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Nottingham
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School of Psychology

School Staff's Viewpoints of Supervision: A Q-Methodological Study

Thesis submitted to the University of Nottingham for the degree of
Doctor of Applied Educational Psychology (Professional Training)

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May 2021

Word count: 40,561

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Key Abbreviations

The following abbreviations have been used multiple times at various points throughout the thesis:

BPS	British Psychological Society
CYP	Children and Young People
DfE	Department for Education
DfES	Department for Education and Skills
DoES	Department of Education and Science
DoH	Department of Health
DSL	Designated Safeguarding Lead
ECM	Every Child Matters
ELSA	Emotional Literacy Support Assistant
EP	Educational Psychologist
EPS	Educational Psychology Service
HCPC	Health and Care Professions Council
LA	Local Authority
SEMH	Social, Emotional and Mental Health
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SENCo	Special Educational Needs Coordinator
SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
OFSTED	Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills
TA	Teaching Assistant
TEP	Trainee Educational Psychologist
TWI	Teacher Wellbeing Index

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank, and show my appreciation to, a number of people who have supported me in the undertaking of this research and the doctorate programme more generally:

- To the school staff who took part in this research - I cannot thank you enough for giving up your time during what has been an incredibly busy year for those working in schools.
- To my placement supervisor and host Educational Psychology Service (EPS), for your ongoing guidance and support with this research as well as my training experience and professional development.
- To my wider Local Authority (LA) colleagues, for supporting with this research and sharing my interest and passion for this area.
- To Dr Nathan Lambert, and the wider tutor team, for your ongoing support, advice and encouragement across the past three years.
- To Cohort 13, for your friendship, laughter and ongoing support. I cannot imagine going through this experience without you all.
- To Matt and Issy, our Q peer supervision sessions have been a huge source of support throughout the research process.
- To my family, especially my parents, for your unconditional love, support and belief in me.
- To Teejay, for your unwavering patience, love and optimism.
- To my friends, for your patience while I have not been around. A special thanks to Catherine for your support in so many ways.

Abstract

Both the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people (CYP) (Department of Health (DoH) & Department for Education (DfE), 2017), and the wellbeing of school staff (DfE, 2019) are current government priorities, thus, the provision of *supervision* for school staff appears to be of increasing importance. Yet while supervision is compulsory for many professionals working with children and young people (CYP) it is largely uncommon in schools (Briggs, 2020). Indeed, the most recent *Teacher Wellbeing Index* (Education Support, 2020) found that only 8% of school staff surveyed currently accessed supervision.

Barriers relating to terminology (Soni, 2019; Steel, 2001) and potential associated connotations (Kennedy & Laverick, 2019), suggest low uptake may be in part related to perceptions of supervision. Therefore, it seems that more needs to be understood about how school staff construe supervision.

Q-methodology was utilised to explore the holistic viewpoints of school staff regarding supervision. Twenty one school staff working in a range of roles and settings, with varying experiences of supervision, completed an online Q-sort activity and a post-sort questionnaire.

Two *Viewpoints* were identified within the sample. These were described as:

1. ‘Achievable and Necessary: Quality Supervision Benefits the Whole-School System’
2. ‘Cautious Optimism: To be Successful Supervision Must be Clearly Defined, Embedded, Safe, Optional and Responsive’

Key implications of the research include reiterating the need to avoid a ‘one-size-fits’ all approach to supervision and the need to develop a shared understanding of supervision and a *culture of supervision* in schools. It is argued that the findings have potential implications for the Educational Psychologist (EP) role suggesting that EPs may be well placed to contribute at a systems level to facilitate access and engagement with supervision.

The use of Q-methodology in answering the research question is discussed, strengths and limitations of the research are identified and suggestions for future research considered.

1 Introduction

1.1 Research Focus

The current research aims to explore the viewpoints of school staff regarding the topic of supervision.

The mental health and wellbeing of children and young people (CYP) and of school staff are current government priorities within the UK (for example, Department for Education (DfE), 2018; DfE, 2019). Further, a link has been demonstrated between staff wellbeing and outcomes for CYP (Rae et al., 2017). Supervision, while commonplace for many professionals working with CYP, is largely absent within schools (Carroll et al., 2020). Despite recognition of its potential benefits for school staff amongst Educational Psychologists (EPs) (for example, Bartle & Trevis, 2015; Rae et al., 2017; Soni, 2015) and other professionals (for example, Barnardo's, 2020) it is reported that as few as 8% of school staff are receiving supervision (Education Support, 2020). In light of the Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic, it has been suggested that supervision for staff is more relevant than ever (Ellis & Wolfe, 2020) and the potential impact of the pandemic on school staff has been noted (Education Support, 2020).

In order to understand this current low uptake of supervision in educational settings, the researcher argues the importance of exploring the perceptions of school staff. Barriers to supervision identified within the existing literature suggest that how school staff construe supervision may be a key factor in uptake. It is argued that there is a gap within the existing research as to the shared viewpoints which school staff may hold in relation to supervision. Therefore, this research aims to make a unique contribution by utilising Q-methodology to explore the holistic viewpoints regarding supervision held by school staff, working in a range of roles and settings, with varying experience of supervision.

1.2 Professional and Personal Motivations for the Current Research

Prior to commencing the Educational Psychology training course, one of the researcher's previous roles was working as an academic learning mentor at a mainstream secondary school. While undertaking this role, the researcher developed a passion for supporting CYP's social, emotional, and mental health (SEMH) needs and

their holistic wellbeing. Subsequently, upon starting the Educational Psychology training doctorate, the researcher began to access regular supervision and saw how integral this was to their role as a Trainee Educational Psychologist (TEP) and to her own holistic wellbeing. This led the researcher to reflect on the potential that supervision could have for school staff.

In her previous role, the researcher accessed fortnightly ‘support sessions’ with the deputy head. However, on reflection, there was something subtly different about those ‘support sessions’ and the professional supervision accessed as a TEP. Further, the researcher reflected upon how the nature of the work in their previous role often impacted upon their own wellbeing and reflected upon how accessing supervision might have supported them to do a more effective job for the CYP in their care.

As part of her role as a TEP, the researcher engaged in discussions with a head teacher in one of their link primary schools regarding setting up and delivering staff supervision. Preparation for this work necessitated the researcher to engage more fully with the literature around supervision and its application in schools. The present research developed from that undertaking, and the researcher’s previous interest and experiences in the area.

1.3 Overview of Thesis

The thesis is organised into the following chapters:

- Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter sets out the context for the research by focusing on wellbeing, the current national context, links between pupil and staff wellbeing, before the focus then turns to supervision. Definitions, functions, models and formats of supervision are discussed and the potential of supervision for staff outlined. A systematic literature review critically analyses research regarding school staff’s views of supervision highlighting the rationale for the current research.

- Chapter 3: Methodology

This chapter describes key features of Q-methodology and its epistemological foundations, and presents a rationale for its use here, considering strengths and limitations. An overview of the procedure for Q-methodology is presented,

followed by detailed procedure for this Q-study. Ethical considerations and alternative methodologies are discussed.

- Chapter 4: Results

This chapter presents the procedure for, and results of, the factor analysis before outlining the qualitative factor interpretation process which turns factors to viewpoints. Interpretations of the viewpoints are presented.

- Chapter 5: Discussion

This final chapter reflects on the appropriateness of Q-methodology in answering the research question by applying qualitative quality indicators. Findings are discussed in the context of existing literature and implications for practice and future research are presented. Final conclusions are drawn considering the unique contribution made.

2 Literature Review

The aim of this chapter is to critically review the existing research in this area and provide a rationale for the current research.

Given that supervision is identified as one way in which EPs can support the wellbeing of school staff (for example, Ellis, 2012) the chapter begins by defining wellbeing, considering wellbeing in the context of CYP and the role school staff play in supporting pupil wellbeing, and highlights links between pupil and staff wellbeing. Staff wellbeing is then discussed in the context of the UK education system and with reference to Hochschild's (2003) emotional labour theory, Bandura's (1977) self-efficacy theory and Weiner's (1979) attribution theory. Definitions, functions, models and formats of supervision are discussed, before focus turns to the potential of supervision for supporting the wellbeing of school staff. The consultation-related literature is briefly presented - given the similarities of some types of school-based consultation with supervision - before the chapter focuses explicitly on supervision and why school staff's views are in need of exploration. Finally, a systematic literature review exploring current research into the views of school staff towards supervision is presented. From here, the rationale for the current research is set out.

2.1 Mental Health and Wellbeing of Children and Young People

2.1.1 Defining Mental Health and Wellbeing

A lack of consensus exists as to an agreed definition of mental health (Manwell et al., 2015), though The World Health Organisation (WHO) (2018) helpfully define mental health as:

“A state of well-being in which an individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and is able to make a contribution to his or her community” (para.2).

While this definition goes beyond viewing mental health as primarily the absence of mental illness (WHO, 2018), it has been criticised for ignoring the role of culture and the wide range of human experience (Galderisi et al., 2015). Within the literature the terms mental health and wellbeing are often used synonymously (Huppert & Riggeri, 2018; Liddle & Carter, 2015) and this convergence of terms is evident

within the WHO's (2018) definition. Martino (2017) notes that understanding wellbeing is key to understanding mental health.

Two broad and distinctly different perspectives have traditionally informed definitions of wellbeing (Liddle & Carter, 2015; Springer & Hauser, 2006). The hedonic perspective, more recently termed subjective wellbeing (Liddle & Carter, 2015), claims that wellbeing is synonymous with happiness and encompasses life satisfaction and the balance between positive and negative affect (Ryan & Deci, 2001). The eudaimonic perspective, more recently termed psychological wellbeing (Liddle & Carter, 2015), argues that wellbeing comprises of factors including autonomy, mastery and personal growth (Ryff & Keyes, 1995). More recently there has been an acceptance amongst the research community that, in fact, these perspectives overlap and a holistic definition of wellbeing should encompass both perspectives (Keyes et al., 2002).

While there is no universally agreed definition of wellbeing (Mind, 2020), recent definitions appear to reflect this more holistic understanding, for example, the Department of Health (DoH) (2014) state that:

“Wellbeing is about feeling good and functioning well and comprises an individual's experience of their life; and a comparison of life circumstances with social norms and values” (p6).

It is also helpfully suggested by Mind (2020) that:

“Mental wellbeing doesn't have one set meaning. We might use it to talk about how we feel, how well we're coping with daily life or what feels possible at the moment” (p1).

It appears widely accepted that wellbeing influences many aspects of a CYP's development and life outcomes (Public Health England (PHE), 2015). Research suggests that positive wellbeing can increase CYP's resilience and ability to cope with stressors and adversity (PHE, 2015). Further, it has been suggested that mental wellbeing in early life may link with longer lasting impacts on mental wellbeing (PHE, 2015).

The current research predominately uses the term wellbeing except where referring to research which has explicitly used the term mental health.

2.1.2 Statistics on Children and Young People's Wellbeing

In considering international statistics, the UK is one of the countries with the lowest ranking of CYP's wellbeing (UNICEF, 2007), with Young Minds (2020) suggesting three children in every classroom have a mental health difficulty. The Children's Society (2021) suggest that this is likely to have increased to as many as five children in every classroom, with the most recent statistics suggesting that one in six 5-16 year olds are likely to experience a mental health difficulty. This could arguably be higher given suggestions that, often, CYP displaying more internalised behaviours may 'fall through the net' (Roffey, 2015). The *Good Childhood Report 2020* (The Children's Society, 2020) reports that based on the 2018 Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) data, the UK ranked lowest of 24 European countries for the proportion of CYP with high life satisfaction.

2.1.3 The National Context of Children and Young People's Wellbeing and the Role of School Staff

In light of such statistics, the UK government has shown a commitment to improving CYP's mental health and wellbeing over the past two decades, through the publication and promotion of various policies and initiatives (Annan & Moore, 2012). In doing so, schools have been identified as having a key role in supporting the holistic development of CYP and promoting wellbeing (Salter-Jones, 2012). Such initiatives include the *Every Child Matters Agenda* (ECM) (Department for Education & Skills (DfES), 2003) which identified five outcomes for CYP and promoted holistic development. Subsequently, the government promoted numerous whole-school wellbeing approaches including the *Primary National Strategy for Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning* (DfES, 2005), and *Targeted Mental Health in Schools* (Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF), 2008). In the most recent *Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice* (Department for Education & Department of Health, 2014) mental health has been incorporated as an area of special educational need (SEN) and publications including the *Green Paper* (DoH & DfE, 2017) and the *Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools* guidance (DfE, 2018) have continued to reiterate both the government's commitment to, and the role of school staff in, promoting CYP's mental health and wellbeing. This has been further reinforced by mental health services such as Children and Adolescent Mental Health

Services (CAMHS) (2009) identifying school staff as vital to the identification of and support for CYP's mental health and wellbeing.

2.1.4 The Link Between Pupil and Staff Wellbeing

A relationship between teacher wellbeing and outcomes for pupils has been demonstrated both nationally and internationally (Rae et al., 2017), suggesting that in considering student wellbeing, staff wellbeing must also be considered (Roffey, 2012). Briner and Dewberry (2007) measured the wellbeing of 24,100 staff working in UK primary and secondary schools on three dimensions: feeling valued, feeling overloaded and job enjoyment. Statistical analyses explored the relationship between teacher wellbeing and Statutory Assessment Test (SATs) data for primary-age students and percentages of pupils obtaining level five or above at each key stage for secondary students. Even when other factors related to pupil performance were controlled for, a correlation was found between teacher wellbeing and pupil performance on SATs. Such research suggests that teacher wellbeing must be considered if school staff are to develop positive and attuned relationships to support CYP's wellbeing (Van Petegem et al., 2007). More recently, Glazzard and Rose's (2019) qualitative study found that teachers perceived their wellbeing to affect their ability to perform their job. The study found that children were somewhat attuned to their teacher's moods and could tell when staff felt stressed. In addition, children felt they learnt more when their teacher was happy.

2.2 Mental Health and Wellbeing of School Staff

2.2.1 National Context of School Staff Wellbeing

Given that data would suggest attrition amongst the teaching profession in England is higher than in many other countries (Durksen & Klassen, 2012), it seems unsurprising that the DfE has had to consider its recruitment and retention strategy. *The Teacher Wellbeing Index's (TWI)* (Education Support, 2020) survey of 3034 educational professionals, including teachers, support staff and senior leaders, found that 53% had contemplated leaving the profession over the past two years due to the impact of their role on their wellbeing and health. One aspect of the government's recruitment and retention strategy included the development of an expert advisory group for staff wellbeing in England (DfE, 2019).

The government have since pledged to implement recommendations made by the advisory group including regularly measuring staff wellbeing (Gibb, 2020) and encouraging settings to show their commitment to staff wellbeing by signing up to a voluntary Education Staff Wellbeing Charter Mark (DfE, 2021). The charter mark includes 12 staff wellbeing pledges from the DfE and pledges from Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (OFSTED) (DfE, 2021). However, actions beyond this are unclear and a formal wellbeing policy for school staff is yet to be developed to the researcher's knowledge. The *TWI* (Education Support, 2020) reported that 62% of staff described themselves as stressed, with this increasing to 77% of senior leaders. Further, the *TWI* (Education Support, 2020) found that for the fourth consecutive year, school staff scored lower on wellbeing measures than other professions, and levels of stress rose between July and October 2020, suggesting a potential impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.

2.2.2 The Factors Impacting Staff Stress and Wellbeing

While Wood (2016) points out that stress experienced by school staff has been a continued narrative since the *Elton Report* (Department of Education and Science (DoES), 1986), and Sharrocks (2014) notes that not all staff will experience stress and negative wellbeing, the statistics suggest that staff wellbeing needs to be considered. In addition to the aforementioned policies which have extended the role of staff in schools to ensure a focus on the holistic needs of CYP, schools have had increasing pressure placed upon them to raise educational standards (Reid & Soan, 2019). Schools are required to follow a tightly prescribed National Curriculum (1988), maintain standards imposed by OFSTED (1992) and also withstand pressures of publicised league tables and performance-related pay (Reid & Soan, 2019). As a result, this political and legislative context appears to have created somewhat of a paradox for school staff.

There have also been suggestions that school staff are responding to an increasing complexity of need (Ellis & Wolfe, 2020). Reid and Soan (2019) argue that within the wider context of austerity in the UK, social issues which families are facing, and thus school staff are supporting, are increasingly complex. Linked to this, Roffey (2016) posits that many CYP across the UK have lived through adverse life experiences including trauma, poverty, abuse and family breakdown, which can influence learning and behaviour. Taken together, this suggests an increasing level of need and

vulnerability of CYP within schools in the UK (Reid & Soan, 2019; Roffey, 2016). While in the past CYP's challenging behaviour has been cited by school staff as a major reason for considering leaving the profession, the most recent *TWI* findings saw this decrease from 51% in 2019 to 39% in 2020 (Education Support, 2019; 2020).

2.2.3 Occupational Stress, Emotional Labour and Burnout

Hochschild's (2003) theory of emotional labour argues that individuals can feel under pressure to regulate their emotions, in order to display certain emotions at work, even when internal emotions may be incongruent with these. Teaching undoubtedly involves a high degree of emotional labour (Hargreaves, 2000).

Lee and Brotheridge (2011) distinguish between different responses to emotional labour in order to regulate emotions and reduce felt dissonance. Responses may be surface acting or deep acting (Lee & Brotheridge, 2011). Surface acting, refers to when an individual overtly displays emotions which they feel their work place expect, while suppressing or hiding their internal feelings (Lee & Brotheridge, 2011). Deep acting, on the other hand, refers to when effort is exerted to ensure the feelings felt are congruent with the emotions required (Lee & Brotheridge, 2011). Emotional labour has been shown to be associated with burnout (Kinman et al., 2011).

Burnout, defined as “a syndrome of emotional exhaustion and cynicism that occurs frequently among individuals who do ‘people-work’ of some kind” (Maslach & Jackson, 1981, p.1), has been described as comprising of three dimensions; emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation and lack of personal accomplishment (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). Grayson and Alvarez (2008) helpfully link each of these three dimensions to the role of staff working in schools. Emotional exhaustion, they posit, occurs when staff are unable to support students effectively due to stress and a sense of their emotional resources being depleted (Grayson & Alvarez, 2008). Depersonalisation occurs when staff develop negative attitudes towards pupils, which can lead to staff acting indifferently or distant with pupils (Grayson & Alvarez, 2008). Personal accomplishment is challenged when staff feel they are not supporting the CYP's achievements (Grayson & Alvarez, 2008).

2.2.4 Staff Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy was defined by Bandura (1977) as the belief in one's ability to complete an action to produce the intended outcomes. In Bandura's (1977) self-efficacy theory he suggested that a person's self-efficacy beliefs can impact on the motivation and effort they put into a task, the choices they will make and the perceived stress when completing a task. Friedman (2003) links the experience of burnout with self-efficacy, arguing that burnout is the breakdown of a person's professional self-efficacy.

Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2010) define teacher self-efficacy as "belief in their own ability to plan, organise and carry out activities that are required to attain given educational goals" (p1). Self-efficacy has been argued as important in protecting against teacher burnout (Schwarzer & Hallum, 2008). Brown (2012) conducted a systematic literature review exploring the link between self-efficacy and teacher burnout. Of the 11 studies which met the inclusion criteria, a negative relationship was demonstrated between self-efficacy and teacher burnout (Brown, 2012).

2.2.5 Staff Attributions

Research has also demonstrated a relationship between low teacher self-efficacy and external attributions regarding a student's difficulties (Gibbs & Miller, 2014). Attribution theory states that individuals will seek out causes in order to explain outcomes (Weiner, 2010) and Weiner (1979) argues that within schools, staff commonly ask attributional questions. Three dimensions of causality have been proposed within attributional theories; locus of control or causality (Rotter, 1966; Weiner, 1979), relating to whether the cause is internal or external to the individual, stability and controllability (Weiner, 1979).

Weiner (1979) links each dimension of causality to a psychological function. In the context of school staff, the locus of causality appears to be most relevant. Weiner (1979) links locus of causality with self-esteem. Miller (2003) found that challenging behaviour was more likely to be externally attributed by teachers, to be due to within child characteristics or outside of the teacher or school's control, when they felt unable to manage. Conversely teachers were more likely to make internal attributions regarding a CYP's behaviour when they were able to successfully intervene (Miller, 2003). This suggests that self-efficacy can impact the attributions made by teachers as to the cause

of challenging behaviour (Gibbs & Miller, 2014). This seems particularly important given that the attributions held by teachers are thought to have an impact on the relationships they have with CYP (Rae et al., 2017), as well as their intended and actual cognitive and emotional reactions to challenging behaviour (Poulou & Norwich, 2002).

2.2.6 The Educational Psychologist Role with Staff Wellbeing

It has been suggested that EPs have a role in supporting staff wellbeing in schools through validating the emotions of school staff as well as encouraging staff to prioritise their emotional wellbeing (Roffey, 2015). Further, as well as supporting staff to explore their perceptions and emotions, Higgins and Gulliford (2014) suggest that EPs are ideally placed to facilitate a number of professional development activities which may enhance feelings of self-efficacy.

Salter-Jones (2012) conducted interviews and focus groups with pupils and teachers in a secondary school recognised for their good wellbeing practice. They also sampled EPs and a behaviour consultant. Findings suggested staff wellbeing was supported by school initiatives which promoted communication, peer support and a work-life balance (Salter-Jones, 2012). While Sharrocks (2014) notes a conflicting narrative in the literature around the extent to which teachers will draw upon peer support due to the potential stigma associated with admitting feeling stressed, EPs are reported to be well placed to contribute to the development of systems of support within schools (Faulconbridge et al., 2017).

Gibbs and Miller (2014) argue that consultation can be offered by EPs to support staff to reflect, generate strategies and simultaneously increase their self-efficacy. In addition to consultation, however, it has also been argued that staff *supervision* and *supervision* groups can be facilitated by EPs as a way of supporting staff wellbeing (for example, Bartle & Trevis, 2015; Rae et al. 2017; Soni, 2015). The focus of the literature review will now turn to supervision.

2.3. Supervision

2.3.1 Definitions of Supervision

There is a lack of agreement when it comes to defining supervision, even within professions where it is common practice (Carroll et al., 2020). A number of definitions

have been posited, for example, Scaife (2001) and Carroll (2010). Hawkins and McMahon (2020) helpfully define supervision as:

A joint endeavour in which a practitioner, with the help of a supervisor, attends to their clients, themselves as part of their client-practitioner relationships and the wider systemic and ecological contexts, and by so doing improves the quality of their work, transforms their client relationships, continuously develops themselves, their practice and the wider profession (p.66).

