupils in danger and actually that child at
685	that point .hh in danger because it's not guna take long before another
686	pupil just goes um-ar-I've had enough of this .hhh you know fight back (.)
687	erm (.) because social care are struggling and don't wanna do this X Y
688	and Z there's a-there's a lot of interactions between different services
689	that mean erm (.) pressures put on schools (.) that actually me- th-wha-
690	I'v-h-I was working with a school the other day and w-a-h and walked
691	through where they were at where this l- young person should be at
692	special school ev- literally everybody the people who w- who administer
693	their EHCP, .hhh the specialist SEND advisers, .hhh the school so
694	everybody else social care everybody said n-you know he needs to be in
695	special school but you're doing so well with him that the provision is that
696	the h- the headteacher or [senior] is with him at all times as well as two
697	members of staff.- that's just not viable longer term and people are still
698	getting injured and actually I-I've said unfortunately you need to be really
699	clear with social care don't just do it randomly talk it through with them
700	that this is what's going to happen when this happens and this is the
701	really really li- I talk about granular detail plans.- you know how you
702	speak to people how-a you know tone you use with some children like
703	sometimes we get down to that kinda level of detail .hhh but if this still
704	gets to X point we will have to exclude we will ring you .hh and you'll
705	need to make sure- and we'll do a ho- alive and well check you know we
706	need to have this in place and sometimes that forces the hand of (.) other
707	agencies which is terrible we shouldn't really be in that position (.)

708	INT:	It's complex though isn't it [indeterminable] complex systems complex
709		lives
710	RES:	yeah quite. .hhh you know i-I'm quite proud of our- well not proud of our
711		exclusion rates this year in fixed term but in general they were much
712		lower than the national and I'm proud that we've not had to permanently
713		exclude I believe in (.) hhh. Like I think (.) when I erm so when I ran the
714		specialist provision I then took over the main school kinda SEND and we
715		had a little one in he was very little actually even though [indeterminable]
716		who had no issues there wasn't he never even had like a sort of
717		detention in year 7 but year 8 his behaviour escalated to the point of
718		where he was at risk of permanent exclusion .hhh erm and-and it was to
719		do with domestic violence and home and lots of different things.- erm but
720		it was so- his behaviour was so extreme and he had attachments like he
721		didn- in the end I kind of erm took him under my wing slightly .hhh erm
722		and if I went to a meeting he would do anything and I mean anything I
723		mean I got called out of a meeting once because he'd crawled into the
724		ceiling and was setting fire in the ceiling (.) and so a- and we still didn't
725		permenantly excl- we didn't permanently exclude because what we
726		needed is somebody who pushed and pushed and pushed and we
727		managed to get his EHCP through in record time and it went straight
728		from no EHCP to an out of county special school .hhh and he went to his
729		out of county special school and I know from his siblings that he did
730		really well and he joined the army and he's really made a good life for
731		himself which is brilliant so I then (.) in a sort of if I've managed it heh
732		heh (h) you can manage-you can manage it(h) .hhh so actually I believe
733		if we permex nobody's advocating for those children and school are
734		unfortunately left as being the people advocating for those children even
735		if they could yes theoretically permanently exclude .hhh erm (.) but (.) if
736		you make it widely known that you just won't permanently exclude or
737		you'll try everything possibly not to permanently exclude .hhh erm people
738		take advantage of that like there are you know p- authorities and things
739		are like of you know you always do brilliantly with .hhh no but now's the
740		time when I'm gunna say no and then you get the support.

741   INT: (long pause!!) hmhm no that's but that's absolutely fab s-w-I'm gunna-

742   unless there's anything else you're- I'm just conscious of time- unless

743   there's anything else you wanted to add

744   RES: no if there's anything else you want to ask please do I don't mind

745   INT: heh I think

746   END OF INTERVIEW

Appendix L: Frameworks for Analysis

Table 7.4: Willig's (2013) six stages of Foucauldian Discourse Analysis

1. Discursive Constructions	How is the discursive object constructed through language? What type of object is being constructed?
2. Wider Discourses	What discourses are drawn upon? What is their relationship to one another?
3. Action Orientation	What do the constructions achieve? What is gained from deploying them here? What are their functions? What is the author doing here?
4. Subject Positions	What subject positions are made available by these constructions?
5. Practice	What possibilities for action are mapped out by these constructions? What can be said and done from within these subject positions?
6. Subjectivities	What can potentially be felt, thought and experienced from the available subject positions?