Hawkins and McMahon (2020) highlight that the length and complexity of their definition mirrors the complexity of supervision, as it serves numerous people and multiple functions.

Hawkins and McMahon's (2020) definition will be adopted for the current research.

2.3.2 Functions of Supervision

Supervision has been suggested to serve a number of purposes including providing space for reflection (Scaife, 2001), improving the experiences of service users (Reid & Soan, 2019), supporting personal and professional development (Dunsmuir & Leadbetter, 2010) as well as providing containment to deal with emotional responses to the supervisee's work (Hulusi & Maggs, 2015). However, while supervision is a fundamental and compulsory activity for many working with CYP and their families, including EPs and more recently Early Years staff, it is yet to be mandatory in schools (Austin, 2010).

Despite a lack of consensus regarding an all-encompassing definition of supervision, particularly across professions, there does at least seem to be agreement that supervision is a complex process with many layers (Kaufman & Schwartz, 2004). Though their terminology differs slightly, Kadushin (1976), Proctor (1988) and Hawkins and Smith (2013) all propose that supervision serves three functions, as set out below in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1: A table to show the three functions of supervision - adapted from Hawkins and McMahon (2020).

Kadushin (1976)	Proctor (1988)	Hawkins and Smith (2013)	Focus
Educative	Formative	Developmental	Developing supervisee skill
Supportive	Restorative	Resourcing	Acknowledging and processing emotions
Managerial	Normative	Qualitative	Ensuring ethical practice

Hawkins and McMahon (2020) argue that these functions are not mutually exclusive and overlap, and that quality supervision will move between the different functions. Further, more recently, a fourth function of supervision has also been suggested; to provide *mediation* as the supervisor mediates between multiple stakeholders (Davys & Beddoe, 2010).

Callicott and Leadbetter (2013) highlight that which function is regarded as central, and which function is likely to be prioritised, differs inter- and intra-professionally.

2.3.3 Models of Supervision

Carroll et al. (2020) state that “A model is a way of conceptualising and applying supervision in a transparent and systematic way in any setting” (p.9). Copious supervision models exist (Callicott & Leadbetter, 2013) and Hawkins and McMahon (2020) argue that these models fit into four categories; psychotherapy-based models, developmental models, process models and second-generation models. Dunsmuir et al.’s (2015) survey of EPs identified Scaife’s (2001), Page and Wosket’s (2001) and Hawkins and Shohet’s (2007) process models as the most commonly used when EPs provide and receive supervision, and each of these are considered below.

Scaife's (2001) General Supervision Framework (Figure 2.1 below) focuses on the processes facilitated by the supervisor, highlighting three dimensions in which variation may exist; the focus of supervision, the medium of supervision and the behaviour of the supervisor in terms of the questions they may ask.

Figure 2.1: Scaife's (2001, p.75) General Supervision Framework.

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Based upon supervision processes rooted within counselling, Page and Wosket's (2001) Cyclical Model (Figure 2.2 below) proposes five stages which can be further broken down into five *sub*-stages (Callicott & Leadbetter, 2013). The model focuses on the structure of supervision sessions (Wedlock, 2017). The cyclical model can be used to compliment other models which may include more detail regarding the content of supervisory sessions (Page & Wosket, 2001).

Figure 2.2: Page and Wosket's (2001, p.36) The Cyclical Model of Counsellor Supervision.

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Hawkins and Shohet's (2007) (Figure 2.3 below) Seven-Eyed model identifies two interconnecting matrices; a client-practitioner matrix and supervisee-supervisor matrix, which explore the relationships within the different systems in supervision. The model further sub-divides these matrices into six modes; three within each matrix and a seventh mode which considers the wider context (Hawkins & McMahon, 2020). The six modes focus on: the client, the supervisee's interventions, the client-practitioner relationship, the supervisee as a practitioner, the supervisory relationship, and the supervisor (Hawkins & McMahon, 2020). The model proposes that quality supervision will move between all seven modes, though it is acknowledged such may not happen in one supervision session (Hawkins & McMahon, 2020).

Figure 2.3: Hawkins and Shohet's (2007; 2012, p.87) Seven-Eyed Model of Supervision.

This figure has been removed by the author of this thesis for copyright reasons.

Dunsmuir et al.'s (2015) survey found that 44% of EPs reported that no model of supervision was clearly present in supervision they received, and 21.4% of EPs said that they did not use a model to guide supervision they delivered. The value of models has been questioned in terms of whether their use increases supervisor confidence or restricts supervisor creativity and flexibility (Page & Wosket, 2001). Arguments have tended to sway towards the need for multiple models rather than a "one-size-fits-all" approach (Hanley, 2017), meaning supervisors can draw upon multiple approaches in a complimentary and flexible way (Kaufman & Schwartz, 2004). The model used may be influenced by the supervisor's theoretical orientation and values (Kaufman & Schwartz, 2004) or the best fit for the supervisee's work (Dunsmuir & Leadbetter, 2010).

2.3.4 Contracting

Page and Wosket's (2001) model explicitly states the need for clear contracting and this may refer to a formal written contract (Reid & Soan, 2019) as well as the ongoing dialogue between the supervisor and supervisee (Calicott & Leadbetter, 2015). Within the context of supervision contracting refers to agreeing ground rules (Hawkins & Shohet, 2012) and ensuring that the purposes are clearly defined (Reid & Soan, 2019). There is agreement within the literature that contracting is key and that it should cover the following areas: practicalities, responsibilities and roles, session format, boundaries, the supervisory relationship and the wider organisational context (Hawkins & McMahon, 2020). However, research suggests that contracting does not always feature in practice (Scaife, 2001).

2.3.5 The Supervisory Relationship

The supervisory relationship is consistently identified as central to effective supervision (Beinart & Clohessy, 2017). Within the supervisory relationship the

importance of creating feelings of safety has been identified (Scaife, 2009), in order for the supervisee to feel contained, whilst also challenged and stimulated (Steel, 2001). The literature indicates a number of qualities which a supervisor should possess, including the ability to “helicopter” over the situation to gain a wider perspective (Hawkins & Shohet, 1989), and skills akin with counselling, such as, empathy, genuineness and unconditional positive regard (Steel, 2001) - though, importantly, Steel (2001) notes the distinction between supervision and counselling.

2.3.6 Psychodynamic Principles in Supervision

Principles from the psychodynamic paradigm are recognised within supervision models, including, transference and countertransference (Wood, 2016). Bion’s (1984) concept of containment is particularly relevant, with scholars recognising supervision as providing a containing function (Hawkins & Shohet, 2000; Ellis & Wolfe, 2020). Containment, a concept coined by Bion (1959; 1984), occurs in supervision when the supervisor facilitates a sense of safety for the supervisee, through knowing that the supervisor is holding on to difficult and potentially unmanageable feelings. Douglas (2007) argues that containment can support an individual to feel able to think. Page and Wosket (2001) argue that the use of a supervision model can increase this feeling of containment for supervisees.

2.3.7 Formats of Supervision

Hawkins and McMahon (2020) identify six forms of supervision; individual, shared, group, peer-group, live and virtual. Dunsmuir and Leadbetter (2010) identified individual, or one-to-one, supervision as the most common, though a rise in group supervision has been noted (Soni, 2015). Group supervision has been identified as a way in which a group of professionals can reflect on their work together (Willis & Baines, 2018) and this may be amongst a peer-group (Soni, 2015) or amongst individuals from different professions (Hanley, 2017). However, it has been suggested that group supervision should supplement, not replace, individual supervision (Proctor, 2000; Steel, 2001).

Some potential benefits for group supervision have been identified, including maximising resources, providing opportunities for shared learning and multiple perspectives, and offering support through the identification of shared challenges

(Hawkins & McMahon, 2020). Conversely a number of disadvantages for group supervision have been identified, including individual supervisee's perceiving a lack of time being spent on their own work, competition and boundary issues (Hawkins & McMahon, 2020), and challenging logistical considerations (Hanley, 2017). Farouk (2004) highlights that within group supervision, group dynamics must be carefully managed (Farouk, 2004), particularly as group relationships have been highlighted as key to success (Hanley, 2017).

Having introduced the concept of supervision the chapter will turn focus to the supervision of *school staff* specifically, considering the available research literature in this area, and ultimately leading to the rationale for the current study.

2.4 Supervision of School Staff

2.4.1 Culture of Supervision

Hawkins and McMahon (2020) state that “supervision is not just an event but an ongoing process which should permeate the culture of any effective helping organisation” (p.233). Schein (2017) defined organisational culture as a “pattern of beliefs, values and behavioural norms that come to be taken for granted as basic assumptions and eventually drop out of awareness” (p.6). More simply, Deal and Kennedy (1982) defined organisational culture as “the way we do things around here” (p.4). Schein (1990) proposed that organisational culture is evident in an organisation's visible artefacts, shared values and deeper shared assumptions. Schools themselves are organisational systems with their own organisational cultures which can impact on how change is received and enacted (Hinde, 2004).

The literature emphasises the need to establish and embed a *culture of supervision* within school systems (Leeds Beckett, 2021) and highlights that, presently, a culture of supervision within school settings is largely absent (Carroll et al., 2020). Thus, illuminating the need to consider supervision within the context of organisational systems (Practice Supervisors Development Programme, (PSDP) 2020). Here the notion of a culture of supervision appears to refer to the need for supervision to be part of the school system's beliefs, values and behaviour at all levels and the literature makes some suggestions as to what this may look like and include. Recommendations include senior leaders modelling the use of supervision at all levels of the system (Social Care Institute

for Excellence (SCIE), 2017) and prioritising and protecting time for staff to access supervision (SCIE, 2017; Carroll et al., 2020). Additionally, the need for a consistent narrative around supervision is suggested (PSDP, 2020).

2.4.2 The Potential of Supervision for School Staff

As a result of the lack of a ‘culture of supervision’ in schools (Carroll et al., 2020) opportunities to reflect upon work and associated emotions in a boundaried space are often not afforded to school staff (Hulusi & Maggs, 2015; Kennedy & Laverick, 2019). Hulusi and Maggs (2015) note that while the *Elton Report* (DoES, 1986) made reference to allowing teachers space to reflect on their work this did not translate into practice. The DfE’s (2019) research report *School and College Staff Wellbeing* made reference to the potential of applying supervision within schools. However, Briggs (2020) notes that to date no specific guidelines exist regarding supervision for school staff.

Concerns around the lack of supervision structures for school staff have been identified by the Association of Child Psychotherapists (2018), who posit that the absence of supervision could lead to increases in stress and burnout. It has been argued that the reflective nature of supervision may be able to prevent stress and burnout (Hawkins & McMahon, 2020), enhance wellbeing and build professional capacity (Dunsmuir & Leadbetter, 2010). Further, Wheeler and Richards (2007) argue that supervision can have a positive impact on the supervisee in terms of increasing their feelings of self-efficacy, self-awareness and feelings of being supported. Carroll et al. (2020) posit that introducing supervision in schools would support in promoting inclusion, promoting staff wellbeing and support staff retention.

2.4.3 Inter-professional Supervision in Schools

Dunsmuir et al. (2015) found that 28.6% of EPs were supervising other professionals working with CYP, and 11.1% of EPs were supervising school staff. Reasons suggested for the rise in inter-professional supervision include; the increase in multi-agency working within children’s services as a partial outcome of the ECM agenda (DfES, 2003), and the move to traded service delivery models in many Educational Psychology Services (EPSs), allowing for the expansion of the EP role (Callicott & Leadbetter, 2013). It has been suggested that inter-professional supervision

can be beneficial as the external supervisor can offer a different insight into the work of the supervisee (Scaife, 2009); however different professional cultures have been identified as a potential barrier (Townend, 2005). EPs are arguably well placed to deliver such supervision given that they have knowledge and skills in facilitation and problem solving (Dunsmuir & Leadbetter, 2010), as well as an understanding of school systems (Rae et al., 2017).

2.4.4 Consultation as Supervision?

Much of the existing literature exploring the use of EP-led supervision in schools has been focused on ‘group consultation’. Similar to supervision, the term consultation is difficult to define, and encompasses a wide range of models and approaches (Nugent et al., 2014). While no one prevalent definition of consultation exists, the literature agrees that consultation possesses the following core features; it is a voluntary, problem solving activity occurring between a help giver and seeker, who together discuss a problem with the shared goal of solving that problem and developing skills which can support in future work problems (West & Idol, 1987). Similar to supervision, a range of models of consultation exist, including mental health (Caplan, 1970), behavioural (Bergan & Tombari, 1976), organisational (Schein, 1969) and process consultation (Schein, 1969).

Whether consultation should be considered a form of supervision is debatable. Rae et al. (2017) highlight that while consultation groups can benefit staff wellbeing, their primary function is congruent with the educative aspect of supervision, whereas supervision explicitly fulfils the educative and supportive role. Blick (2019) conducted interviews with five primary school teachers exploring their emotional experiences when working with behaviour perceived as challenging and used grounded theory to develop a model of supervision for schools. Blick (2019) suggested that while consultation can provide staff with time and space to share experiences and feel empowered through utilising a problem-solving approach, such relief may only be temporary given that consultation is often a one-off intervention focused around the needs of an individual CYP. Further, Blick (2019) suggests that teachers need support to be focused on their individual experiences and needs to be effective.

It has been suggested that consultation groups can serve as peer supervision as they afford school staff the space to collaboratively explore and reflect upon challenges they face, and to better understand CYP and their behaviours (Farouk, 2004; Hanco, 1999). Such groups are thought to be conducive to developing the self-efficacy beliefs of school staff through the acknowledgement of, and validation of, difficult emotions and the generation of solutions (Gibbs & Miller, 2014).

2.4.5 Group Consultation Models in Schools and the Existing Evidence-Base

The consultation literature has explored the use of group consultation models in schools and staff's retrospective views of these. A number of these models are based on Schein's (1969) process consultation, which emphasises the role of the consultant in supporting clients to identify and explore a problem and generate solutions (Rockwood, 1993). Hanco (1995) adapted Schein's (1969) ideas and adapted process consultation for application with groups of school staff. Research applying Hanco's (1995) model of group consultation in schools suggests that staff view this as positive in terms of; reducing feelings of isolation and stress, supporting staff to find practical solutions (Stringer et al., 1992), allowing time to reflect, learning from colleagues and planning ways forward (Bozic & Carter, 2002).

Building on Hanco's (1995) model, Farouk (2004) developed a model of process consultation giving increased attention to group dynamics and the influence of school culture. Research utilising Farouk's (2004) process consultation in schools suggests that the approach is perceived by staff as a valuable opportunity to share information and strategies (Hayes & Stringer, 2016), to reflect on practice (Hayes & Stringer, 2016; Kempsell, 2018) and that it is perceived by some staff as empowering (Kempsell, 2018). Further, Davison and Duffy (2017) found statistically significant improvements in staff confidence, concern and self-efficacy, following the facilitation of Farouk's model over a six month period with nurture group staff in 11 primary schools.

Other consultation models stemming from Hanco's (1999) work have been applied in schools and the views of staff have been retrospectively obtained. Models have included; Teacher Support Teams (TSTs) (Norwich & Daniels, 1997), New Teacher Groups (NTGs) (Knotek et al., 2002), The Staff Sharing Scheme (SSS) (Gill & Monsen, 1995; 1996), and Work Discussion Groups (WDGs) (Jackson, 2002; 2008).

The existing research suggests that TSTs have been perceived by teachers to increase confidence (Norwich & Daniels, 1997) and NTGs have supported teachers to develop more positive perceptions of their students and their own abilities (Knotek et al., 2002). SSSs have been perceived by staff to increase problem-solving capacity (Gill & Monsen, 1996), increase teacher confidence, decrease feelings of stress (Monsen & Graham, 2002) and increase reflection (Jones et al., 2013). Similarly, WDGs have been perceived by staff to support resilience and decrease feelings of stress (Jackson, 2008) and, more recently, staff in specialist and alternative provisions reported WDGs were valuable in helping them feel heard, supporting staff wellbeing and allowing time for reflection. However, the findings also highlighted the importance of group readiness for the process (Ellis & Wolfe, 2019).

The consultation literature has explored staff's views and experiences of other group problem-solving models, such as, Circles of Adults (CoA) (Wilson & Newton, 2006) and Solution Circles (SCs) (Forest & Pearpoint, 1996). Research has found that staff perceived CoAs as supportive of self-reflection and awareness (Dawson, 2013), and that staff valued the CoA process and felt increased empathy and awareness around the student's needs (Turner & Gulliford, 2020). The consultation literature has found positive views of SCs amongst school staff in terms of sharing ideas and promoting inclusion, however, time pressures and fear of conflict and exposure were among other views expressed (Brown & Henderson, 2012). Positive views of EP-facilitated consultation groups have also been found amongst college staff, with staff perceiving they had gained a better understanding of student's needs (Guishard, 2000).

The consultation literature has aimed to explore school staff's views of different models of group consultation, which could arguably be regarded as a form of group supervision, and the research indicates largely positive views. The literature review will now consider school staff's views around supervision explicitly, and why it is important to obtain and understand such views.

2.5 School Staff's Views of Supervision

2.5.1 The Current Context

The potential of supervision for supporting school staff wellbeing has been acknowledged by EPs for some time (for example, Ellis, 2012; Hulusi & Maggs, 2015).

A recent blog on *EdPsy*¹, aimed at practising EPs, raised once more the view within the EP community that school staff could benefit from supervision (Ellis & Wolfe, 2020). Within this, the authors argued that in the current context of the Covid-19 pandemic, staff deserve and need access to supervision more than ever (Ellis & Wolfe, 2020). Such a view appears to be consistent across the profession with a number of EPSs offering staff supervision throughout the pandemic (for example, Nottingham City EPS, 2020; Nottinghamshire County Council Psychology Service, 2020).

The importance and value of staff supervision has also been recognised outside of the EP profession, with private companies (for example, Talking Heads, 2020), research institutions (for example, Leeds Beckett University, 2021) and charities (for example, Barnardo's, 2020) discussing the importance of introducing supervision in schools, and setting up and offering this as a service. Further, a number of websites and blogs aimed at school staff, such as, *TES* and *Optimus Education*, have published articles over the past three years referring to the potential of supervision for school staff (Carroll & Esposito, 2020; Downing, 2019; Morewood, 2018). While currently no formal policy has been enacted, the DfE (2019) made reference to supervision as a potential initiative which may benefit school staff.

Despite this interest in the potential of supervision for school staff, the uptake of supervision appears to be limited. The most recent *TWI* (Education Support, 2020) found that as few as 8% of school staff surveyed were receiving supervision. Therefore the researcher would argue that there appears to be somewhat of a discrepancy between the espoused potential of supervision for school staff and the current uptake.

2.5.2 Factors Influencing Views and Uptake

A range of explanations have been offered for the limited uptake of supervision within educational settings. It could be argued that many of the factors identified suggest that school staff's perceptions may be a potential barrier to the growth and implementation of supervision in schools, and thus, are important to explore. Factors suggested include both practical concerns such as no time or space (Hulusi & Maggs, 2015), and theoretical concerns.

¹ EdPsy is an online community for EPs which includes a regular blog as well as referencing other resources, events and interest groups for EPs.

The definition and use of the potentially confusing term *supervision* has been offered as a potential factor which may impact on school staff's views on supervision and uptake of supervision (Soni, 2019; Steel, 2001). It has been argued that, while in the helping professions supervision is regarded as a positive process, the same positive connotations may not exist within schools (Kennedy & Laverick, 2019). Further, it has been suggested that many school staff may not be aware of supervision unless they know someone in another profession who receives it (Barnardo's, 2019) or have personal experiences of it. Linked to this, it has been argued that staff working in schools may regard supervision as a means of monitoring and evaluating practice (Roberts, 2017).

Hulusi and Maggs (2015) suggest that school staff's views of supervision may be influenced by a resistance to embrace psychological processes. They highlight that psychologists have been arguing for supervisory groups within schools for years and argue that there has been reluctance, both within schools and psychology generally, to draw upon psychodynamic theory which is key to supervision. At a microsystem level, Rafferty and Coleman (2001) noted that supervision may have negative connotations amongst school staff who perceive supervision as a place in which they may be "analysed". At a macro-system level, Hulusi and Maggs (2015) suggest that supervision may be seen as a risk, as the complex process of supervision may reveal insights into how the school functions, which may pose difficulties for schools.

Previous experiences of supervision, both in terms of whether these were positive or negative have also been suggested as a barrier to supervision (Hawkins & Shohet, 1989). For example, a supervisee may have perceived past experiences of supervision as unhelpful or have experienced poor practice (De Hann, 2012). Willis and Baines (2018) point out that even where previous experience has been positive, this may serve as a barrier if individuals compare experiences when working with a new supervisor or group.

Hawkins and McMahon (2020) make reference to *personal blocks* to supervision and highlight the importance of understanding these in order for supervision to meet individual's needs and be effective. They identify eight potential blocks, many of which are congruent with the barriers identified above:

1. Past experiences

2. Personal inhibitions
3. Difficulties with power and authority
4. Role conflict
5. Feelings of being assessed
6. Practical barriers
7. Difficulties seeking and receiving support
8. Organisational culture

Taken together, the researcher argues that these factors suggest that the views school staff hold regarding supervision may impact their response to, and engagement with supervision. It therefore seems important to explore the views of school staff.

2.5.3 The Relevance of School Staff's Views

There appears to be considerable agreement that supervision has potential for supporting staff wellbeing, though in practice supervision appears to be something of a luxury for school staff (Briggs, 2020). Various factors have been suggested which appear to influence the uptake of supervision (Hulusi & Maggs, 2015; Madeley, 2014) and the researcher argues that many of these factors relate to how staff may construe supervision. For example, the potential connotations associated with the term supervision have been identified as an important aspect in school staff's response to the approach (Kennedy & Laverick, 2019; Page & Wosket, 2001; Roberts, 2017; Soni, 2019; Steel, 2001) and Barnardo's (2019) argue that for the true potential of supervision to be recognised, it is "essential" that staff understand its purposes and benefits. The perceptions of school staff regarding supervision are therefore potentially a key factor in its limited uptake.

It was noted earlier in the literature review that while to date no formal policy has been enacted to promote and extend supervision into school settings, the DfE (2019) made reference to its potential in their recent staff wellbeing report. Further, while there is an ongoing narrative as to the importance of affording school staff access to supervision, this narrative has largely been promoted by professionals external to schools, thus, it seems crucial to understand the views of school staff. Ultimately, in

order to understand the so far rather limited uptake of supervision and to consider how to increase access and engagement with supervision, it is argued here that more needs to be understood about school staff's likely perceptions of supervision.

The research exploring the views of school staff regarding supervisory support presented in the review so far have generally been focused upon experiences of group *consultation* models. As previously stated, the extent to which such consultation approaches are representative of 'supervision' is debatable, with some authors presenting the approaches as potentially synonymous (Wood, 2016) and others making important distinctions between the two approaches (Blick, 2019). As such, the case is made here that further exploration of school staff's views of what is offered and named as supervision in schools is required.

A systematic literature review undertaken to assess existing research into school staff's perceptions regarding supervision is described below.

2.6 Systematic Literature Review

Systematic Literature Reviews (SLRs) have historically focused on answering questions of intervention effectiveness (Boland et al., 2017); however, the importance of including methodologically diverse evidence within such reviews has been noted (Hong & Pluye, 2019). Consequently, methods of qualitative systematic reviews and mixed methods systematic reviews have emerged (Pluye & Hong, 2014), though Lucas et al. (2007) argue that the best methods for synthesising both qualitative and quantitative data have not yet been established.

Qualitative research synthesis methods loosely fall into two categories: integrative - where data is aggregated through description and summary, or interpretative - where data is interpreted to generate new theory (Noyes & Lewin, 2010). The Cochrane Intervention Handbook suggests that the choice of synthesis should be made dependent on the review question, the evidence being reviewed, resources and expertise (Noyes & Lewin, 2010). Due to the fact that the review question was interested in *views*, it was anticipated that a qualitative narrative synthesis or mixed method synthesis, which would be aggregative in nature, would be appropriate.

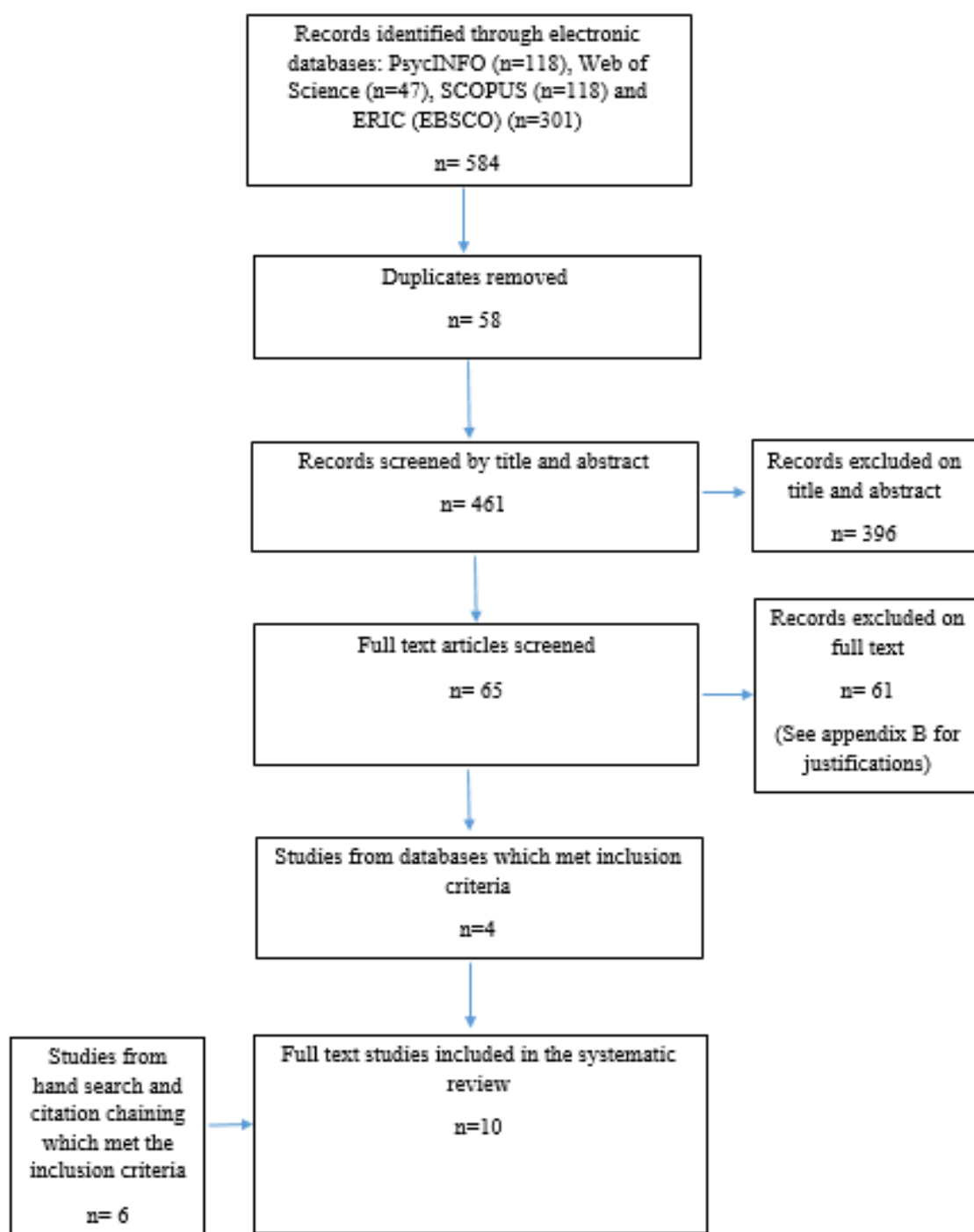
The review aims to answer the following question:

What does current research tell us about the views of school staff towards supervision?

2.6.1 Search Strategy

The databases PsycINFO, ERIC (EBSCO), Scopus and Web of Science were searched between October and December 2020. Search terms used are presented in Appendix A. Hand searches and citation chaining were utilised to identify other relevant literature. Figure 2.4 details the process of the search. Any papers which the researcher was unsure of, based on the title and abstract, were reviewed at full text. See Appendix B for a list of excluded studies.

Figure 2.4: Flow Chart to Show the Process of Search Screening and Selection.



2.6.2 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

All search results were judged against the following inclusion and exclusion criteria leaving 10 studies for inclusion in the review:

Population. Research which gained the views of school staff (including teachers, support staff, senior leaders) working directly with children within primary, secondary and specialist settings were included. Staff not based in school settings (for example, Speech and Language Therapists, EPs) were excluded, as were staff working in other educational settings (for example, early years, higher or further education). The rationale for this was that EPs work in such settings less often.

Phenomenon of interest. The review is concerned with supervision as defined earlier in the narrative review; therefore studies where this was clear were included. Studies which referred to consultation or coaching were excluded. While consultation can be deemed an approach to staff supervision, and often consultation models are applied to supervision suggesting considerable overlap, the review focuses on research which explicitly focuses on and names supervision as such. Research focusing on supervision as congruent with a management activity was also excluded.

Context. While much international research exists on the topic of supervision, the decision was made to exclude such research and include only UK-based studies. During initial scoping searches it became apparent that much of the international research conflated the concept of supervision with evaluation and performance monitoring. Additionally, while the UK education system has some similarities with other international education systems, it was decided that staff working in UK schools will have different experiences to staff working in education systems in other countries.

Research design. The review is concerned with views, thus studies which were qualitative or mixed methods were included and quantitative studies excluded.

Publication. Both peer reviewed and grey literature which was empirical in nature was included, and literature which was theoretical, or discussion based was excluded.

Date of publication. Research published in and after 1990 was included and, where possible, the author applied this criterion to databases. This date was chosen as significant changes to the landscape of the education system were introduced towards the end of the previous decade and the beginning of this decade including the introduction of the National Curriculum in 1989 and OFSTED in 1992. Both have been cited as pressures on schools.

2.6.3 Data Extraction and Synthesis

Summary of Methodologies. The included studies used a variety of methods yielding both quantitative and qualitative data for analysis. Four studies conducted semi-structured interviews (Bainbridge et al, 2019; France & Billington, 2020; Rae et al., 2017; Willis & Baines, 2018), three used questionnaires (Austin, 2010; Osborne & Burton, 2014; Reid & Soan, 2019) and one used a focus group (Bartle & Trevis, 2015). Soni (2015) used questionnaires, records, and a focus group, and Kennedy and Laverick (2019) presented supervisee and supervisor reflections as a case study.

A textual narrative synthesis was chosen allowing both quantitative and qualitative data to be combined, integrated, and summarised in order to answer the review question (Boland et al., 2017). A parallel synthesis was opted for in which qualitative and quantitative findings are synthesised simultaneously (Noyes & Lewin, 2010). Popay et al.'s (2006) guidance was used to support the author through the synthesis process.

Preliminary Synthesis. Textual descriptions were developed for each of the included studies. These are summarised in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2: A table to show the preliminary synthesis of each included study.

Author(s) and Title	Context and Sample	Methodology	Summary of Key Findings
Austin (2010) Introducing consultancy supervision in a primary school for children with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties.	SEMH primary Teachers, teaching assistants (TAs) Play therapist-led, one-to-one consultancy supervision	Questionnaire pre- and post-supervision (n=17) Analysis: “combination of approaches” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Descriptive statistics • Example quotations • “Themes” Semi-structured interviews (n=9) Analysis: unclear	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding of supervision unclear but clarity increased • Increased %’s pre to post (pre, post) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Positive feelings about supervision (53%, 94%) - Supportive function most helpful (88%, 94%) - Extremely useful (41%, 88%) • Flexibility of topics discussed • Supported self-awareness, self-esteem, offload/de-stress • Express thoughts and feelings in a safe environment • Positive impact on CYP • Would be valuable across all education services • External supervisor essential
Bainbridge et al. (2019)	Second part of Reid and Soan (2019): One-to-one (n=4) or group (n=3) clinical supervision with external	Semi-structured interviews (n=4)	Themes: 1. Professional learning 2. Health and well-being

Author(s) and Title	Context and Sample	Methodology	Summary of Key Findings
Towards a virtuosity of school leadership: clinical support and supervision as professional learning	supervisor for primary and junior school senior leaders and SENCo's Bainbridge et al. (2019) views of head teachers	Thematic analysis and a case- study	3. Wider school culture
Bartle and Trevis (2015) An evaluation of group supervision in a specialist provision	SEMH school Key workers EP-led fortnightly group supervision 4 models: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solution circles • Process consultation 	EP-facilitated focus group Thematic analysis	3 themes: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Process 2. Impact 3. Practicalities

Author(s) and Title	Context and Sample	Methodology	Summary of Key Findings
supporting young people with mental health needs: a social constructionis t perspective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflecting team • Balint group 		
France and Billington (2020) Group supervision: understandin g the experiences and views of Emotional Literacy	5 Emotional Literacy Support Assistants (ELSAs) in one LA Four schools: primary and secondary Group supervision	Semi-structured interviews Thematic analysis	Themes: 1. Session format 2. Learning in the moment 3. Applying learning from supervision sessions 4. Communication, relationships, and emotional support 5. Schools approach to ELSA 6. Challenges

Author(s) and Title	Context and Sample	Methodology	Summary of Key Findings
Support Assistants in one county in England.			
Kennedy and Laverick (2019) Leading inclusion in complex systems: experiences of relational supervision for head teachers.	2 senior leaders EP-led 'relational' supervision One-to-one mostly – every 1/3 joint	Case-study of reflections: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervisor's • Supervisee's 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus of sessions changed as sessions progressed • Trust critical within supervisee-supervisor relationship • Supervision a pause button to reflect, build resilience to lead and contain the emotional experience of others • Designated time for personal and professional development • Protecting the time and staying with discomfort needed

Author(s) and Title	Context and Sample	Methodology	Summary of Key Findings
Osborne and Burton (2014) Emotional literacy support assistants' views on supervision provided by Educational Psychologists : what EPs can learn from group supervision.	270 ELSAs in one Local Authority (LA) Varying experiences of ELSA role	Questionnaire • Descriptive statistics Thematic analysis	Perceptions of supervision: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meets needs (89%). Helpful (mean rating of 4.38/5). Perceptions of supervisor: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fulfils role - 17% felt supervisor could do more. Helpful for a range of reasons Perceptions of relationships: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supervisory relationship good (mean rating=4.43/5). Relationship with others in group good (mean rating=4.45/5). Advantages of group supervision - 2 main themes: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Sharing ideas, experiences, and resources</i> <i>Support function</i> Disadvantages of group supervision – 2 main themes: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Insufficient time to discuss cases</i>

Author(s) and Title	Context and Sample	Methodology	Summary of Key Findings
			<p><i>2. Personal or sensitive issues</i></p> <p>Perceptions of impact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Various levels: practitioner, CYP, colleagues, school • 3 main themes: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>1. Knowledge, skills and awareness</i> <i>2. Confidence</i> <i>3. Increased status</i>
<p>Rae et al. (2017)</p> <p>Supporting teachers' well-being in the context of schools for children with social, emotional</p>	<p>Two Social Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties (SEBD) schools</p> <p>School A – county primary day/residential, 5-11years</p> <p>School B - Outer London, primary and secondary, non-residential, 6-16years</p>	<p>Semi-structured interviews (n=8)</p> <p>Questions adapted from Austin (2010)</p> <p>Conventional content analysis</p>	<p>Themes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Stressful aspects of working in SEBD provision 2. Positive aspects of working in SEBD provision 3. Existing support mechanisms 4. Understanding supervision as a process 5. Staff development of emotional literacy skills 6. Role of EP in supervision process

Author(s) and Title	Context and Sample	Methodology	Summary of Key Findings
and behavioural difficulties.	Teachers with varied experience in setting (3 months – 24 years)		
Reid and Soan (2019) Providing support to senior managers in schools via 'clinical' supervision: a purposeful, restorative professional and personal developmental space.	Primary and junior school Senior leaders and SENCo's (Special Educational Needs Coordinator) One-to-one (n=4) or group (n=3) clinical supervision with external supervisor	Qualitative questionnaires: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Beginning• Mid-way• End Thematic analysis	Themes: 1. Professional safety 2. Professional resilience 3. Professional development

Author(s) and Title	Context and Sample	Methodology	Summary of Key Findings
<p>Soni (2015)</p> <p>A case study on the use of group supervision with learning mentors.</p>	<p>Primary learning mentors from one LA</p> <p>EP-led, group supervision</p>	<p>Case-study methodology:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus group (n=6) • Analysis of supervision records (n=16) • Questionnaires (n=5) <p>Focus group data = key themes</p> <p>Records = coded using 3 functions of supervision and topics covered</p> <p>Questionnaire data = not specified</p>	<p>Outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group supervision: very beneficial/beneficial, well worth/worth the time • 4-10 issues per session (average 6) and this covered wide range of issues; children, sharing materials, issues related to role, topic-focused, staff, parents and family • Functions utilised: educative (71%), supportive (15%), managerial (13%) • Barriers: other school duties, workload, ill-health <p>Enablers: senior management support</p>
<p>Willis and Baines (2018)</p>	<p>SEMH school</p> <p>Teachers, TAs, office manager</p>	<p>Semi-structured interviews (n=12)</p> <p>Thematic analysis</p>	<p>Themes:</p> <p>Benefits</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Shared emotional experiences

Author(s) and Title	Context and Sample	Methodology	Summary of Key Findings
The perceived benefits and difficulties in introducing and maintaining supervision groups in a SEMH special school.	Psychotherapist-led group supervision		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Therapeutic effects 3. Develop professional practice <p>Difficulties</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In-session challenges 2. Practical challenges <p>Maintaining effective group supervision</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Qualities of the supervisor <p>Future supervision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Engagement

2.6.4 Quality Assessment

Gough's (2007) Weight of Evidence (WoE) framework was used for quality appraisal. The framework suggests four ratings:

- WoE A, rating of the methodological quality of a study
- WoE B, rating of the appropriateness of a study's design in answering the review question
- WoE C, rating of the relevance of a study in answering the review question
- WoE D, overall rating based on A-C which informs how much a study may contribute in answering the review question.

Gough (2007) highlights overlaps between the WoE framework and Pawson et al.'s (2003) Transparency, Accuracy, Purposivity, Utility, Propriety, Accessibility and Specificity (TAPUPAS) model, suggesting that Transparency, Accuracy, Accessibility and Specificity fit with WoE A, Purposivity with WoE B and Utility and Propriety with WoE C.

The author used a combination of the TAPUPAS criteria, using Pawson et al.'s (2003) descriptions to judge each paper, The Mixed Methods Appraisal Tool (Pluye et al., 2011) to judge Specificity and author-generated criteria to assess Utility. An average rating was used to calculate WoE D. Table 2.3 indicates the overall judgements for each study. Further explanation of the quality appraisal tool is available in Appendix C.

Table 2.3: A table to show the overall WoE judgements for each study.

Author(s)	WoE A					WoE B	WoE C			WoE D
	Transparency	Accuracy	Accessibility	Specificity	Overall	Purposivity	Utility	Propriety ²	Overall	
Austin (2010)	Low	High	High	High	High	High	Medium	Yes	Medium	High
Bainbridge et al. (2019)	High	High	High	High	High	High	Medium	Yes	Medium	High
Bartle and Trevis (2015)	Medium	High	High	High	High	High	Medium	Yes	Medium	High
France and Billington (2020)	High	High	High	High	High	High	Medium	Yes	Medium	High
Kennedy and	Low	Medium	High	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium	Yes	Medium	Medium

² A yes/no judgement was made for propriety based on whether or not the study was deemed ethical and made reference to ethical considerations.

Laverick (2019)										
Osborne and Burton (2014)	High	High	High	High	High	High	Medium	Yes	Medium	High
Rae et al. (2017)	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	Yes	High	High
Reid and Soan (2019)	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	Yes	High	High
Soni (2015)	Medium	High	High	High	High	High	Medium	Yes	Medium	High
Willis and Baines (2018)	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	Yes	High	High

All papers were rated high overall except for Kennedy and Laverick (2019), which was rated as medium. All studies were deemed to be ethical and were judged high on accessibility. All papers were rated high on accuracy, specificity and purposivity with the exception of Kennedy and Laverick (2019) which was rated as medium due to a lack of clarity in terms of methods of data collection and analysis and lack of reference to researcher influence. Six papers achieved high ratings for transparency (Bainbridge et al., 2019; France & Billington, 2020; Osborne & Burton, 2014; Rae et al., 2017; Reid & Soan, 2019; Willis & Baines, 2018). Two papers were rated medium: due to lack of information regarding the sample (Bartle & Trevis, 2015) and lack of clarity regarding the analysis of questionnaire data (Soni, 2015). Austin (2010) was rated low as aims were only referred to within the abstract and the data analysis procedure was vague, stating a “number of methods were used”. Kennedy and Laverick (2019) were given a low rating due to reasons already discussed.

Rae et al. (2017), Reid and Soan (2019) and Willis and Baines (2018) were rated high on utility. Although Rae et al. (2017) focused on teachers in SEMH settings only; they researched staff's views of supervision generally without delivering a particular model of supervision, therefore including the views of staff with varying experience of supervision. Willis and Baines (2018) and Reid and Soan (2019) were rated as high, as although they gathered views following the delivery of a particular model of supervision, views of more than one staff role were presented in-depth; teachers, support staff and administrative staff views of group supervision (Willis & Baines, 2018) and senior leaders and SENCos views of clinical supervision (Reid & Soan, 2019).

The remaining seven studies were given medium ratings for utility due to the fact they gathered the views of staff working in one role and/or setting type, and of a particular model/format of supervision. While Osborne and Burton (2014), Bainbridge et al. (2019) and France and Billington (2020) were judged as providing staff views in a good degree of depth, it was unclear how many of their sample were from which type of school setting and all three studies focused on views of one staff role; head teachers (Bainbridge et al., 2019) and ELSAs (Osborne & Burton, 2014; France & Billington, 2020).

The remaining four studies presented staff views in some depth. Austin (2010) focused on the views of a range of staff roles; however, this was specifically around one-to-one consultancy supervision. The other three studies focused on the views of one particular staff role in one setting type regarding a particular format/model of supervision; views of key workers in an SEMH setting of group supervision (Bartle & Trevis, 2015), views of primary learning mentors of group supervision (Soni, 2015) and views of senior leaders of relational supervision (Kennedy & Laverick, 2019).

2.6.5 Synthesis

Four broad themes were identified:

1. School staff view supervision as beneficial for personal and professional development

Three studies suggested that school staff largely hold positive views regarding supervision, perceiving it as beneficial and worth the time (Soni, 2015); useful and valuable (Austin, 2010); and worth continuing and extending to others (Willis & Baines, 2018). The research suggests that school staff view supervision as fulfilling supportive and educative functions, though the extent to which each is regarded as helpful or is most utilised varies (Austin, 2010; Soni, 2015). All of the studies reported that school staff recognised the supportive function of supervision identifying supervision as; a restorative space (Reid & Soan, 2019); providing personal/emotional support (France & Billington, 2020; Osborne & Burton, 2014; Rae et al., 2017; Willis & Baines, 2018); supportive of better work-life balance and being better able to care for oneself (Bainbridge et al., 2019); and therapeutic (Willis & Baines 2018). More specifically, the research suggests that school staff viewed supervision as supportive in terms of; managing stress and anxiety (Austin, 2010; Bainbridge et al., 2019; Reid & Soan, 2019; Willis & Baines, 2018); building resilience (Kennedy & Laverick, 2019; Reid & Soan, 2019), self-awareness (Austin, 2010; Bartle & Trevis, 2015; Osborne & Burton, 2014), self-esteem (Willis & Baines, 2018) and confidence (Osborne & Burton, 2014); and developing coping strategies (Willis & Baines, 2018).

All studies reported staff views which suggested recognition of the educative function of supervision, with six papers explicitly referencing professional learning/development (Bainbridge et al., 2019; Kennedy & Laverick, 2019; Osborne & Burton, 2014; Rae et al., 2017; Reid & Soan, 2019; Willis & Baines, 2018). The

research suggests that school staff view supervision as educative in terms of; problem-solving (Bartle & Trevis, 2015; France & Billington, 2020; Reid & Soan, 2019); reflection (Bainbridge et al., 2019; France & Billington, 2020; Willis & Baines, 2018); developing knowledge and skills (Osborne & Burton, 2014); developing reflexivity and a different perspective (Reid & Soan, 2019); learning in the moment and applying learning to practice (France & Billington, 2020); gaining ideas and practical advice (Osborne & Burton, 2014); and developing strategic thinking and leadership/management (Bainbridge et al., 2019; Reid & Soan, 2019).