Table 7.5: Parker's (1992) 20 steps to 'discovering' discourses in post-structural discourse analysis

Step	Description (Parker, 1992)
1	Treating our objects of study as texts which are described, put into words
2	Exploring connotations through some sort of free association, best done with other people
3	Asking what objects are referred to, and describing them
4	Talking about the talk as if it were an object, a discourse
5	Specifying what types of person are talked about in this discourse, some of which may already have been identified as objects.
6	Speculating about what they can say in the discourse, what you could say if you identified with them (what rights to speak in that way of speaking)
7	Mapping a picture of the world this discourse presents
8	Working out how a text using this discourse would deal with objections to the terminology
9	Setting contrasting ways of speaking, discourses, against each other and looking at the different objects they constitute

10	Identifying points where they overlap, where they constitute what look like the 'same' objects in different ways
11	Referring to other texts to elaborate the discourse as it occurs, perhaps implicitly, and addresses different audiences
12	Reflecting on the term used to describe the discourse, as matter which involves moral/political choices on the part of the analyst
13	Looking at how and where the discourses emerged
14	Describing how they have changed, and told a story, usually about how they refer to things which were always there to be discovered
15	Identifying institutions which are reinforced when this or that discourse is used
16	Identifying institutions that are attacked of subverted when this or that discourse appears
17	Looking at which categories of person gain and lose from the employment of the discourse
18	Looking at who would want to promote and who would want to dissolve the discourse
19	Showing how a discourse connects with other discourses which sanction oppression

20	Showing how the discourses allow dominant groups to tell their narratives about the past in order to justify the present, and prevent those who use subjugated discourse from making history

Figure 7.6: Example of coding using NVivo prior to organising codes

Appendix N: The identification of objects in analysis

Table 7.6: Objects emerging from initial stages of analysis

| Exclusion: Selection of key objects initially identified (Parker step 3) |
|---|
| - A process
- A tool
- An option
- A last resort
- A message (to community, to child, to other children)
- A weapon
- Something in control of itself – a treadmill, a cycle, automatic
- A boundary / edge / verge / brink
- A lever
- A safety measure, protective
- A consequence / sanction / punishment
- As distinct to a school move, being off site or managed move
- Should be prevented – not a good thing
- A destination
- Necessary
- A highlighter - Highlights the level of need
- A risk
- A solution when cannot meet need |

After re-reading transcripts and exploring descriptions of the objects against excerpts, objects were redefined, removed and any new objects were noted:

Objects that remained:		
- A weapon - As protection		
Objects that changed focus	**Changed focus by:**	**Outcome:**
A process A tool An option A last resort As distinctive As necessary	These objects reflected a process or tool either reflecting a punishment or a protective measure. Therefore, these objects changed focus to reflect exclusion as protection or as a punishment.	Combined under 'exclusion as protection' or 'exclusion as punishment'
A consequence / sanction / punishment A message	I considered these objects to reflect an over-arching construction of	Combined and renamed: A punishment

	disciplinary school exclusion as something to respond to certain behaviours or actions and as having a disciplinary function, therefore, I combined these objects and identified the new object as a punishment	
A risk Should be prevented – not a good thing In control of itself A destination	I considered these objects to the construction of exclusion as a bad thing.	Combined under 'exclusion as a bad thing'
A solution A highlighter A lever	These objects seemed to reflect a construction of exclusion as a solution when a child has additional needs that could not be met in mainstream. Again, these objects reflected a solution as a a protective measure. Therefore, these objects changed focus to reflect exclusion as protection.	Combined with 'exclusion as protection'
A boundary Edge Verge Brink	These objects seemed to reflect constructions of the child as opposed to exclusion	Removed