Three of the studies suggest that school staff view supervision as flexible highlighting that a number and range of issues can be discussed (Austin 2010; Kennedy & Laverick, 2019; Soni, 2015). Two of these papers suggested that as staff engaged with supervision, their views on how sessions could be utilised developed. Kennedy and Laverick (2019) reported a shift towards forward planning as sessions progressed, though this is based on reflections from one supervisee alone. Similarly, Austin (2010) found that following engagement with supervision, staff regarded a greater number of topics as suitable for discussion and, whilst children remained a high priority, future thinking was identified as increasingly suitable for discussion.

2. School staff view supervision as potentially beneficial for others

Four papers suggested that staff perceived supervision as beneficial for pupils both directly and indirectly (Austin, 2010; Osborne & Burton, 2014; Reid & Soan, 2019; Willis & Baines, 2018); and three papers made reference to views that supervision benefits colleagues, school and the wider profession (France & Billington, 2020; Osborne & Burton, 2014; Reid & Soan, 2019). Bainbridge et al. (2019) suggested that staff view supervision as beneficial for the wider school culture, in terms of communication within the school community about wellbeing.

Within the research, school staff expressed views that group supervision benefitted themselves, others in the group and colleagues. Pertinent in four of the studies, which explored views of group supervision delivered to groups of school staff, was the theme of sharing. This included the sharing ideas (France & Billington, 2020); the sharing of experiences and resources (Osborne & Burton, 2014); the sharing of insight from others (France & Billington, 2020); a sense of relief from sharing (Bartle & Trevis, 2015); and feelings of validation and empathy through the sharing of

experiences with others (Willis & Baines, 2018). The research suggests that supervision is viewed by school staff as beneficial for relationships and communication with others (Bartle & Trevis, 2015; France & Billington, 2020; Willis & Baines, 2018) in terms of; countering strained relationships with colleagues (Willis & Baines, 2018); and increasing team coherence (Bartle & Trevis, 2015). Though, Osborne and Burton (2014) and France and Billington (2020) found that some ELSAs perceived relationships and working with others as a challenge of group supervision.

3. School staff identify the need to consider a range of practicalities in implementing supervision

All the studies referred to the need for practical considerations around supervision in one way or another. School staff expressed varying views regarding the length of sessions (Osborne & Burton, 2014); frequency of sessions (France & Billington, 2020; Osborne & Burton, 2014; Willis & Baines, 2018); time of day when sessions were held (Austin, 2010; France & Billington, 2020); and the importance of protected time (Bartle & Trevis, 2015). When it came to group supervision, the research suggests varying views amongst staff with regard to; the different models used (Bartle & Trevis, 2015); group size (France & Billington, 2020; Osborne & Burton, 2014) and group make up (Soni, 2015; Willis & Baines, 2018).

The research suggests positives of group supervision, discussed in other themes, though Osborne and Burton's (2014) research suggests that disadvantages of group supervision were perceived to be insufficient time to discuss cases and/or more sensitive and personal issues. The research suggests that staff perceived feelings of safety (Austin, 2010; Kennedy & Laverick, 2019; Reid & Soan, 2019); trust (Kennedy & Laverick, 2019); and honesty (Bartle & Trevis, 2015) as important aspects of supervision. Staff in France and Billington's (2020) study referred to familiarity and comfort, which is likely to promote feelings of safety. School staff expressed views indicating they perceive confidentiality as an important aspect of supervision (Rae et al., 2017; Reid & Soan, 2019) as well as the importance of sessions being non-judgemental (Willis & Baines, 2018).

The research indicated that staff held the view that supervisors needed to be appropriately skilled to be effective (France & Billington, 2020; Osborne & Burton, 2014; Willis & Baines, 2018) and where asked, the majority of staff felt that their

supervisor largely met their expected roles, though some felt they could do more (Osborne & Burton, 2014). Two studies highlighted an external supervisor as essential (Austin, 2010) and beneficial (Willis & Baines, 2018).

The research suggests that school staff have mixed views regarding EPs as supervisors; with the majority of staff in Rae et al.'s (2017) study viewing the EP role as assessing and identifying pupil needs rather than providing supervision and supporting staff wellbeing. Where staff had experienced supervision with an EP, this was seen positively (France & Billington 2020).

Within the research staff perceived the support of senior leaders to be important in order for supervision to take place, and staff views suggested barriers to supervision including school duties, workload, ill-health (Soni, 2015) and funding (Bainbridge et al., 2019). Within the research school staff identified supervision as having room for improvement with suggestions made relating to; reviewing sessions and outcomes (Austin, 2010; Bartle & Trevis, 2015); preparing material (Bartle & Trevis, 2015); cooling down at the end (Austin, 2010); and giving consideration to the recording and tracking of sessions (Bartle & Trevis, 2015; France & Billington, 2020).

4. School staff have varying understandings of supervision

Three of the studies, all of which rated high on WoE, made reference to staff's understanding of supervision as a process. Austin (2010) found that prior to engaging in supervision, staff appeared uncertain as to what supervision was, with some likening it to counselling and 35% stating that they didn't know what supervision was. However, Austin's (2010) participants developed a clearer understanding of what supervision was following engagement. Similarly, Rae et al. (2017) found that there was a limited understanding of the concept of supervision and that teachers used supervision interchangeably with counselling, consultation, support groups and management. France and Billington (2020) noted that ELSAs had preconceptions as to what supervision was and that this did not always fit with supervision received.

2.6.6 Summary of SLR

Limitations. The small-scale review as part of a wider research project brings with it several limitations. Firstly, some papers were inaccessible online, some of which may have been relevant for the review question. Secondly, the review was not subject to

inter-rater checks in screening, selection, appraising or synthesising and, while the researcher has endeavoured to be transparent and objective at every stage, it is recognised that there may be elements of subjectivity. Further, it is noted that this is the researcher's first time conducting this type of synthesis. A final limitation, relating more generally to methods of qualitative and mixed method synthesis, is that through the attempts to synthesise qualitative findings some of the rich detail which characterises such research traditions may be lost (Savin-Baden & Major, 2010).

Conclusions and implications. The SLR described above sought to answer the question:

What does current research tell us about the views of school staff towards supervision?

The review suggests that school staff largely viewed supervision as positive and recognised both a supportive and an educative function. The research reviewed suggests that staff held differing views regarding many of the sub-issues relating to supervision. For example, the potential benefits for personal and professional development, the potential benefits for others beyond the supervisee, views relating to group supervision and views pertaining to the supervisor. Further, the review suggests that school staff viewed the need for various practicalities and logistics to be considered when implementing supervision within schools; however differing views emerged as to precisely what these practicalities were and how they could be satisfied. Consistent with arguments presented earlier in the chapter, three papers suggested that school staff held varying views and levels of understandings relating to what supervision is and that a shared definition across professions may not yet be present.

While the review identified generally positive views held by school staff regarding supervision overall, it also highlighted a range of views in relation to many of the sub-issues of supervision. Based on the existing literature, it is currently unclear how school staff construe these sub-themes in relation to each other and, therefore, construe the topic of supervision as a whole. Previous research has primarily relied on questionnaires, interviews and focus groups to gather the views of school staff regarding supervision. While these methods were purposeful in answering the research questions set out in the included studies, it could be argued that such methodologies and their subsequent analyses break the topic into discrete themes (Bradley, 2007).

Hallam (2014) notes that subtle differences in terminology between constructs relating to views (for example, views, attitudes, beliefs, perceptions, experiences) are rarely clearly defined. Therefore it seems important to set out here the subtle differences relevant to the current undertaking. The researcher would argue that the existing research has identified school staff's *views* of supervision and a gap remains regarding the shared *viewpoints* held by staff. Watts and Stenner (2012) define viewpoints as how groups of people construe a particular topic, and Hallam (2014) suggests that viewpoints are "collective views held by a group of people on a certain topic" (p.14). Such definitions note a subtle, yet important, difference between views and viewpoints with viewpoints referring to the *combination* of views on a topic relating to the many sub-themes, and how they fit together, to form a holistic viewpoint. Therefore in order to develop an understanding of how school staff construe the topic of supervision holistically, including its many sub-themes, it seems necessary to identify and explore the range of shared viewpoints held amongst school staff.

The research reviewed has largely focused on gaining the views of school staff in particular roles or settings. For example, the reviewed research largely sampled staff from SEMH settings, mainstream primary settings and mainstream secondary settings. Additionally, within these settings, except for two studies which sampled the views of a mix of staff roles, the research to date largely focused on the views of one particular staff role within a setting, predominantly focusing on support staff or senior leaders rather than teachers.

The literature, with the exception of Rae et al. (2017), has also focused on the views of school staff regarding particular models of supervision. In doing so, the research has largely illuminated staff views of particular models and experiences of supervision, rather than views regarding supervision more broadly. This is similar to the limitations observed in the consultation-related literature reviewed earlier in the chapter.

Consequently, the research to date, with the exception of Rae et al. (2017), has broadly failed to include the views of school staff not currently in receipt of supervision, or who have not previously experienced supervision. While the synthesis suggests that school staff hold positive views of supervision, such views are arguably more representative of a subset of school staff who have been offered the opportunity – and have been motivated to engage with supervisory sessions. It seems reasonable to expect

that other views may exist amongst school staff, particularly given that the review highlights the potential confusion around the term supervision.

2.7 Introduction to Current Research

2.7.1 Rationale and Unique Contribution

This chapter has highlighted the importance of supporting the wellbeing of school staff and the potential of supervision as one way of doing so. Despite an ongoing narrative regarding the potential value and importance of supervision for school staff both within the EP profession (for example, Ellis, 2012; Ellis & Wolfe, 2020; Hulusi & Maggs, 2015) and amongst other professional groups and organisations (Barnardo's, 2020; Leeds Beckett University, 2021; Talking Heads, 2020), statistics suggest that supervision is still uncommon in schools (Education Support, 2020).

Several barriers identified in the literature which could serve as explanations for the limited uptake of supervision in schools appear to illuminate the importance and role of staff perceptions. While research has sought to explore the views of school staff regarding supervision, this has largely been in the context of the delivery of a particular model of supervision rather than exploring views of supervision as a general topic. Further, research has largely focused on school staff's views in the context of a particular staff role or school setting and has tended to utilise semi-structured interviews and questionnaires.

The existing research suggests that school staff hold generally positive views of supervision however that differing views exist regarding the many sub-issues of supervision. To date research has not explored the shared viewpoints which school staff may hold regarding supervision which would give further understanding to how school staff construe the topic of supervision holistically. The researcher would argue that identifying and understanding these shared patterns of construing amongst school staff regarding the topic of supervision is important for increasing engagement with, and access to, supervision within schools.

Q-methodology explores issues to reveal groups of subjective opinion within a population thus known as viewpoints (Lim, 2010). Q-methodology has been successfully used to explore the viewpoints of Early Years Staff (Madeley, 2014) and ELSAs regarding supervision (Atkin, 2019). This study employs Q-methodology to

explore the holistic viewpoints of school staff working in different roles (teachers, support staff, senior leaders) within different school settings (primary, secondary, specialist). Further, in utilising this methodology, the research explores how this group of professionals construe the concept of supervision in the context of varying experiences of supervision. While supervision is not currently a requirement for school settings, many EPs and EPSs have noted its potential in supporting staff wellbeing and are increasingly offering this work. Thus, it appears important to identify and explore the range of viewpoints held by school staff in relation to this topic.

2.7.2 Research Question

What are the viewpoints held by school staff regarding supervision?

3 Methodology

The aim of this chapter is to introduce the reader to, and demonstrate the appropriateness of, Q-methodology in answering the research question. The aims and distinctive features of Q-methodology will be presented, and the epistemological and ontological basis for the study will be described. Alternative methods that might have been employed will be identified, so as to underscore the reasons for selecting a Q-methodological approach. A general overview of the procedure for Q-methodology will be described, and consideration will be given as to how the study quality was appraised and maintained. Finally, the procedure for the current research is described and ethical considerations presented.

3.1 Introduction to Q-Methodology

3.1.1 Aims of Q-Methodology

Q-methodology is an exploratory research method developed in 1935 by William Stephenson as a method to explore subjective beliefs (Brown, 1980). Q-methodology aims to investigate the range of subjective views on a particular topic or phenomenon, thereby, revealing shared ‘viewpoints’ (Watts & Stenner, 2012). Watts and Stenner (2012) suggest that Q-methodology allows for people’s subjective views to be studied both “systematically and holistically” (p.14). Through the Q-sorting activity, participants are asked to systematically rank order a number of statements on the research topic and, in doing so, express their holistic viewpoint (Coogan & Herrington, 2011).

The participant’s data, their Q-sort, becomes their viewpoint on the topic of study, which is held constant in time and compared with the Q-sorts, and therefore viewpoints, of other participants (Coogan & Herrington, 2011). The overall product of a Q-study is the identification of shared holistic viewpoints about the topic of study within the sample of participants (Watts & Stenner, 2012). The literature suggests that Q-methodology is particularly valuable in exploring viewpoints, where; a phenomenon is regarded as complex, there is a lack of consensus around definitions, and people’s viewpoints are of importance (Watts & Stenner, 2012). For these reasons, Q was deemed an appropriate methodology to explore school staff’s viewpoints of supervision.

3.1.2 Distinctive Features of Q-Methodology

The distinctive feature of Q-methodology is its ability to reveal shared viewpoints around a topic (Webler et al., 2009) by considering “collective voices while at the same time identifying subtle differences between some of those voices” (Coogan & Herrington, 2011, p.4). Q-methodology does this by bringing the scientific principles of systematisation to subjective views and is therefore regarded a qualiquantological methodology (Stenner & Stainton Rogers, 2004; Watts & Stenner, 2005). Watts and Stenner (2005) note that this qualiquantological label may put off qualitative researchers, however, McKeown and Thomas (2013) argue that rejecting Q-methodology on these grounds would be ill-informed, given that the approach is able to reveal lived experiences, often a key aim of qualitative inquiry. In fact, Stephenson (1935) developed Q-methodology due to his ongoing dissatisfaction with positivist methods, and their inability to consider human subjectivity (Watts & Stenner, 2005).

Consistent with the rejection of hypothetico-deductive methods, where the researcher begins with a theory and aims to test hypotheses, Q-methodology rejects the formulation of hypotheses entirely given its exploratory nature (Watts & Stenner, 2005). Q-methodology is closely aligned with abduction which focuses on using observations to explain a phenomenon and discover new knowledge (Watts & Stenner, 2012). In developing Q-methodology, Stephenson identified the possibility of inverting traditional factor analysis (Watts & Stenner, 2005), which uses statistics to reveal patterns in how subjects (participants) respond to different variables (often questions or measures) (Webler et al., 2009). Conversely, in Q factor analysis, the statistics reveal patterns across the Q-sorts (the variables) in relation to where participants have placed the Q-statements (subjects) (Webler et al., 2009).

Particularly distinctive to Q-methodology is the focus on revealing holistic viewpoints and emphasis of the gestalt procedure (Watts & Stenner, 2005). The gestalt procedure holds that, rather than separating a given phenomenon into separate parts, the phenomenon should be understood as a whole sum of its parts (Watts & Stenner, 2005). In this sense, Q-methodology focuses on the whole (the Q-sort configuration) and how the parts (the Q-statements) make up this whole (Brown, 1980).

The notion of subjectivity is also pivotal to Q-methodology, defined by Brown (1980) as a person’s “point of view” (p.47). Stephenson used the term “operant

subjectivity” suggesting that subjectivity is a behaviour or activity that can be understood in reference to the environment in which it occurs, contrasting views that subjectivity is a mental concept (Watts & Stenner, 2012). Within Q-methodology, a participant expresses their operant subjectivity by interacting with the Q-statements to reveal their view (Watts & Stenner, 2012).

3.2 Epistemology and Ontology

Kuhn (1962) defined a paradigm as “a way of looking at or researching phenomena” (p.23). Mertens (2014) identifies four major paradigms: post-positivist, constructivist, transformative and pragmatic. Each paradigm has its own core values and stance when it comes to axiology, ontology, epistemology, and methodology (Guba & Lincoln, 2005). These are summarised in Table 3.1, adapted from Mertens (2014).

Table 3.1: A table to show four major research paradigms and their corresponding ontology, epistemology and methodology.

Research paradigm	Ontology	Epistemology	Methodology
Post-positivism	One external reality	One external truth	Quasi-experimental
Constructivism	Socially constructed	Socially constructed	Qualitative
Transformative	Socially constructed	Power structures determine accepted knowledge	Quantitative and qualitative
Pragmatism	Pragmatic	Pragmatic	Whichever is most useful for the research question

Of particular importance to the positioning of the current research, and in understanding the methodological decisions made, is *ontology*, the nature of reality, and *epistemology*, the nature of knowledge and the relationship between the researcher and

participants (Mertens, 2014). Arguments have been made for positioning Q-methodology within various paradigms. For example, Gephart (1999), as cited in Webler et al. (2009), argues that Q-methodology could fit within the post-positivist, constructivist-interpretivist, and post-modernist paradigms. The researcher here positions the current research, and therefore the use of Q-methodology, within social constructionism.

Social constructionist ontology rejects the positivist notion that there is one external reality and embraces the notion that people's interpretations of reality are socially constructed and, therefore, multiple subjective realities exist (Mertens, 2014). Social constructionist epistemology identifies knowledge as being constructed through social interactions between people (Raskin, 2002) and, therefore, accepts that within research, the researcher and participants develop shared knowledge through their interactions during research activities (Mertens, 2014). Further, social constructionist epistemology holds that, given that multiple subjective realities exist, it is the researcher's role to look at the research question through the many lenses of the participants (Cohen et al., 2018).

While much literature use the terms social constructionism and social constructivism interchangeably (Young & Collin, 2004), Watts and Stenner (2012) argue that when it comes to Q-methodology the distinction is of paramount importance as the methodology can be used in a way which aligns itself with both social constructivist and social constructionist traditions. Watts and Stenner (2012) argue that Stephenson utilised Q-methodology consistent with constructivist epistemology, as the focus of his research was often on individual participants' constructions of reality and their individual viewpoints. On the contrary, other research utilising Q-methodology has aligned itself with social constructionist epistemology, aiming to reveal the constructions of groups of people and, consequently, *shared* viewpoints (Watts & Stenner, 2012). Watts and Stenner (2005) argue that Q-methodology has largely been positioned within qualitative methods and has been used to research many social constructionist research questions.

More recently, arguments have been presented positioning Q-methodology within the pragmatist paradigm. Pragmatism largely refrains from identifying a fixed ontological or epistemological position and, instead, takes guidance from what makes

practical sense in answering the research question (Mertens, 2014). Often, this leads the pragmatic researcher to mixed methods research (Mertens, 2014). Q-methodology's status as a qualiquantological method has led some to identify it as a mixed method (Ramlo, 2016). Ramlo and Newman (2011) argue that Q-methodology mixes both post-positivist and constructivist research principles in that it can be used to test hypotheses and develop theoretical insights. However, Ramlo (2016) highlights that the term qualiquantological was developed by Q-methodologists Stenner and Stainton-Rogers (2004) in order to explain the hybridity of Q-methodology which they felt that the label of mixed methods did not accurately encapsulate. Further, Brown (2008) suggests that Q-methodological research is largely congruent with the aims of qualitative methodologies, regardless of its use of quantitative statistical analysis as a part of the overall methodological procedure.

Given that the aim of the current research is to explore shared viewpoints of a group of school staff, the researcher construed the research as fitting with social constructionism. The researcher was interested in how a group of people, namely school staff, construed the topic of supervision. The researcher expected that school staff would construe this topic in multiple ways consistent with social constructionist ontology that multiple realities exist.

While the researcher appreciates that Q-methodology draws on qualitative and quantitative research traditions, the aim of the research was to explore viewpoints rather than test hypotheses. In fact, Watts and Stenner (2005) argue that Q-methodology does not fit with the notion of hypothesis testing given its exploratory nature. Further, while the researcher appreciates that Q-methodology employs statistical analyses, this was felt to be secondary to the qualitative aspects of Q-methodology consistent with Brown's (1993) suggestion that the purpose of the mathematical operations in Q-methodology are "primarily to prepare the data to reveal their structure" (p.17).

3.3 Selecting an Appropriate Methodology

3.3.1 Alternative Research Designs

Much of the existing research investigating school staff's views regarding supervision has utilised questionnaires, focus groups and semi-structured interviews. Research using questionnaire designs has tended to use thematic analysis or content

analysis. While a questionnaire design was an option for the present research, and would have enabled the collection of a vast number of responses, it would have violated the gestalt procedure that Q-methodology so effectively captures. Analysis of data collected through questionnaires is often carried out question by question (Cross, 2005) and focuses on identifying commonality in responses on distinct questions rather than commonality between participants as a whole (Kitzinger, 1984). Consequently, such analysis does not allow for the identification of shared viewpoints (Plummer, 2012) as per the aims of the research.

Semi-structured interviews and focus groups, and subsequent thematic analysis, have also been utilised within the existing literature. While such methodologies were an option within the current research such an approach would have restricted the numbers of participants, leading to the gathering of fewer voices. Further, semi-structured interviews and focus groups rely on participants to articulate their views and experiences in detail. Given that supervision is highlighted as a complex topic with a lack of a shared definition and understanding across professions, and that only a minority of school staff are likely to have experienced it, it could be argued that it may have been difficult for participants to articulate their views on the topic (Madeley, 2014).

While several methods would have been available to analyse interview data, for example, Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis or Discourse Analysis, the researcher had reservations about adopting such approaches as it seemed these were not best fit for the research aims and question. These analysis methods focus on finding similar themes common across the participants' data resulting in views being merged and as a consequence individual nuances are often lost (Bradley, 2007). Further, such methods analyse data in terms of isolated parts, neglecting the gestalt principle which is central to Q-methodology (Watts & Stenner, 2005). Given that the purposes of the research were to explore the viewpoints of school staff and focus on the shared patterns of construing supervision as a holistic topic, Q-methodology was deemed the best fit.

3.3.2 Q-Methodology as Best Fit for the Research

Q-methodology has been suggested as a “middle-ground” between questionnaire designs and semi-structured interviews (Zabala et al., 2018). The researcher deemed Q-methodology the best fit for the current research given its ability to reveal shared

viewpoints across a group of participants, in this case, school staff, and explore potentially complex phenomenon, in this case, supervision (Watts & Stenner, 2005). Supervision is arguably a complex phenomenon with many sub-issues given the existence of various definitions and understandings across professions. Q-methodology explores the range of holistic viewpoints which may exist (Bradley, 2007) and considers the interconnections between subtopics which alternative methodologies fail to do (Zabala, et al., 2018). Further, Q-methodology allows for many voices to be heard, giving equal importance to all views, whilst simultaneously highlighting nuances between these (Watts & Stenner, 2012). For these reasons, Q-methodology was deemed to satisfy the aims and purposes of the research.

It has been suggested that Q-methodology enables participants to make sense of, and clarify, their own understanding of topics through the Q-sort activity (Madeley, 2014; Webler et al., 2009). Such was deemed as a further benefit given the complexity of the topic. Finally, it can be argued that through the use of Q-methodology, participants themselves can decide what is of importance and relevance to them (Stephenson, 1986) rather than this being arguably imposed through the researcher's choice of questions when utilising questionnaire designs and through the researcher's interpretation when using qualitative designs (Crosby, 2015).

3.4 Overview of Q-Methodological Procedure

McKeown and Thomas (2013) highlighted five stages in a Q-study:

1. Developing and sampling the concourse
2. Sampling and selecting participants
3. Administering the Q-sort
4. Analysing Q-sort data
5. Factor interpretation

3.4.1 Developing and Sampling the Concourse

Concourse. In any Q-methodological study a *concourse*, which consists of all the possible things which may be said around the topic of study, must first be developed (Webler et al., 2009). The Q-set, which is the set of statements which participants sort, is sampled from this concourse (Webler et al., 2009).

Whilst there is little specific guidance in the literature regarding precisely how the concourse should be developed (Kenward, 2019), a range of methods are recommended including conducting interviews with people who possess knowledge of the research topic and referring to the existing literature on the research topic, for example, newspapers, articles and books (Brown, 1993; Webler et al., 2009).

Q-set. The concourse for any research topic is potentially unlimited (McKeown & Thomas, 2013); therefore a representative sample is taken from the concourse (Watts & Stenner, 2005). This representative sample is the *Q-set*, and contains all of the items that the participants later sort to indicate their subjective viewpoint (Watts & Stenner, 2005).

Each individual Q-statement must add something unique to the overall Q-set and, in its totality, the Q-set must cover the breadth of the topic (Watts & Stenner, 2012). Q-sets can vary in size depending on the topic. Some argue that a Q-set of 40-80 statements is most appropriate (Stainton-Rogers, 1995), while others argue that a Q-set of 20-60 statements is acceptable (Webler et al., 2009).

While the literature suggests that there is “no single or correct way to generate a Q set” (Watts & Stenner, 2012, p.57), the composition of the Q-set is integral given that it forms the tool allowing subjectivity to be expressed by participants (Coogan & Herrington, 2011). Kenward (2019) argues that despite the potentially unlimited concourse, the viewpoints which exist on a topic are finite. Thus, a Q-set which is comprehensive and representative of the wider concourse should allow diverse viewpoints to be represented (Brown, 1980; Coogan & Herrington, 2011; McKeown & Thomas, 2013).

McKeown and Thomas (2013) suggest that unstructured or structured sampling can be utilised to ensure a comprehensive Q-set. Structured sampling can be deductive, taking themes or categories from the theory and arranging potential Q-statements within these, or inductive, where possible statements are organised into categories or themes emerging from analysis of the concourse (McKeown & Thomas, 2013; Webler et al., 2009).

3.4.2 Sampling and Selecting Participants

The *P-set* refers to the participants who complete the Q-sorting activity (Webler et al., 2009).

Q-methodology aims to recruit a sample with a breadth of views on the topic of study (Webler et al., 2009). Different sampling strategies are referred to within the literature including strategic sampling (Watts & Stenner, 2012), opportunity sampling (Watts & Stenner, 2005) and snowball sampling (Webler et al., 2009), though the most pressing question relates to the size of sample required.

It is widely accepted that Q-methodology requires a small participant sample (McKeown & Thomas, 2013) with the literature offering two criteria to support in determining sample size (Webler et al., 2009). One criterion suggests that given between two and five viewpoints are typically extrapolated and that, ideally, between four and six participants should define each viewpoint - a sample of between eight and 30 participants would be appropriate (Webler et al., 2009). A second criterion suggests that within Q-studies there must be more statements than participants, with ratios of 3:1 or 2:1 being suggested (statements: participants) (Watts & Stenner, 2012; Webler et al., 2009).

3.4.3 Administering the Q-Sort

Data collection occurs through the participants each undertaking a *Q-sort* (Brown, 1980).

During this stage participants express their views by ranking each Q-statement, in relation to the other Q-statements, on the Q-grid (Brown, 1993; Watts & Stenner, 2005; 2012). Participants are provided with a *condition of instruction* which tells them how to sort the statements. For example, participants are often requested to sort the Q-statements in terms of how strongly they agree or disagree with them (Brown 1980). Through ranking statements in this way, participants assign their own meaning in line with what is psychologically significant to them (Stephenson, 1936). While the placement of each statement is important, it is the placement of each statement in the context of all the other items which gives specific meaning (Watts & Stenner, 2012).

The Q-sort grid, on which participants are asked to sort the Q-statements onto, is typically laid out in a normal distribution pattern (Watts & Stenner, 2012; Webler et al., 2009). This normal distribution is “numbered from a positive value at one pole, through zero, to the equivalent negative value at the other pole” (Watts & Stenner, 2012, p.78). Each column is assigned a value and a scale, typically, between 11 (+5 through to -5) or 13 (+6 through to -6) is used (Watts & Stenner, 2005), though this is dependent on the size of the Q-set. The use of a normal distribution requires a particular number of items to be placed under each value, thus encouraging participants to think carefully about each statement and where it ranks in the overall sort (Webler et al., 2009).

McKeown and Thomas (2013) suggest a number of steps for the Q-sorting activity. Assuming the condition of instruction relates to how much the respondents agree/disagree with the items, participants are asked to read through the statements and to sort them into three piles; *agree*, *disagree* and *neutral*. Participants are then asked to select the items they ‘most strongly agree’ with and arrange these at the positive pole. How many items this is, is determined by the distribution grid. Participants are then asked to select the items they ‘most strongly disagree’ with and arrange these at the negative pole. Participants are asked to continue to alternate between the positive and negative pole working inwards until all statements are placed on the grid. Researchers may then ask participants to identify the point at which they began to disagree with the statements or agree with the statements – this is called the *zero-salience line* (Webler et al., 2009). The participant’s responses are recorded, and this completed Q-sort ultimately represents their viewpoint on the topic (Coogan & Herrington, 2011).

Following completion of the Q-sort, participants are often asked, through an interview or questionnaire, for additional information which supports the analysis of their Q-sort (Watts & Stenner, 2005; 2012). Questions may ask participants why they placed the statements as they did, particularly those at the two poles, (Brown, 1980; Watts & Stenner, 2012), as well as information about the Q-sort activity, for example, if they feel any items are missing and if any items lacked clarity (Watts & Stenner, 2005; Webler et al., 2009). While Q-studies are most commonly conducted in person, they can also be conducted by post or online (Watts & Stenner, 2012).

3.4.4 Analysing the Q-Sort Data

The completed Q-sorts are correlated prior to the researcher undertaking a factor analysis (Brown, 1980; Stephenson, 1936; Webler et al., 2009), which reveals different factors - patterns - within the data. There are a number of steps within the analysis which will be discussed in greater depth in Chapter 4. These steps are as follows:

Factor Analysis. The correlation matrix is subject to by-person factor analysis, which takes the completed Q-sorts and identifies similarities within them in order to reveal a set of factors explaining as much variance within the data as possible (Watts & Stenner, 2012).

Factor Extraction. Following factor analysis, researchers must decide which factors to extract for rotation (Watts & Stenner, 2005).

Factor Rotation. Watts and Stenner (2012) define factor rotation as “the physical movement or rotation of factors, and their viewpoints, about a central axis point” (p.12). Rotation aims to create the “factor solution” accounting for the most variance within the data (Watts & Stenner, 2012; Webler et al., 2009).

Factor Array. Each extracted factor is represented by a factor array, which is a ‘best-estimate’ Q-sort for that factor, produced by merging together the Q-sorts of participants who significantly loaded onto the factor (Watts & Stenner, 2005).

Factor Interpretation. Following the extraction of factors, the researcher’s task is to interpret the factors in order to give them meaning, and in so doing transform them into viewpoints (Webler et al., 2009). This includes looking at the factor arrays and the qualitative comments collected from the participants who load significantly onto the factor (Watts & Stenner, 2005).

Essentially, each factor indicates a similar way in which a number of participants have ranked statements (Brown, 1980; Coogan & Herrington, 2011; Webler et al., 2009). These factors are then interpreted by the researcher, revealing shared viewpoints in the participant sample (Brown, 1980).

3.5 Quality Indicators of Q-Methodology

Given the qualiquantological nature of Q-methodology, it appears appropriate to consider quality indicators applicable to both qualitative and quantitative research.

3.5.1 *Quantitative Quality Indicators*

Generalisability. Generalisation, the extent to which results from the research can be applied to a wider population of people, is often applied as a quality indicator in quantitative research (Watts & Stenner, 2012). Watts and Stenner (2012) argue that findings from Q-research are not generalisable to a wider population and, in fact, this should not be of interest to a Q-researcher. Q-methodology, rather, identifies the existing viewpoints within the participant sample which can reveal important findings without the need to generalise further (Watts & Stenner, 2012).

Reliability. Van Exel and Graaf (2005) suggest that, where Q-methodology is concerned, replicability is the most appropriate lens with which to consider reliability. Research has reported correlation coefficients of 0.80 (Akhter-Danesh et al. 2008; Brown, 1980) suggesting high levels of consistency in viewpoints across time. However, Watts and Stenner (2005) state that “Q methodology makes no claim to have identified viewpoints that are consistent within individuals across time” (p.19). They argue that a Q-sort is a snapshot of how the participant viewed a topic at one point in time and that it would be reasonable to think that participant’s may change their minds.

Validity. A further quantitative criterion, validity, has been discussed in the context of Q-methodological research. While a number of actions have been suggested to increase the validity of Q-methodological studies, such as, using natural language of the participants for the Q-statements to reduce researcher bias (Webler et al., 2009), Brown (1980) argues that the criterion of validity is not relevant to Q-research. Brown (1980) argues that it is only when participants interact with the Q-set that meaning emerges and, given that Q-methodology is interested in exploring subjectivity, a participant’s point of view cannot be measured against an external criterion.

Ramlo (2016) suggests that whilst Q-studies have often been appraised in reference to the criterion applied to quantitative research and criticised on these grounds, such criterion may not be a wholly appropriate way to judge Q-methodological

research. Given that, theoretically, Q-methodology does not position itself as being concerned with constructs such as validity, reliability and generalisability, the researcher has deemed it more appropriate to consider the quality of the current research in light of qualitative quality indicators.

3.5.2 Qualitative Quality Indicators

While quantitative quality standards are well-established, this is less true within qualitative research (Tracy, 2010). Guba and Lincoln (1989) suggested alternatives to the quantitative criteria of validity, reliability and generalisability suggesting credibility, dependability, and transferability. Tracy (2010) suggests eight criteria for judging the quality of qualitative research studies:

1. Worthy topic – Is the research topic relevant, timely and significant?
2. Rich rigor – Does the research use appropriate theory, sampling, data collection and analysis procedures?
3. Sincerity - Does the research demonstrate the researcher's self-reflexivity and transparency about the procedures?
4. Credibility – Does the research include thick description, triangulation and reflections of the participants?
5. Resonance – Does the researcher influence the audience through their representation and transferable findings?
6. Significant contribution – Does the research make a significant contribution?
7. Ethical – Does the research adhere to ethical guidelines?
8. Meaningful coherence – Does the research achieve its purposes through appropriate methodology, procedure and discussion?

The current research will be assessed according to these standards in Chapter 5.

3.6 Procedure for this Q-Methodological Study

The five stages described in section 3.5 formed the basis for the procedure followed in the current study, which will now be described in detail.

3.6.1 Developing and Sampling the Concourse

The concourse was developed through reviewing relevant literature, and by speaking directly with professionals who were knowledgeable about the topic and whose views were of interest. In the present study this included EPs, a head teacher and a SENCo.

Literature Review. The researcher consulted the literature on supervision, and notably on supervision *in schools*. Whilst reviewing the literature, an Excel spreadsheet was created to record potential Q-statements taken directly from the literature.

Focus Group with EPs. An hour-long focus group with three EPs was undertaken via Microsoft Teams. The researcher used opportunity sampling, emailing EPs working within their host EPS to recruit this sample. While the literature suggests the ideal size for focus groups is somewhere between four and 12 (Morgan, 1998), the researcher used a smaller number due to the fact the focus group was being conducted online and due to challenges presented by the Covid-19 pandemic at the time of the research.

The participating EPs were regularly receiving one-to-one and peer supervision within the EP team, and all had been involved in supervising school staff. While EP views were not of direct interest to the researcher, it was perceived that EPs would have interesting things to say regarding the topic given their role in schools, and their experiences receiving and providing supervision.

A focus group schedule was developed (see Appendix D), using Krueger and Casey's (2009) structure to ensure the inclusion of five types of questions: *opening*, *introductory*, *transition*, *key*, and *end questions*.

During the focus group, the researcher noted down potential Q-statements expressed by the participants onto a word document which was shared on-screen. These statements were reflected back to the participants to ensure their views had been accurately captured. This allowed the participants' own words to be retained, as suggested by Webler et al. (2009).

Interviews with School Staff. Opportunity sampling was used to recruit two members of school staff for two individual, hour-long, semi-structured interviews. Interviews were again conducted via Microsoft Teams.

Participants included:

- A SENCo at an inner-city, mainstream secondary school, who had been receiving supervision-like ‘support’ from an EP (though the SENCo did not herself refer to this support using the term ‘supervision’).
- A head teacher at an inner-city, mainstream infant school, who had attended a supervision training course and was passionate about implementing supervision for their staff.

The researcher developed an interview schedule (see Appendix E), and as with the focus groups, Q-statements were noted down on a word document shared on-screen with interviewees as the interviews progressed.

Statements generated through the interviews were added to the statements generated through the focus groups and reviewing the existing literature. Together, a concourse of 705 potential statements was gathered.

Developing the Q-Set. In order to reduce the concourse to a more manageable size, a number of activities were undertaken.

Firstly, duplicates were removed (Oppenheim, 1992) and, where necessary, statements were further broken down to ensure each contained a single idea (Webler et al., 2009).

Structured sampling (McKeown & Thomas, 2013; Webler et al., 2009) was then conducted by grouping together items that seemed to represent a similar theme.

This process led to a total of 92 themes emerging. In order to create a comprehensive Q-set of approximately 60 items, where possible similar themes were merged, and one Q-statement was selected to represent each of the final themes. The researcher retained the wording of the original statement (i.e. as taken from participants or the text) wherever possible (Webler et al., 2009) and edited statements only to improve clarity (Oppenheim, 1992). In support of this process the researcher:

- Consulted with their placement supervisor in their host LA.
- Consulted with their academic and research supervisor at University.
- Consulted with two TEP colleagues using the same methodology, on three different occasions.

Through these activities the concourse was reduced to a final Q-set of 61 statements which were deemed to represent the concourse.

Piloting the Q-Set. The final Q-set was piloted through an informal Q-sort conducted by an EP, a TEP and a Newly Qualified Teacher (NQT), all of whom provided informed written consent. This pilot sample was gained by drawing upon personal contacts, and professional colleagues in the researcher's host EPS. The purpose of the pilot was twofold; to gain feedback on the Q-set and to gain feedback on the software to be employed in the wider Q-study (the latter is discussed in further detail section 3.6.3).

The aims of the pilot were therefore as follows:

“To gain feedback on the statements in terms of clarity of wording, whether anything felt missing, whether any were hard to handle/understand, etc.”

The EP and TEP both completed the Q-sort activity independently and emailed feedback to the researcher. The NQT completed the Q-sort activity whilst on Microsoft Teams with the researcher, providing verbal feedback as they completed the activity. The pilot concluded that the statements in the Q-set were clear, easily understood, and comprehensive. For this reason, no changes were made to the Q-set.

See Appendix F for the final Q-set.

3.6.2 Sampling and Selecting Participants

The researcher was interested in gaining the viewpoints of a range of school staff including teachers, support staff and senior leaders, with varying experiences of supervision, working in a range of settings including primary, secondary and specialist schools.

While Q-methodology does not require a sample to be representative of the population, the ideal is that the sample will contain as much variability in opinion as possible (McKeown & Thomas, 2013). While this desire for variability led the researcher to consider purposive sampling, the availability of participants at the time of the research (during the Covid-19 pandemic) was challenging, and for this reason, opportunity sampling was employed. Whether or not opportunity sampling is best practice within a Q-study has been debated (Watts & Stenner, 2014), however, Watts

and Stenner (2005) highlight that opportunity sampling avoids researchers making a priori assumptions regarding how participants with different demographic characteristics may view the topic, consistent with the exploratory nature of Q-methodology.

The initial recruitment strategy included the following activities:

- Asking EPs within the researcher's host EPS to forward an email to SENCOs and head teachers at their link schools (see Appendix G). The email set out the purpose of the research, and asked SENCOs and head teachers to contact the researcher directly if they were interested in participating in the study.
- A follow up email was sent by the EPS admin team to the SENCO and/or head teacher in all schools within the LA.

Due to challenges in recruiting participants at this time, a wider recruitment strategy was subsequently also employed. The second stage of recruitment included the following activities:

- A recruitment flyer (see Appendix H) was published in the LA's weekly electronic newsletter sent to all schools.
- From the above activity, the researcher was contacted by an LA colleague, who was a member of the Safeguarding Children Partnership (SCP) for the host LA and another LA. This colleague - and other colleagues on the SCP - expressed an interest in the topic and asked if they could share the research with their school contacts within the region. They subsequently contacted head teachers known to them both within and outside of the researcher's LA, and made contact with leaders of a multi-academy trust outside of the researcher's LA. The SCP also included a link to the recruitment flyer in their own newsletter.
- Speaking at a SENCO ambassador meeting within the LA where SENCOs regularly meet to discuss SEND.
- Contacting another EPS where the researcher had previously completed a professional placement. EPs within this EPS emailed schools and retweeted the recruitment flyer and link to the information sheet on their Twitter account.
- Asking TEP and EP colleagues to share the recruitment flyer with personal contacts who worked in schools. This also led to one participant recommending another participant via snowball sampling.

- Contacting the researcher's personal contacts to share the recruitment flyer. This led to a head teacher sharing the research with staff within four schools under his headship.

Twenty three participants ultimately completed the online Q-sort activity.

Two datasets were excluded leaving a final sample of 21, consistent with the suggested ratios of between 2:1 and 3:1 statements to participants.

Demographic details of the sample are presented in Table 3.2. The final sample were predominately female (76.2%) with a wide range of experience in educational settings.

Table 3.2: A table to show the demographic characteristics of the P-sample.

Demographic	<i>n</i>	%
Gender		
Male	5	23.8
Female	16	76.2
Age (years)		
31-40	6	28.6
41-50	7	33.3
51-60	7	33.3
61-70	1	4.8
Type of setting		
Infant	1	4.8
Junior	1	4.8
Primary	9	42.9
Secondary	7	33.3
Mixed Primary and Secondary	1	4.8
Specialist Primary	1	4.8
Specialist Secondary	1	4.8
Time working in current setting (years)		
0 – 5	6	28.6
6-10	6	28.6
11-15	3	14.3
16-20	4	19.0
21-25	1	4.8
26-31	1	4.8
Time working within education (years)		
6-10	3	14.3
11-15	7	33.3
16-20	7	33.3
21-25	1	4.8
26-31	3	14.3

Region working in		
West Midlands	7	33.3
East Midlands	12	57.1
North East	1	4.8
Yorkshire and Humber	1	4.8

Participants were asked about their current role through an open question in the post-sort questionnaire. The use of open questions allowed participants to self-categorise, consistent with suggestions by Watts and Stenner (2012). Participants largely listed more than one role, therefore for the purpose of analysis, the researcher assigned each participant a *primary* role category dependent on the first role that the participant listed. The final sample consisted of a range of roles including teaching, support, safeguarding, SEND and leadership roles. See Table 3.3 for the self-categorised roles and primary role categories assigned by the researcher.

Table 3.3: A table to show the roles of school staff in the P-sample.

Primary Role Category (Participant's Self-Categorised Role)	<i>N</i>	%
Teacher	<i>n</i> =4	19.0
Teacher	1	
Teacher/SENCo Support	1	
Senior Teacher	1	
Secondary Teacher	1	
Support staff	<i>n</i> =3	14.3
Higher Level TA/ELSA	1	
Inclusion Mentor	1	
Learning Mentor/Safeguarding Advisor/ National	1	
Collaborative Outreach Programme Coordinator		
SEND	<i>n</i> =3	14.3
SENCo	1	
Assistant SENCo	1	
SENCo/Senior Leader/Mental Health Lead/Teacher	1	
Safeguarding	<i>n</i> =5	23.8
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	1	
DSL/Deputy Principal	1	
Family Welfare/Looked After Children's Manager/Deputy DSL	1	
Deputy DSL	1	
Designated Safeguarding and Mental Health Lead	1	
Senior Leader	<i>n</i> =6	28.6
Senior Leader	1	
Senior Lead Practitioner	1	
Head Teacher	2	
Assistant Head Teacher	1	
Deputy/SENCo	1	

In addition to demographic information, the post-sort questionnaire collected information about the participants' experiences of supervision, see Table 3.4.

Table 3.4: A table to show the P-sample's overall experiences of supervision.

Supervision Experience	<i>n</i>	%
Currently experiencing supervision		
Yes	13	61.9
No	8	38.1
Experience of supervision during time working in education		
Yes	14	66.7
No	7	33.3

Participants who had received supervision were asked to provide information regarding the format, frequency and role of the supervisor. Some participants gave multiple responses to these questions therefore percentages have not been calculated. See Table 3.5.

Table 3.5: A table to show the P-sample's experiences of supervision.