Figure 7.7: Example of early development of concept maps
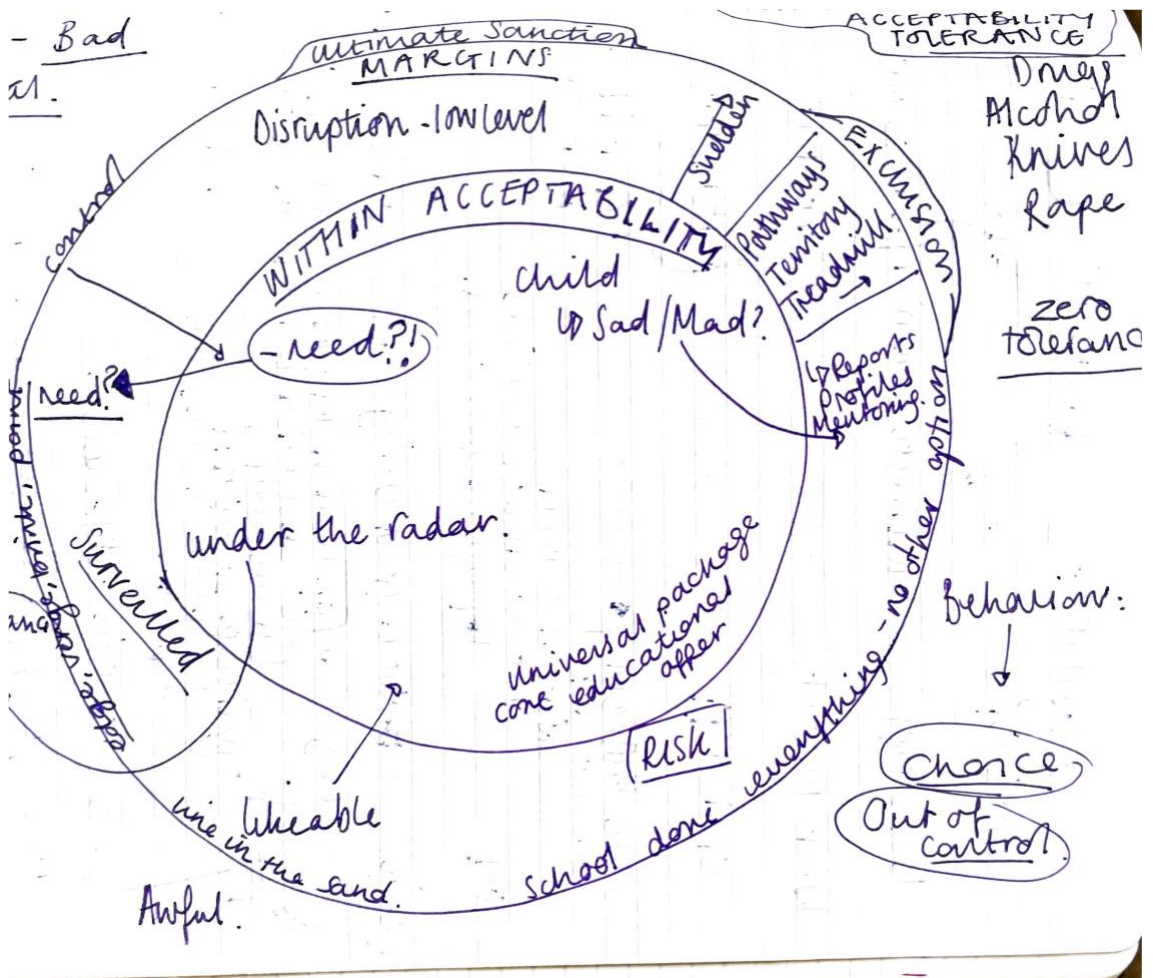
Appendix P: Description of Elements of Trustworthiness

Table 7.7: Description of elements of trustworthiness (Ary et al., 2017)

Construct	Description
Credibility	The amount to which the findings of the study represent the realities of the research participants
Transferability	The extent to which findings generated can be applied to other contexts or groups
Dependability	The extent to which variability in the findings can be understood and explained.
Confirmability	The extent to which the research is neutral and free from bias in the procedure, analysis and interpretations.