Supervision Experience	<i>n</i>
Format of supervision	
One-to-one	8
Group	1
Both	5
Frequency of supervision	
Weekly	4
Fortnightly	2
Every 3 weeks	2
Twice per month	1
Monthly	4
Half-termly	2
Around a particular case	1
Supervisor's job title	
Senior Leader	2
Line Manager	1
SENCo/Assistant Head Teacher	1
Head Teacher	3
Teaching Colleague	2
EP	2
Service Delivery Manager	1
Counsellor/Psychotherapist	2

3.6.3 Administering the Q-sort

Formats of Q-sorting. Face-to-face, postal and online methods can be used to administer the Q-sort activity (Watts & Stenner, 2012). Despite online Q-methodology being potentially advantageous in terms of convenience, face-to-face administration is often regarded as preferable (Watts & Stenner, 2012). Face-to-face interaction between the participant and researcher during the Q-sorting activity has been suggested to support participant engagement, and comments made during the task can be useful

when it comes to interpretation (Nazariadli et al., 2019). The inability of online software to capture this has been linked to suggestions that online studies can be of lower quality (Couper et al., 2001).

Conversely, face-to-face Q-methodology is often regarded as resource intensive (Nazariadli et al., 2019) and some argue that the procedure may lead to a sense of the participant being watched, potentially impacting on their final Q-sort (Cross, 2005; Scott et al., 2014). Further, the presence of the researcher has been suggested to potentially limit replicability over time (Goodman et al., 2016).

Several online Q-methodology platforms have been developed to overcome the limitations of face-to-face Q-methodology (Nazariadli et al., 2019). Due to the challenges presented by the Covid-19 pandemic, the decision was taken to utilise an online Q-methodology software. While the researcher notes the strengths and limitations of online Q-methodology, the pragmatics of the situation were the main driver in this decision.

Online Q-Sorting. A range of online Q-methodology software were considered, and VQMethod (Nazariadli, 2017) was ultimately selected as it:

- Allowed the consent form, Q-sort activity and post-sort questionnaire to be accessed through one link.
- Allowed the researcher to input their own condition of instruction and upload multi-media instructions.
- Allowed participants to see the normal distribution grid as they would during face-to-face administration.
- Appeared to be user-friendly and professional.
- Generated data which was easily downloadable and transferable into PQMethod.
- Was free and fully accessible.
- Had been recommended on a discussion board by another post-graduate researcher.
- Had been evaluated in a peer reviewed article.

Piloting the software. A dual purpose of the piloting stage described earlier, was to pilot the software and task instructions. Table 3.6 outlines the purposes of piloting the software, the feedback received and actions taken by the researcher.

Table 3.6: A table to show the purposes of piloting the online Q software including feedback obtained and actions taken.

Purpose	Feedback from pilot	Action taken
Gain feedback on the software	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easy to use and straight forward. • Small writing for statements and difficult to see all statements at once. Though, statements were easily enlarged. • Nuances of software noted including that clicking particular buttons reset the activity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased font size used for Q-statements. • Supplementary instructions edited to include nuances noted about the software.
Gain feedback on the instructions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Variable feedback: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - On-screen instructions clear enough - On-screen instructions clear but hard to refer to - Other forms of instructions would be useful - Instructions unclear • One participant, who had not experienced supervision, said they had sorted the statements based on how they thought the researcher would define supervision. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Video instructions for the Q-sort activity added. • On-screen instructions edited to reiterate that there were no right or wrong answers in an attempt to decrease social desirability bias.
Gain feedback on the post-sort questionnaire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questions appropriate. • Zero-point of agreement question unclear. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removed zero-point of agreement question.

Gain feedback on length of activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activity took 30-35 minutes which was deemed reasonable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/A
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Procedure. Participants were provided with a link to the online Q-sort activity, enabling them to access the activity when convenient. The link took them to a consent form which had to be completed before beginning the activity (see section 3.7). Instructions were presented in a number of formats given that Watts and Stenner (2012) highlight the critical nature of the written instructions where the researcher is not present during the activity. This included on-screen instructions at each step of the activity (see Appendix I) and a PDF of supplementary instructions (see Appendix J) shared via email or a link in the information sheet. The instructions also included the debrief form.

VQMethod presented the activity in a number of steps, each will be described in turn.

Step 0. Once they had provided informed consent, participants were instructed to read through and familiarise themselves with the Q-statements. The condition of instruction provided to participants asked them to consider each statement in relation to the sentence “As a member of staff working in a school it is my view that...” indicating their level of agreement by sorting items from most agree to most disagree.

Step 1. Participants were asked to sort the statements, presented visually on-screen, one at a time, into three boxes on-screen; *most agree*, *most disagree* and *neither agree nor disagree*.

Step 2. Participants were presented with a normal distribution grid (see Figure 3.1) and asked to sort the statements into the spaces on this grid, beginning at the poles (i.e. +6 and -6) and working inwards until all of the statements were placed on the grid.

Finally, they were instructed to review their completed Q-sort before confirming and moving on.

Most Disagree				Neither Agree nor Disagree								Most Agree	
-6	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5	+6	
(2)												(2)	
	(3)										(3)		
		(4)								(4)			
			(5)						(5)				
				(6)				(6)					
					(7)	(7)	(7)						

Step 3. Participants were asked to type their reasons for selecting the two statements ranked at +6 and the two statements ranked at -6.

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- Demographic information; gender, age, current job title, type of school setting, time working in current setting, time working in education and other roles.
- Experiences of supervision; current and past experiences of supervision, the job title of their supervisor, the frequency and format of supervision.
- Experiences of the Q-sort activity; whether the participant felt their completed Q-sort accurately captured their perspective, whether there were any additional statements they felt should have been included and whether they had any additional comments on the activity.

An additional question asking participants to identify the geographical region in which they work was added as the researcher extended the recruitment process beyond their home LA.

3.6.4 Analysing Q-Sort Data

As this was the researcher's first-time using Q-methodology, walk-through guides by Webler et al. (2009) and Watts and Stenner (2012) were used to support analysis, which was conducted using PQMethod (Schmolk, 2014). The researcher selected PQMethod as it is regarded by the Q-methodological community as effective, user-friendly and freely accessible (Watts & Stenner, 2005). An in-depth description of the analysis undertaken will be given in Chapter 4.

3.6.5 Factor Interpretation

The researcher interpreted the extracted factors using Watts and Stenner's (2012) guide as a prompt. This will be discussed in Chapter 4.

3.7 Ethical Considerations

The research adhered to ethical guidance from the British Psychological Society (BPS) (2004; 2018), the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) (2016) and the University of Nottingham (2009) throughout the research process. Ethical approval was gained from the University of Nottingham Ethics Committee prior to data collection (see Appendix L for letter confirming ethical approval). The main ethical considerations and actions taken to ensure ethical research practice are outlined below.

3.7.1 Informed Consent

Informed consent was gained from all participants prior to the collection of data.

All potential participants were provided with an information sheet outlining the purposes of the research and what the research would entail. Different information sheets were produced for the focus group (see Appendix M), semi-structured interviews (see Appendix N) and the Q-sort activity (see Appendix O). Information sheets highlighted the right to withdraw, issues of confidentiality and made clear that the research was entirely voluntary in nature. Where participants were gained through EPS relationships, the information sheet made clear that working relationships with the EPS would be in no way impacted by decisions whether to volunteer, and verbal head teacher consent was also gained. The information sheet welcomed participants to contact the researcher to ask any questions.

For the focus group and semi-structured interviews, participants were provided with a separate consent form which they were required to sign and return to the researcher before taking part (see Appendix P) and were emailed a debrief sheet following participation (see Appendix Q). For the Q-sort activity, the information sheet contained a link to the research activity where participants were required to give informed consent (see Appendix R). Participants were unable to access the research activity without providing consent. The debrief form was included within the supplementary instructions, which were provided via email or a link in the information sheet. The debrief information contained the researcher's email should participants have any questions, concerns or wanted to request a copy of the findings of the study. While the research was perceived as posing no ethical risks, it was felt that providing an email address for the researcher would cover anything which could arise during the online research activity.

3.7.2 Right to Withdraw

All participants were reminded of their right to withdraw at any point before, during or after the research in both the information form and consent form. Prior to the focus group and semi-structured interviews, this was also verbally reiterated.

3.7.3 Confidentiality

The only data collected during the focus group and semi-structured interviews were the potential Q-statements, as recorded on the word document that was visible to participants.

Data collected through the Q-sort software was confidential. While questions were asked in the post-sort questionnaire relating to gender, age, experience, type of setting and region that the participant worked, no identifying information was collected. While the researcher was able to identify in some instances who had completed the Q-sort, this was not deemed an issue as in research the researcher typically knows whose data belongs to who. A research participant privacy notice was included within the information sheet.

Data was collected and held on the VQMethod software which was password protected. The researcher's account and thus the data will be deleted from the VQMethod website on completion of the examination process.

4 Results

The aim of this chapter is to describe the analysis undertaken, with reference to the literature and key decision points, and to provide a transparent and coherent account of the analysis and subsequent findings. The factor analysis is described, quantitative findings are presented and the viewpoints identified are described.

4.1 Overview of Analysis

PQMethod was used to generate correlations between the Q-sorts, extract and rotate factors and develop factor arrays (Webler et al., 2009). The steps of analysis will now be outlined.

4.2 Factor Analysis

Factor analysis explores the correlation matrix to find groups of similarities known as factors (Watts & Stenner, 2005; McKeown & Thomas, 2013).

Within PQMethod, Principal Component Analysis (PCA) or Centroid Factor Analysis (CFA) are available. While PCA is not traditionally a form of factor analysis, it finds the mathematically “best” solution (Watts & Stenner, 2012). However, Watts and Stenner (2012) posit that within Q-methodology the mathematically “best” solution is of little relevance, particularly at the expense of adequately exploring the data. CFA allows data to be explored through rotation and leaves decisions about solutions until later in the analysis (Watts & Stenner, 2005; 2012). The latter was deemed to fit the exploratory nature of the research; therefore, a CFA was undertaken, initially extracting seven factors from the data.

CFA directs PQMethod to find the largest amount of shared, or common, variance within the data – this becomes factor one (Watts & Stenner, 2012). The software then identifies shared variance in the same way from the remaining data – this becomes factor two (Watts & Stenner, 2012). The analysis continues to do this until no more shared variance, and therefore no more factors, can be extracted from the data (Watts & Stenner, 2012).

4.3 Factor Extraction

PQMethod requires the researcher to decide how many factors they want the programme to find (Webler et al., 2009). The researcher directed PQMethod to find and extract seven factors initially, based on the guidance of Brown (1980).

The CFA led to the generation of a correlation matrix and an unrotated factor matrix. The unrotated factor matrix is displayed in Table 4.1. Within this table, factor loadings are provided indicating the correlation coefficient for each Q-sort with each factor extracted. This indicates how similar each Q-sort is to each factor (Webler et al., 2009), with 1.00 indicating that a Q-sort is identical to the factor. Participants who have sorted the statements in a similar way will load onto the same factor indicating a shared viewpoint (Brown, 1980; 1993; Watts & Stenner, 2005).

Table 4.1: A table to show the unrotated factor matrix including factor loadings for each Q-sort on each factor, eigenvalues and explained variance for each factor.

Q-sorts	Factors						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	0.7923	-0.0571	0.0060	0.1781	0.0419	-0.0855	0.0079
2	0.7439	-0.1291	0.0220	-0.1579	0.0162	0.0922	0.0098
3	0.5765	0.1857	0.0233	-0.0671	0.0008	0.3438	0.1594
4	0.3202	0.4440	0.1944	-0.3930	0.1516	0.2183	0.0573
5	0.6584	-0.1144	0.0177	0.2167	0.0606	0.1490	0.0258
6	0.6169	0.2759	0.0602	0.1573	0.0334	0.0826	0.0079
7	0.7551	-0.2693	0.0862	0.0897	0.0127	0.1863	0.0409
8	0.5692	-0.1729	0.0367	-0.2078	0.0320	-0.1006	0.0110
9	0.6387	0.0549	0.0002	0.0324	0.0027	-0.2212	0.0570
10	0.6414	0.1167	0.0071	0.1328	0.0247	-0.2377	0.0667
11	0.6198	0.2105	0.0316	0.2743	0.0966	-0.1328	0.0194
12	0.5334	-0.0468	0.0042	-0.3940	0.1523	-0.2625	0.0833
13	0.6339	-0.3236	0.1257	-0.1166	0.0071	-0.2951	0.1083
14	0.6361	-0.1452	0.0268	0.2125	0.0584	0.0316	0.0012
15	0.6340	-0.2710	0.0870	0.0698	0.0084	0.1405	0.0229
16	0.5163	-0.1067	0.0156	0.0511	0.0052	0.2995	0.1147
17	0.5706	-0.0820	0.0100	0.1989	0.0515	-0.2506	0.0749
18	0.5297	0.4691	0.2262	-0.0549	0.0005	-0.1227	0.0166
19	0.7592	-0.2634	0.0825	-0.1538	0.0151	0.0091	0.0001
20	0.5954	0.1882	0.0241	0.2775	0.0990	0.0312	0.0012
21	0.5314	0.0876	0.0029	-0.3999	0.1584	0.1217	0.0175
Eigenvalues	8.1068	1.0562	0.1356	0.9571	0.1055	0.7387	0.0780
% of	39	5	1	5	1	4	0
Explained							
Variance							

The researcher examined the unrotated factor matrix and used several criteria to decide how many factors to extract for rotation. These criteria will now be discussed.

4.3.1 Kaiser-Guttman

The Kaiser-Guttman criterion uses eigenvalues, which provide a measure of the “statistical strength and explanatory power” of a factor (Watts & Stenner, 2012, p.105). This criterion recommends that factors with an eigenvalue less than 1.00 are discarded and factors with an eigenvalue of 1.00 or above are retained (Watts & Stenner, 2012). The rationale for that being, that factors with an eigenvalue below 1.00 would account for less variance than one individual Q-sort (Watts & Stenner, 2005). Despite being criticised for being arbitrary (Brown, 1980), the Kaiser-Guttman criterion is generally accepted within the Q-community (Watts & Stenner, 2005; 2012). Reference to Table 4.1 indicates two factors had an eigenvalue above 1.00, suggesting two factors should be extracted and retained.

4.3.2 Two or More Significantly Loading Q-Sorts

Another widely accepted criterion within the Q-research literature is that a factor should only be extracted if it has a minimum of two Q-sorts significantly loading onto it (Brown, 1980). To determine significance at the $p < 0.01$ level within a Q-study, the following formula is used (Brown, 1980):

$$2.58 \times (1/\sqrt{\text{number of items in the Q-set}})$$

The following calculation was completed to ascertain significance at the $p < 0.01$ level for this study:

$$2.58 \times (1/\sqrt{61}) = 0.33 \text{ (rounded to 2 decimal places)}$$

Reference to Table 4.1 indicates that three factors had two or more significantly loading Q-sorts, suggesting three factors should be extracted and retained.

4.3.3 Humphrey's Rule

Humphrey's rule (Fruchter, 1954) suggests that for a factor to be deemed significant, and therefore be extracted for rotation, the “cross-product of its two highest

loadings (ignoring the sign) exceeds twice the standard error” (Brown, 1980, p.223).

Brown (1980) provides the following formula for calculating standard error:

$$1 / (\sqrt{\text{number of items in the Q-set}})$$

The following calculation was completed to ascertain the standard error for this study:

$$1 / (\sqrt{61}) = 0.13 \text{ (rounded to 2 decimal places)}$$

Therefore, twice the standard error:

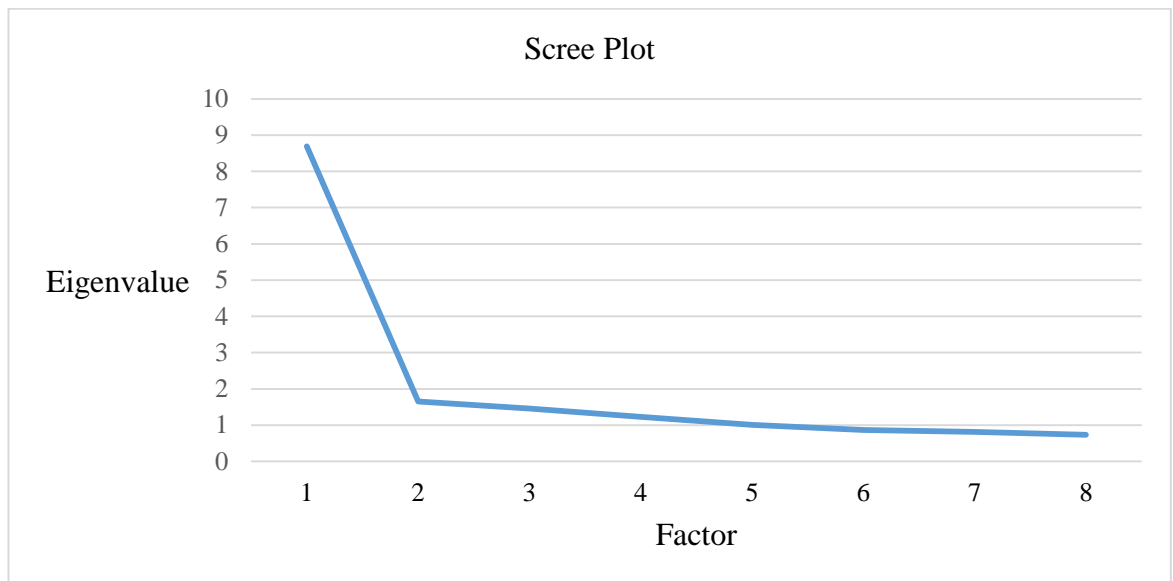
$$0.13 \times 2 = 0.26 \text{ (rounded to 2 decimal places)}$$

Brown (1980) suggests that Humphrey’s law can be more liberally applied, in that, those factors exceeding once the standard error could be retained. Calculations for Humphrey’s law using the original criterion and Brown’s (1980) criterion can be found in Appendix S, suggesting one or three factors respectively should be extracted and retained.

4.3.4 Scree Test

The Scree Test (Cattell, 1966) involves plotting the eigenvalues onto a line graph and visually inspecting where the slope of the line changes direction (Watts & Stenner, 2012). The point at which this change occurs suggests the number of factors to extract for rotation (Ledesma et al., 2015). The Scree Test (Cattell, 1966) was designed for use with PCA, therefore the researcher ran a PCA, prior to the CFA, to obtain the eigenvalues for the Scree plot (Watts & Stenner, 2012). The Scree plot (see Figure 4.1) was shown to two TEPs and the researcher’s academic supervisor. All agreed that the line changed at two, suggesting the extraction of two factors for rotation.

Figure 4.1: Scree Plot.



4.3.5 Factors Selected for Rotation

The four criteria suggested between one and three factors for extraction, see Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: A table to show the recommended number of factors to extract based on each criterion discussed.

Criterion	Recommended number of factors for extraction
Kaiser-Guttman	2
Two or more loading Q-sorts	3
Humphrey's Rule	
Standard error	3
Twice the standard error	1
Scree Test	2

The researcher decided to initially proceed in extracting and rotating three factors.

4.4 Factor Rotation

Rotation of the extracted factors is conducted to make the factors “more relevant or meaningful” (Webler et al., 2009, p.10). Within rotation, the factor loadings generated through the factor analysis are expressed as correlations relative to each factor (Watts & Stenner, 2012). The coordinates visually represent the mapping of each Q-sort relative to every other Q-sort, therefore, the closer the coordinates of two Q-sorts, the more similarity they hold (Watts & Stenner, 2012). The purpose of rotation is to increase the amount of Q-sorts which significantly load onto only one factor (Watts & Stenner, 2012).

Data can be hand-rotated or subject to varimax rotation (Watts & Stenner, 2005). By-hand rotation is favoured by prominent Q-researchers, such as, Stephenson (1953) and Brown (1980), and is particularly useful where there are preconceived ideas about what to look for within the data (Watts & Stenner, 2012). By-hand rotation, or manual rotation, requires the researcher to physically rotate the factors to find the best solution, however, it has been perceived by some critics as introducing subjectivity (Watts & Stenner, 2012). Conversely, varimax rotation is automatically completed by the statistical software and aims to create the “factor solution” which accounts for the most variance (Webler et al., 2009; Watts & Stenner, 2014). Webler et al. (2009) argue that varimax is often preferable, due to its transparency and ease, and that varimax rotation fits with Q’s aim to reveal shared viewpoints (Watts & Stenner, 2005; 2012). Watts and Stenner (2012) recommend the use of varimax rotation, followed by manual rotation, to overcome shortcomings and maximise on strengths.

4.4.1 Three-Factor Solution

The three extracted factors were rotated using varimax rotation. Inspection of the rotated factor loadings indicated that a three-factor solution was not appropriate, with no Q-sorts significantly loading onto factor 3 after rotation.

4.4.2 Two-Factor Solution

The two extracted factors were rotated using varimax rotation. This led to a solution which accounted for 43% variance. This was deemed acceptable given Kline’s (1994) suggestion that a factor solution accounting for between 35-40% is acceptable.

In total, 12 of the 21 Q-sorts significantly loaded onto either factor 1 or 2 (Factor 1: 10, Factor 2: 2) using $p < 0.01 = 0.33$. While this met the criteria of two or more significant sorts per factor, nine Q-sorts were noted to be ‘confounding’ - meaning that they loaded significantly onto both factors.

Webler et al. (2009) suggest that a final solution needs clarity, i.e. as many Q-sorts should load onto the factors as possible. To reduce confounding sorts, and therefore include more voices in the final factor model, the significance level was increased to 0.43, as recommended by Watts and Stenner (2012). With this higher significance level, 19 of the 21 Q-sorts loaded onto either factor 1 or factor 2 (Factor 1: 13, Factor 2: 6), leaving only one confounding Q-sort and one Q-sort which did not significantly load onto either factor. The researcher employed manual rotation in an attempt to decrease these confounding sorts/non-loaders further, however, no improvements to the model could be achieved and the two-factor solution produced through the varimax rotation alone was retained as the best and final solution.

4.4.3 Factor Comparisons

The PQMethod output includes correlation coefficients indicating correlations between factors. Watts and Stenner (2012) suggest interrogating these prior to factor interpretation noting that some inter-correlation is inevitable, but that high correlations may indicate a single viewpoint rather than distinct viewpoints within the data. Table 4.3 presents the correlations between the two factors in the study.

Table 4.3: A table to show correlations between the two factors.

Factor	1	2
1	1.0000	0.6171
2	0.6171	1.0000

Dancey and Reidy (2007) suggest the following conventions to determine the strength of correlations:

- 0= zero
- 0.1-0.3= weak
- 0.4-0.6= moderate

- 0.7-0.9= strong
- 1= perfect

Using these conventions, the factors were deemed to be moderately correlated. While Webler et al. (2009) highlight the need for distinctness in deciding on the final factor solution, they argue that, whilst lower correlation coefficients between factors are ideal, higher correlations are acceptable particularly, where distinguishing statements are of importance to the topic at hand.

4.4.4 Final Factor Solution

The two-factor solution was retained as final. The final solution explained 43% of the study variance, with 19 of 21 Q-sorts significantly loading onto one of the two factors. One Q-sort was confounding and one Q-sort did not load significantly onto either factor. While there was a moderate correlation between the two factors, the factors were deemed different enough to be considered distinct viewpoints.

The two-factor solution was consistent with Webler et al.'s (2009) criteria of:

1. Simplicity – the minimum number of factors necessary were retained.
2. Clarity - confounding and non-significant Q-sorts were minimised.
3. Distinctiveness – the two factors were moderately correlated.
4. Stability – Q-sorts clustered together demonstrating similarities.

Table 4.4 shows the final two-factor solution. Bold correlation coefficients followed by an X indicate where Q-sorts significantly load onto a factor. Confounding Q-sorts and non-significant Q-sorts are highlighted in red and grey respectively. As PQMethod only provides eigenvalues for the unrotated factor matrix, eigenvalues for the rotated factors were calculated using the following formula (Brown, 1980):

Variance \times (number of Q-sorts/100)

Table 4.4: A table to show the final two-factor solution with significantly loading, confounding and non-significant Q-sorts indicated.

Q-sorts	Factors	
	1	2
1	0.6749X	0.4189
2	0.6780X	0.3322
3	0.3577	0.4888X
4	-0.0014	0.5474X
5	0.6002X	0.2939
6	0.3374	0.5856X
7	0.7694X	0.2252
8	0.5623X	0.1942
9	0.4848X	0.4194
10	0.4507	0.4710
11	0.3782	0.5343X
12	0.4593X	0.2752
13	0.7031X	0.1102
14	0.6002X	0.2559
15	0.6724X	0.1528
16	0.4806X	0.2168
17	0.5100X	0.2686
18	0.1534	0.6908X
19	0.7692X	0.2325
20	0.3715	0.5020X
21	0.3787	0.3829
Total Participants	13	6
Eigenvalue	5.88	3.15
% Explained Variance	28	15

4.5 Factor Arrays

In order to interpret the factors and transform them into viewpoints, factor arrays were produced and analysed (Watts & Stenner, 2012).

For each factor, PQMethod uses the significantly loading Q-sorts to calculate factor scores for each statement, in terms of where it was placed in the Q-sort (Watts & Stenner, 2012). PQMethod uses weighted averages giving a higher weighting to the Q-sorts with a higher factor loading (Brown, 1993). Confounding Q-sorts are excluded from this process (Watts & Stenner, 2012). Weighted scores are converted to z scores allowing comparisons to be made between factors (Watts & Stenner, 2012). PQMethod calculates whether the differences between z scores for each statement are statistically significant (van Excel & de Graaf, 2005). Those which are significantly different are considered to be ‘distinguishing statements’, whereas those which are not are considered to be ‘consensus statements’ (van Excel & de Graaf, 2005).

Table 4.5 indicates the factor scores, presented as z score and rank position, for each statement for each factor. The z scores were used to produce a factor array in the form of an idealised Q-sort for each factor which will be presented with each factor interpretation.

Table 4.5: A table to show factor scores, as z scores and rank score, for each statement, for each factor.

Statement Number	Statement	Factor 1		Factor 2	
		Rank	z score	Rank	z score
1	Supervision is of no benefit to me.	-6	-2.408	-6	-2.198
2	My need for supervision changes over time.	0	0.254	2	0.503
3	All school staff need supervision.	0	0.357	0	-0.024
4	Supervision of school staff is integral to achieving the best for children and young people.	5	1.093	1	0.447
5	Supervision safeguards the wellbeing of school staff.	2	0.749	2	0.790
6	Supervision needs to be voluntary for school staff.	-3	-0.993	3	1.076
7	The term supervision is often misunderstood by school staff.	1	0.409	5	1.340
8	Supervision is already happening in schools under a different name.	-1	-0.132	-2	-0.553

9	Supervision enables managers to evaluate staff performance.	-3	-0.939	-2	-0.481
10	Accessing supervision will make my peers think that I cannot cope.	-5	-1.698	-5	-1.275
11	Supervision is often a tick box exercise being imposed upon school staff.	-4	-1.390	-4	-1.207
12	Supervision helps school staff to learn and develop as professionals.	3	0.846	2	0.748
13	There is not enough time for supervision.	-2	-0.513	3	0.842
14	I find the idea of supervision daunting.	-5	-1.656	-4	-1.171
15	For supervision to be successful in schools there would need to be an appropriate space.	-1	-0.062	1	0.327
16	There is not enough funding for schools to provide supervision for their staff.	-2	-0.895	4	1.125
17	The support of senior leaders is vital if supervision is to be successful.	3	0.949	5	1.378
18	Supervision is only needed in schools in difficult contexts.	-5	-1.919	-5	-2.175

19	Schools need training on supervision if they are going to implement it properly.	2	0.548	5	1.499
20	Supervision needs to be embedded into whole-school culture to be successful.	5	1.176	6	1.751
21	Supervision is not prioritised in schools.	-2	-0.386	0	0.266
22	Supervisees need to be able to trust that their supervisor will keep things confidential.	4	0.951	1	0.475
23	Supervision sessions need to have a fixed structure.	-3	-0.947	-3	-0.808
24	Supervision is more valuable when it is one-to-one.	-2	-0.369	2	0.762
25	For supervision to be successful the purpose must be clear.	2	0.774	1	0.474
26	A formal written record of supervision is unnecessary.	-3	-1.213	-5	-1.561
27	Supervision only works when it is at a planned time.	-3	-1.186	0	-0.100
28	Supervision sessions need to be regular.	-1	-0.052	1	0.290
29	The skill-set of the supervisor determines	1	0.522	4	1.148

	the success of supervision.				
30	Supervisors should ideally be from outside of the school setting.	-4	-1.238	0	0.194
31	Supervision must be provided by someone who has been suitably trained.	3	0.936	4	1.186
32	The supervisor must understand my role.	1	0.365	3	0.904
33	The relationship between the supervisor and supervisee is key to how effective supervision is.	0	0.302	0	0.127
34	Supervision enables supervisees' concerns to be heard.	1	0.440	1	0.412
35	Supervision gives supervisees the space to reflect on their practice.	6	1.763	4	1.210
36	Supervision is strictly for discussing professional matters.	-4	-1.643	-3	-0.869
37	Supervision needs to be collaborative.	2	0.678	1	0.460
38	Supervision is only helpful when supervisees are given direct answers.	-4	-1.637	-4	-1.260
39	Supervision must be non-judgemental.	2	0.793	6	1.890

40	Supervision helps supervisees to develop solutions to problems where they feel stuck.	1	0.524	0	0.205
41	Supervision increases supervisees' confidence.	-1	0.248	-1	-0.214
42	Supervision is not a place to feel challenged.	-1	-0.195	2	0.643
43	Supervision ensures the supervisees' strengths and achievements are recognised.	4	0.988	-3	-0.911
44	Supervision makes supervisees more self-aware.	4	1.079	-1	-0.412
45	Supervision encourages supervisees to think differently.	3	0.802	3	1.007
46	Supervision gives supervisees the chance to offload.	-1	0.075	-2	-0.528
47	Supervision makes supervisees feel valued as professionals.	3	0.935	-2	-0.424
48	Supervision empowers supervisees.	6	1.268	-2	-0.554
49	Supervision is a reassuring experience.	0	0.314	-1	-0.346
50	Supervision allows supervisees to explore their worries.	1	0.437	3	0.793

51	Supervision helps supervisees to feel re-energised.	0	0.273	-2	-0.737
52	Supervision enables supervisees to cope with the stress of their role.	2	0.629	-1	-0.212
53	Supervision helps supervisees to feel less alone when facing challenges.	5	1.168	0	-0.087
54	Supervision enables supervisees to stay physically well.	-2	-0.525	-1	-0.338
55	Supervision facilitates a better work-life balance.	-2	-0.263	-4	-1.236
56	Supervision is integral to supervisees being able to do their job effectively.	0	0.266	-3	-1.101
57	Supervision supports the development of key working relationships.	0	0.275	-1	-0.110
58	Good quality staff supervision supports staff retention.	1	0.467	-3	-0.888
59	Poor supervision can make things feel worse.	4	1.074	-1	-0.293
60	Supervision is a waste of time.	-6	-2.590	-6	-2.703
61	The more experience you have of being	-1	0.121	2	0.501

supervised, the more
you are able to gain
from the process.

4.6 Factor Interpretation

The notion of abduction is key to the factor interpretation process, as the researcher uses information in the factor array to capture and summarise the viewpoint in the language of the Q-statements (Watts & Stenner, 2012). Of key importance in generating the qualitative summaries is remaining true to the gestalt principle, by ensuring that how the Q-statements are interrelated in the context of the whole factor array is the focus of interpretation, rather than focusing on the polarities at the expense of other items (Watts & Stenner, 2012). To ensure that the summaries were holistic and systematic, the researcher developed a crib sheet for each factor (Watts & Stenner, 2012). Within the first draft of the crib sheets the researcher included:

- The highest ranked statements (+6, +5)
- The lowest ranked statements (-6, -5)
- The statements which ranked higher than the other factor
- The statements that ranked lower than the other factor

A second draft of each crib sheet was generated including demographic information and any other items which seemed interesting to the holistic interpretation. The researcher considered the distinguishing statements (see Table 4.6 below) and qualitative comments collected in the post-sort questionnaire when generating the qualitative summaries (Watts & Stenner, 2005; Webler et al., 2009).

Table 4.6: A table to show distinguishing statements between the two factors.

An asterisk (*) indicates significance at the $p < 0.01$ level, all other statements are significant at the $p < 0.05$ level.

Statement number	Statement	Factor 1		Factor 2	
		Rank	z-score	Rank	z-score
35.	Supervision gives supervisees the space to reflect on their practice.	6	1.76	4	1.21
*48.	Supervision empowers supervisees.	6	1.27	-2	-0.55
20.	Supervision needs to be embedded into whole-school culture to be successful.	5	1.18	6	1.75
*53.	Supervision helps supervisees to feel less alone when facing challenges.	5	1.17	0	-0.09
4.	Supervision of school staff is integral to achieving the best for children and young people.	5	1.09	1	0.45
*44.	Supervision makes supervisees more self-aware.	4	1.08	-1	-0.41
*59.	Poor supervision can make things feel worse.	4	1.07	-1	-0.29
*43.	Supervision ensures the supervisees' strengths and achievements are recognised.	4	0.99	-3	-0.91
22.	Supervisees need to be able to trust that their supervisor will keep things confidential.	4	0.95	1	0.47
*47.	Supervision makes supervisees feel valued as professionals.	3	0.93	-2	-0.42

*39.	Supervision must be non-judgemental.	2	0.79	6	1.89
*52.	Supervision enables supervisees to cope with the stress of their role.	2	0.63	-1	-0.21
*19.	Schools need training on supervision if they are going to implement it properly.	2	0.55	5	1.50
*29.	The skill-set of the supervisor determines the success of supervision.	1	0.52	4	1.15
*58.	Good quality staff supervision supports staff retention.	1	0.47	-3	-0.89
*7.	The term supervision is often misunderstood by school staff.	1	0.41	5	1.34
32.	The supervisor must understand my role.	1	0.36	3	0.90
*49.	Supervision is a reassuring experience.	0	0.31	-1	-0.35
*51.	Supervision helps supervisees to feel re-energised.	0	0.27	-2	-0.74
*56.	Supervision is integral to supervisees being able to do their job effectively.	0	0.27	-3	-1.10
46.	Supervision gives supervisees the chance to offload.	-1	-0.07	-2	-0.53
*42.	Supervision is not a place to feel challenged.	-1	-0.20	2	0.64
*55.	Supervision facilitates a better work-life balance.	-2	-0.26	-4	-1.24
*24.	Supervision is more valuable when it is one-to-one.	-2	-0.37	2	0.76

*21.	Supervision is not prioritised in schools.	-2	-0.39	0	0.27
*13.	There is not enough time for supervision.	-2	-0.51	3	0.84
*16.	There is not enough funding for schools to provide supervision for their staff.	-2	-0.89	4	1.13
*6.	Supervision needs to be voluntary for school staff.	-3	-0.99	3	1.08
*27.	Supervision only works when it is at a planned time.	-3	-1.19	0	-0.10
*30.	Supervisors should ideally be from outside of the school setting.	-4	-1.24	0	0.19
*36.	Supervision is strictly for discussing professional matters.	-4	-1.64	-3	-0.87
14.	I find the idea of supervision daunting.	-5	-1.66	-4	-1.17

The final crib sheets can be found in Appendix T.

The researcher recognised the potential for their own subjectivity to influence the factor interpretation stage. To overcome this, Q-researchers are advised to check their factor interpretations with participants who load significantly onto each factor (Watts & Stenner, 2005). Unfortunately, this was not possible due to the anonymity of the data collection process and time constraints as a result of difficulties recruiting. The researcher also noted that many published online Q-studies do not typically carry out member checks in the same way that face-to-face studies typically do (for example, Lazard & Capdevilla, 2020).

However, the researcher still recognised the need to ensure reflexivity and to lessen the influence of their own biases and views on the interpretations as much as possible. Therefore, the researcher adopted a three-phase strategy based on the Recaptured-Item Technique (RIT) (Meehl et al., 1971). The RIT was developed as a way to reduce subjectivity in factor naming, thus the researcher felt this could be adapted to reduce subjectivity in factor interpretation and naming viewpoints. The following process was used:

1. Crib sheets were shared with two TEP colleagues who were asked to identify key characteristics for each factor. These were compared to the researcher's initial thoughts to ensure nothing important had been missed.
2. Factor interpretations were shared with the same TEP colleagues who were asked to identify what they felt needed to be included in the summary, and possible factor names. These were compared to the researcher's summaries and factor names to ensure nothing important had been missed.
3. Summaries for each viewpoint were shared with two different TEP colleagues who were asked to generate a factor name for each summary. These were compared with the researcher's factor names and edited to encompass all important aspects.

The two viewpoints will be presented in turn using the following structure:

- Factor array
- Demographic information: To maintain the confidentiality of participants, the demographic information has been presented for each factor as a general summary.

- Qualitative interpretation: The statement number followed by the rank position are presented within brackets, for example, (5: +6) indicates statement 5, which was ranked +6 within the factor array. Quotes from the post-sort questionnaire are included to triangulate the quantitative data.
- Summary of viewpoint

The term viewpoint will be used going forward to qualitatively discuss each factor, with factor 1 becoming Viewpoint 1 and factor 2 becoming Viewpoint 2. The term factor will be used only when referring to quantitative data.

4.6.1 Viewpoint 1: Achievable and Necessary: Quality Supervision Benefits the Whole-School System

4.6.1.1 Viewpoint 1: Factor Array

Figure 4.2: Factor Array for Viewpoint 1.

-6	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5	+6
60	18	36	26	16	42	3	40	39	17	44	20	35
1	10	38	27	54	8	49	29	25	31	59	53	48
	14	11	6	13	15	33	58	5	47	43	4	
		30	23	21	28	57	34	37	12	22		
			9	24	46	51	50	52	45			
				55	61	56	7	19				
					41	2	32					

For the Viewpoint 1 crib sheet - detailing the ranking of individual items within the viewpoint - see Appendix T.

4.6.1.2 Viewpoint 1: Demographic Information

13 participants significantly loaded onto Factor 1 using the increased $p < 0.01$ level of 0.43. Factor 1 accounted for 28% of the explained variance and had an eigenvalue of 5.88.

Demographic details for participants significantly loading onto this factor were as follows:

- Gender: female (n=10), male (n=3)
- Age bracket: 31-40 (n=4), 41-50 (n=4), 51-60 (n=5)
- Experience in education: 6-10 (n=2), 11-15 (n=4), 16-20 (n=3), 21-25 (n=1), 26-31 (n=3)
- Setting: junior (n=1), mainstream primary (n=5), specialist primary (n=1), mainstream secondary (n=4), specialist secondary and PRU (n=1), mixed primary and secondary (n=1)
- Primary role: teacher (n=2), support staff (n=3), safeguarding (n=1), SEND (n=2), senior leader (n=5)

The participant's experiences of supervision were as follows:

- Experience of supervision: yes (n=10), no (n=3)
- Format of supervision: one-to-one (n=6), group (n=1), both (n=3)
- Frequency of supervision: case-by-case (n=1), weekly (3), fortnightly (n=2), monthly (n=2), half-termly (n=1), mixed (n=1)
- Role of supervisor: internal to school (n=6), external (n=3), both (n=1)

4.6.1.3 Viewpoint 1: Interpretation

Viewpoint 1 was named: *Achievable and Necessary: Quality Supervision Benefits the Whole-School System.*

School staff holding this viewpoint perceived supervision as positive and valuable, disagreeing that supervision is a waste of time (60: -6) and of no benefit (1: -6).

'Thinking about how to better support pupils/children is never a waste of time (...).'

(Participant 1)

'Supervision has played a great part in making me a more reflective practitioner. It has benefitted me in so many other ways and as a team leader I recognise the many important roles it has to play in people's work and want to set that up formally in order to support other staff who may feel day to day burdens in their professional role.'

(Participant 15)

In contrast to Viewpoint 2 (discussed below), participants subscribing to this viewpoint perceived supervision as empowering (48: +6) suggesting supervision is an enabling and motivating experience supporting supervisees to take responsibility and action when it comes to their work.

‘(...) being able to have time to reflect upon cases/issues/problems with a supervisee can & should empower the supervisee to think around the case, whilst standing back & being more objective & to be able to find solutions/next steps and actions (...).’

(Participant 7)

Further, participants highlighted the importance of supervision as a place to recognise strengths and achievements (43: +4), supporting staff to feel valued (47: +3) and positively impacting staff retention (58: +1).

‘(...) being recognised for practice that is good is also key as positive reinforcement really helps with morale and motivation.’

(Participant 19)

‘If staff are happy and feel valued in their role, then they will not look for jobs elsewhere. I have seen this evidenced on both ends of the spectrum.’

(Participant 13)

Participants showed some level of disagreement, however, with the notion that supervision increases confidence (41: -1).

Staff holding this viewpoint had clear views on what they regarded to be the purposes of supervision, disagreeing that supervision is a space for performance management (9: -3).

‘I believe that supervision should be a space to support- staff performance should be completed in another remit.’

(Participant 16)

Rather, they saw supervision as a space to facilitate professional growth and development through reflecting on practice (35: +6), learning and developing as professionals (12: +3) and thinking differently (45: +3).

‘With the correct level of training a supervisor can ask the right questions that allow a supervisee to reflect on their practice and walk themselves through the problem and 9 times out of 10 work out a solution. This can happen simply from having space and time to reflect on issues and concerns.’

(Participant 2)

‘Because each time that I use supervision, I think deeper about my own practice and what I could do differently. Knowing that most of the time, it is the adult that needs to change something, not the child. At times, I might have not thought about something that others ‘removed’ may ask me about during a supervision session.’

(Participant 14)

In comparison to Viewpoint 2, participants recognised the role of supervision in personal growth, strongly agreeing that supervision can help supervisees become more self-aware (44: +4). Consistent with this, participants highlighted the active role of the supervisee, disagreeing that supervision is only helpful when direct answers are given (38: -4) and viewing collaboration as necessary (37: +2).

‘Supervision for me is not giving direct answers (on the whole.) This is quite dictatorial and would not benefit the skills, knowledge, and confidence of the supervisee to make decisions and a difference in their role. There may be a time when a direct answer is needed (...)’

(Participant 7)

‘Collaborative, non-judgemental reflection allows supervisees the time and thought space to develop their practice, which in turn will help pupils to achieve their best.’

(Participant 1)

In contrast with Viewpoint 2, participants holding this viewpoint showed some level of disagreement that supervision is not a place to be challenged (42: -1) further

supporting the notion that participants perceived supervision as facilitative of personal and professional growth.

‘The chance to receive healthy challenge and see a situation from another point of view almost lifts a weight that you often don't even realise has been bearing down on you.’

(Participant 15)

Participants disagreed that supervision is just for discussing professional matters (36: -4) and apparently perceived supervision as a supportive tool. This suggests that participants holding this viewpoint recognised supervision as a holistic experience.

‘As a senior leader, I do feel that it is incredibly important to keep sights on how staff are feeling and their wellbeing related to professional worries and those outside of school which may be affecting their work.(...)’

(Participant 13)

Participants strongly endorsed the role of supervision in helping staff feel less alone when facing challenges (53: +5) suggesting that supervision was perceived within this viewpoint as a connecting experience. However, participants responded neutrally to statements suggesting that supervision supports working relationships (57: 0) and that the supervisory relationship is key to effective supervision (33: 0).

‘It is an opportunity and space for supervisees to feel supported when facing challenges.’

(Participant 16)

‘(...) Stress is inevitable and no-one should feel alone or isolated in their decisions (...).’

(Participant 7)

Participants perceived supervision to help staff cope with the stress of their role (52: +2), explore worries (50: +1) and as supportive of wellbeing (55: +2). This reinforces the perception that supervision supports the individual in a holistic way.

'All colleagues require supervision. Not only to discuss the key challenges of the role and those that we support but also for their own support and wellbeing.'

(Participant 14)

'(Supervision is) of the highest importance for both good mental well-being and productivity of the member of staff. Good mental health is vital, and supervision is a chance to offload or talk through issues in job role, consider actions.'

(Participant 5)

While the qualitative comment above referred to supervision as a chance to offload, this viewpoint indicated some level of disagreement that this is a function of supervision (46: -1). Participants also disagreed that supervision facilitates work-life balance (55: -2) or enables staff to stay physically well (54: -2).

Within this viewpoint the indirect impact of supervision in supporting CYP to achieve the best outcomes was highlighted (4: +5), suggesting participants holding this viewpoint perceived the benefits of supervision to go beyond the individual practitioner.

'Supervision provides a safe space for teachers to reflect on their practice, to develop new skills and knowledge enabling them to provide the best for those young people in education.'

(Participant 12)

'Supervision allows school staff to understand situations, feelings etc. and explore how best to support the pupils, which in turn supports the pupils achieving their best.'

(Participant 1)

To a slightly lesser extent than in Viewpoint 2, school culture was highlighted. The importance of embedding supervision within whole-school culture was recognised (20: +5), as well as the support of senior leaders (17: +3) and the importance of staff training (19: +2).

'(...)if it is fully supported by school leaders and staff have training re this, it will become a way of life and more supportive and proactive practices can come about that impact positively on our young people and families.'

(Participant 7)

Participants subscribing to this viewpoint highlighted the potential negative impact of poor supervision (59: +4) suggesting that it is not just access to supervision that is important to those holding this viewpoint, but access to good quality supervision. This was supported by the importance placed on a suitably trained supervisor (31: +3) who keeps things confidential (22: +4).

'Processes not properly conducted can lead to negative feelings and a deterioration in relationships.'

(Participant 8)

'Supervision needs to be undertaken with a senior leader who has had adequate training and there needs to be an agreed set of 'rules' for supervision to be successful. If it is rushed or carried out by untrained supervisors, it can hurt relationships within the school team and cause division and then the purpose of supervision will become lost.'

(Participant 2)

Participants disagreed that the supervisor needs to be external (30: -4). They placed some importance on formal arrangements, in terms of supervision having a clear purpose (25: +2) and disagreed that a formal written record was unnecessary (26: -3). However, participants subscribing to this viewpoint disagreed that supervision only works at a planned time (27: -3), needs a fixed structure (23: -3) and needs to be regular (28: -1), suggesting that they valued some degree of flexibility. In contrast with Viewpoint 2, participants showed some level of disagreement that one-to-one supervision is more valuable (24: -2).

The importance of a non-judgemental space (39: +2), supervisor skill-set (29: +1) and understanding the supervisee's role (32: +1) were perceived to be of some importance - although to a lesser extent than in Viewpoint 2. In stark contrast with Viewpoint 2, school staff holding this viewpoint perceived that supervision is achievable within the school resources, disagreeing that there is not enough time (13: -2), funding (16: -2) or space (15: -1) for supervision. This suggests that this viewpoint perceived the benefits of supervision to outweigh the potential costs and barriers.

'Supervision is integral in ensuring staff are looked after and able to do a good job. It is time worth committing for a better outcome for all parties.'

(Participant 13)

School staff holding this viewpoint perceived that their positive view of supervision was shared with colleagues, disagreeing that supervision is daunting (14: -5), that accessing supervision will make their peers think that they cannot cope (10: -5) and that supervision is a tick box exercise (11: -4).

'Supervision is part of our culture and all colleagues are able to access supervision, so none feel it is a black mark against them.'

(Participant 17)

Participants holding this viewpoint showed some level of disagreement that supervision is not prioritised already in schools (21: -2) and strong disagreement that supervision is only needed in schools in difficult contexts (18: -5). This suggests that this viewpoint advocated for universal access to supervision across school settings.

'At whatever level there needs to be some form of quality supervision/support in whatever role. The organisation will function much more smoothly.'

(Participant 5)

In contrast with Viewpoint 2, school staff holding this viewpoint disagreed that supervision needs to be voluntary (6: -3), however one qualitative comment was at odds with this.

'Everyone, as long as it is voluntary, would benefit from supervision.'

(Participant 1)

While participants appeared to advocate for universal access to supervision to some extent, participants responded neutrally to the suggestion that all school staff need supervision (3: 0). This may suggest that while supervision should be available for all it should not be *compulsory* for all, suggesting some staff roles may need it more than others.

'It may not be relevant to someone's role.'

(Participant 8)

4.6.1.4 Summary of Viewpoint 1: *Achievable and Necessary: Quality Supervision Benefits the Whole-School System*

School staff holding Viewpoint 1 perceived supervision to be a positive and valuable tool needed in all schools. However it appeared important to those holding this viewpoint that quality supervision is offered by a skilled supervisor and that it remains confidential. Participants endorsing this viewpoint perceived multiple benefits for the individual practitioner including feeling empowered, celebrating strengths and feeling valued. In addition, staff subscribing to this viewpoint perceived the benefits of supervision as reaching beyond the individual practitioner and indirectly reaching CYP in their care. The purpose of supervision was perceived to be to facilitate personal and professional development and ensure the supervisee feels supported. Staff holding this viewpoint perceived that supervision is achievable within the resources of schools and that it should be embedded in whole-school culture.

4.6.2 Viewpoint 2: *Cautious Optimism: To be Successful Supervision Must be Clearly Defined, Embedded, Safe, Optional and Responsive*

4.6.2.1 Viewpoint 2: Factor Array

Figure 4.3: Factor Array for Viewpoint 2.

-6	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5	+6
60	18	38	56	51	44	21	22	5	6	35	19	39
1	26	55	43	48	49	40	25	24	45	31	17	20
	10	11	58	8	54	30	37	12	32	29	7	
		14	36	46	59	33	4	42	13	16		
			23	9	41	3	34	2	50			
				47	52	53	15	61				
					57	27	28					

For the Viewpoint 2 crib sheet - detailing the ranking of individual items within the viewpoint - see Appendix T.

4.6.2.2 Viewpoint 2: Demographic Information

Six participants significantly loaded onto Factor 2 using the increased $p < 0.01$ level of 0.43. Factor 2 accounted for 15% of the explained variance and had an eigenvalue of 3.15.

Demographic details for participants were as follows:

- Gender: female (n=5), male (n=1)
- Age bracket: 31-40 (n=1), 41-50 (n=3), 51-60 (n=2)
- Experience in education: 11-15 (n=3), 16-20 (n=3)
- Setting: infant (n=1), mainstream primary (n=4), mainstream secondary (n=1)
- Primary role: teacher (n=1), safeguarding (n=3), SEND (n=1), senior leader (n=1)

The participant's experiences of supervision were as follows:

- Experience of supervision: yes (n=3), no (n=3)
- Format of supervision: one-to-one (n=2), one-to-one and group (n=1)
- Frequency of supervision: weekly (1), triweekly (n=1), monthly (n=1)
- Role of supervisor: internal to school (n=1), external (n=1), information not provided (n=1)

4.6.2.3 Viewpoint 2: Interpretation

Viewpoint 2 was named: *Cautious Optimism: To be Successful Supervision Must be Clearly Defined, Embedded, Safe, Optional and Responsive.*

Similar to Viewpoint 1, school staff holding Viewpoint 2 apparently strongly disagreed that supervision is of no benefit (1: -6) and a waste of time (60: -6), suggesting that this viewpoint perceived supervision as positive.

'I believe supervision is of benefit to all education professionals.'

(Participant 18)

However, in contrast to Viewpoint 1, practical barriers were highlighted to be of importance, suggesting that this viewpoint questions how achievable implementing supervision in schools may be. Participants holding this viewpoint agreed with

statements suggesting there is not enough funding (16: +4), time (13: +3) or space (15: +1) in schools for supervision.

'Supervision involves time and cost in already stretched schools.'

(Participant 3)

To a greater extent than in Viewpoint 1, participants strongly agreed that supervision is a term which is often misunderstood by staff within schools (7: +5).

'I think that often supervision is misunderstood as being in the same bracket as therapy and counselling (...).'

(Participant 6)

This suggests that school staff may need further clarification as to what supervision is and what it offers. Supported by the following qualitative comment:

'Just like an aspect of school practice, for supervision to work properly, it would need to be embraced by the members of the school rather than being something that is done to them. To ensure this acceptance of supervision as a beneficial tool, all stakeholders would need to be involved in its introduction and ensuring that it becomes part of whole-school culture. Staff will need to discuss its benefits, to hear testimony from other settings and to see a workable model of how it can improve practice to ensure that it can be successful.'

(Participant 4)

Despite a perceived lack of shared understanding of the term supervision within schools, staff holding this viewpoint perceived that their generally positive view of supervision was shared with their colleagues. This is supported by strong disagreement that accessing supervision may be perceived as daunting (14: -4), a tick box imposed on school staff (11: -4) or as indicative of not coping (10: -5).

'(...) I have had supervision and will continue to do so. My peers are able to see that I am coping with my work and fully competent in my role and I am confident that accessing supervision will not alter this.'

(Participant 6)

Participants holding this viewpoint highlighted the importance of feeling safe and, to some extent, protecting themselves. Staff holding this viewpoint placed a greater

importance than Viewpoint 1 on the need for supervision to be non-judgemental (39: +6) and not challenge supervisees (42: +2).

'It is important that the information shared by the supervisee is met in a non-judgemental way in order to build a trust bond and encourage full openness.'

(Participant 18)

This suggests that participants subscribing to this viewpoint valued acceptance and feeling safe from judgement and evaluation. This is supported by some level of disagreement that supervision can be used to evaluate staff performance (9: -2). Contrasting with Viewpoint 1, participants disagreed that supervision is a place for recognising strengths and achievements (43: -3), suggesting that this viewpoint perceived supervision not to be the place for value-judgements whether positive or negative.

School staff subscribing to this viewpoint highlighted the necessity of having a formal written record of supervision (26: -5). When taking into account qualitative comments it seems that this record may elicit a sense of safety and help supervisees to protect themselves.

'A formal written record needs to be kept so that if the supervisee wishes to revisit what was discussed and explored the supervisor can look back at the notes. It also important from a safeguarding point of view in case anything happens after a supervision session so that both parties have a record of what was discussed and any discrepancies that may arise.'

(Participant 20)

Staff holding this viewpoint to some extent agreed, in contrast with Viewpoint 1, that one-to-one supervision is more valuable (24: +2). Qualitative comments seemed to support, and reinforce, the need for safety.

'Personally, I feel that one-to-one supervision makes it easier for the supervisee to speak freely and to not be judged by others within the group. I know that there are certain situations where I would be more reticent to speak.'

(Participant 6)

In comparison to Viewpoint 1, less importance was placed on trusting the supervisor to keep things confidential (22: +1), however, the ranking of this statement in the context of other statements and qualitative comments reinforced the need for feeling safe.

'It's important that people can have an open and honest conversation.'

(Participant 3)

While statements and qualitative comments implied the importance of feeling safe, the supervisory relationship was ranked neutrally (33: 0).

The importance of the supervisor was highlighted within this viewpoint more so than within Viewpoint 1. Staff highlighted the importance of supervisor skill-set (29: +4), supervisor training (31: +4) and the need for the supervisor to understand the supervisee's role (32: +3). While these all identify the need for a highly trained and skilled supervisor, participants holding this viewpoint slightly disagreed that poor supervision could make things worse (59: -1).

'There is the potential that if the supervisor has not had the appropriate training then they could give the supervisee some incorrect advice and this could potentially mean that an unsafe decision or action could be taken by the supervisee. It could also mean that the supervisee does not leave the session having addressed their concerns which would be a worry for them.'

(Participant 20)

Similar to Viewpoint 1, participants highlighted an active role for the supervisee assigning some level of importance to supervision being collaborative (37: +1) and disagreeing that supervision is only helpful when direct answers are given (38: -4).

'During supervision a supervisor may not feel that they are in a position to answer a question directly for various reasons. There could be no one specific answer to a question or situation or they may not feel that they have been given all of the facts to be able to answer directly (...).'

(Participant 20)

While Viewpoint 1 strongly disagreed that supervision needed to be provided by an external professional, staff subscribing to this viewpoint responded neutrally toward this (30: 0). This may suggest that participants holding this viewpoint are more

concerned with the training and skillset of the supervisor than their position within the school system.

For supervision to be successful in schools, this viewpoint highlights, to a greater extent than Viewpoint 1, the criticality of supervision being embedded in whole-school culture (20: +6), the need for training (19: +5) and the support of senior leadership (17: +5).

‘Supervision needs to be part of the culture of a school, starting with the support of the governors and senior management team and an acknowledgement by them of the benefits of it for staff (...).’

(Participant 20)

‘For supervision to be effective, sufficient training must be undertaken to get the most out of the experience (...).’

(Participant 4)

Contradictions within this viewpoint were particularly evident in rankings of statements relating to the benefits and purposes of supervision. Participants seemed clear that supervision supports professional growth, endorsing statements suggesting that supervision gives supervisees space to reflect on practice (35: +4), though this was agreed with to a significantly lower degree than in Viewpoint 1. Participants also endorsed statements suggesting that supervision encourages supervisees to think differently (45: +3) and helps staff to learn and develop (12: +2).

‘Supervision is a reflection tool and supports solution focussed problem solving.’

(Participant 11)

However, in contrast with Viewpoint 1, this viewpoint showed some level of disagreement that supervision makes supervisees more self-aware (44: -1).

While in contrast to Viewpoint 1, participants were neutral about supervision supporting supervisees to feel less alone (53: 0), school staff endorsed statements highlighting the role of supervision in exploring worries (50: +3) and in safeguarding the wellbeing of school staff (5: +2).

‘(...) Its part of supporting a person mental health and wellbeing. You must not work in isolation.’

(Participant 11)

Participants showed some level of disagreement, however, with the notion that supervision is a chance to offload (46: -2), re-energise (51: -2), cope with stress (52: -1) or feel reassured (49: -1).

‘Whilst the relationship between the supervisor and supervisee is important and should be a positive one, the supervisee should not use this as an opportunity to offload. They may wish to discuss stresses and/or issues but this should be approached in a professional manner. This may be agreed upon, when a school looks at implementing such an approach or they may offer the opportunity to discuss issues elsewhere or with a named person, such as a line manager. Offloading directly to the supervisor may cause negativity in the relationship or divert from the focus of the supervision.’

(Participant 4)

While this may appear to be somewhat contradictory, it could suggest that while this viewpoint acknowledges that supervision has an emotional support function, it is not necessarily perceived as restorative, or as the primary function of supervision. Further, the qualitative comment above suggests that offloading is perceived to be negative and inappropriate in a professional context, despite the recognition that supervision is not just for discussing professional matters (36: -3).

In comparison to Viewpoint 1, staff placed less emphasis on the longer-term and wider impacts of supervision, disagreeing that supervision can facilitate a better work-life balance (55: -4), support staff retention (58: -3), make staff feel valued (47: -2) and empowered (48: -2). In contrast to Viewpoint 1, this viewpoint agreed to a lesser extent, that supervision is integral to achieving the best for CYP (4: +1) and disagreed that supervision is integral for staff to do their job effectively (56: -3). Such may suggest that this viewpoint, rather than seeing supervision as a necessity, perceived it as more of a luxury, in that, while it would have its benefits it is not pivotal to everyday practice. Flexibility is highlighted by this viewpoint in terms of not needing a fixed structure to sessions (23: -3), the need for supervision to be available as and when it is needed (2: +2) and to be voluntary (6: +3).

‘I have had supervision and felt that it was very useful for me. Supervision is offered to me when I require it.’

Despite this need for supervision to be accessed flexibly, participants holding this viewpoint, disagreed that supervision is only needed in schools in difficult contexts (18: -5) suggesting that the option to access supervision would be welcomed. Participants also showed some level of agreement that more experience of supervision the supervisee has the more they can gain from it (61: +2), suggesting that perceptions of supervision may be impacted by experience.

4.6.2.4 Summary of Viewpoint 2: *Cautious Optimism: To be Successful Supervision Must be Clearly Defined, Embedded, Safe, Optional and Responsive*

School staff holding this viewpoint perceived supervision to be beneficial, however they recognised several barriers to its successful implementation in schools. These barriers included resourcing and a lack of clarity around the term supervision. Staff endorsing this viewpoint perceived that supervision must be non-judgemental and free from both positive and negative evaluation. Participants subscribing to this viewpoint highlighted the criticality of embedding supervision in school culture, if it is to be successful, and the importance of supervisor training and skill. Staff perceived that supervision could benefit professional development and offer some emotional support, though this may not be restorative as such. Staff holding this viewpoint perceived that supervision needs to be offered as and when it is needed and should be voluntarily accessed, suggesting that it is more of a luxury than a necessity.

4.7 Consensus Statements

PQMethod highlighted 35 consensus statements; 29 at the $p > 0.05$ level (indicated by an asterisk) and six at the $p > 0.01$ level. These statements were not ranked significantly differently between factors and illuminate aspects of the topic where viewpoints converge (Coogan & Herrington, 2011). While some of these statements have been included in the factor interpretations above, they have been grouped into themes below to indicate consensus between the viewpoints. The rankings for Viewpoint 1 and Viewpoint 2 respectively are given in parentheses.

4.7.1 Beneficial and Wanted

- *1. Supervision is of no benefit (Viewpoint 1: -6, Viewpoint 2: -6)
- *8. Supervision is already happening in schools under a different name (-1, -2)
- *10. Accessing supervision will make my peers think that I cannot cope (-5, -5)
- *11. Supervision is often a tick box exercise being imposed on school staff (-4, -4)
- 14. I find the idea of supervision daunting (-5, -4)
- *60. Supervision is a waste of time (-1, -1)

4.7.2 The Need for Supervision

- *2. My need for supervision changes over time (0, +2)
- *3. All school staff need supervision (0, 0)
- *18. Supervision is only needed in schools in difficult contexts (-5, -5)
- *61. The more experience you have of being supervised, the more you are able to gain from the process (-1, +2)

4.7.3 Purpose and Benefits of Supervision

- *5. Supervision safeguards the wellbeing of school staff (+2, +2)
- *9. Supervision enables managers to evaluate staff performance (-3, -2)
- *12. Supervision helps school staff to learn and develop as professionals (+3, +2)
- *34. Supervision enables supervisees' concerns to be heard (+1, +1)
- 35. Supervision gives supervisees the space to reflect on their practice (+6, +4)
- *40. Supervision helps supervisees to develop solutions to problems (+1, 0)
- *41. Supervision increases supervisees' confidence (-1, -1)
- *45. Supervision encourages supervisees to think differently (+3, +3)
- 46. Supervision gives supervisees the chance to offload (-1, -2)
- *50. Supervision allows supervisees to explore their worries (+1, +3)

*54. Supervision enables supervisees to stay physically well (-2, -1)

*57. Supervision supports the development of working relationships (0, -1)

4.7.4 Role of School Culture on Access and Response to Supervision

*17. The support of senior leaders is vital if supervision is to be successful (+3, +5)

20. Supervision needs to be embedded into whole-school culture (+5, +6)

4.7.5 Roles and Responsibilities of the Supervisor and Supervisee

22. Supervisees need to be able to trust that their supervisor will keep things confidential (+4, +1)

*31. Supervision must be provided by someone who has been suitably trained (+3, +4)

32. The supervisor must understand my role (+1, +3)

*33. The relationship between the supervisor and supervisee is key to how effective supervision is (0, 0)

*37. Supervision needs to be collaborative (+2, +1)

*38. Supervision is only helpful when supervisees are given direct answers (-4, -4)

4.7.6 Logistics and Practical Considerations for Delivery of Supervision

*15. For supervision to be successful in schools there would need to be an appropriate space (-1, +1)

*23. Supervision sessions need to have a fixed structure (-3, -3)

*25. For supervision to be successful the purpose must be clear (+2, +1)

*26. A formal written record of supervision is unnecessary (-3, -5)

*28. Supervision sessions need to be regular (-1, +1)

4.8 Non-Significant and Confounding Q-sorts

Two participant's Q-sorts were not included in the final factor solution due to being confounding or non-significant. These will now be briefly discussed.

4.8.1 Non-significant

Participant 21's Q-sort did not significantly load onto either factor ($p < 0.01 = 0.43$); with a factor loading of 0.3787 on Factor 1 and 0.3829 on Factor 2. The Q-sort would have significantly loaded onto both factors at the lower $p < 0.01 = 0.33$, in which case the Q-sort would have been confounding. The participant's demographics, individual Q-sort and qualitative data were considered in relation to both viewpoints.

Consistent with both viewpoints, the participant's two most disagreed with statements were (-6):

- 1: Supervision is of no benefit to me
- 60: Supervision is a waste of time

The participant's two most agreed with statements were (+6):

- 59: Poor supervision can make things feel worse

This was somewhat similar to Viewpoint 1.

- 26: A formal written record of supervision is unnecessary

The ranking of this statement contrasted both Viewpoints who disagreed with this (-3, -5).

Other key differences regarding this participant's Q-sort included:

- Some agreement that supervision can be used to evaluate staff performance (9: +3).
- Some agreement that supervision feels daunting (14: +2).

4.8.2 Confounding

Participant 10's Q-sort loaded significantly onto both factors ($p < 0.01 = 0.43$); with a factor loading of 0.4507 on Factor 1 and 0.4710 on Factor 2. This Q-sort would have also significantly loaded onto both factors at the lower $p < 0.01 = 0.33$. The participant's demographics, individual Q-sort and qualitative data were considered in relation to both viewpoints.

The participants two most disagreed with statements were (-6):

- 60: Supervision is a waste of time.
This was consistent with both viewpoints.
- 56: Supervision is integral to supervisees being able to do their job effectively.
This was most consistent with Viewpoint 2.

The participants two most agreed with statements were (+6):

- 61: The more experience you have of being supervised, the more you are able to gain from the process.
- 42: Supervision is not a place to feel challenged.

Both of these statements were most consistent with Viewpoint 2.

This participant's Q-sort was similar to Viewpoint 1 in terms of perceiving supervision as empowering (48: +3), helping staff to feel valued (47: +5), and contributing to personal (44: +5) and professional development (1: +4, 40: +4).

This participant's Q-sort was similar to Viewpoint 2 in terms of perceiving supervision as needing to be non-judgemental (39: +5) and not a place for challenge (42: +6). Also similar with Viewpoint 2, this participant perceived practical barriers in implementing supervision (16: +3, 13: +2), perceived one-to-one supervision to be more valuable (24: +4) and agreed that the term supervision is often misunderstood (7: +3).

4.9 Responses to Post-Sort Questions

The post-sort questionnaire also asked three additional questions about the Q-sort experience:

- Do you feel your completed Q-sort accurately captures your perspective of the topic of supervision?

All but one participant felt their Q-sort accurately represented their perspective, with participant three commenting:

"Not sure as the activity was difficult to complete".

(Participant 3)

Two participants made additional comments:

“Needed more spaces on the + side”

(Participant 7)

“There were some that I sorted based on my current setting while I know that the situation is very different in other schools and in those I have worked at previously. I know that I am very lucky now!”

(Participant 13)

- Are there any additional statements which should have been included?
- Are there any further comments which you would like to make about any of the statements or the Q-sort experience overall?

Responses to these questions will be discussed in section 5.1.

4.10 Summary of Results

This chapter has described both the quantitative and qualitative analysis employed in the current study.

Twenty one Q-sorts were factor analysed leading to a two-factor solution, with 19 significantly loading Q-sorts. These were transformed into two Viewpoints;

- Viewpoint 1- *Achievable and Necessary: Quality Supervision Benefits the Whole-School System*
- Viewpoint 2 - *Cautious Optimism: To be Successful Supervision Must be Clearly Defined, Embedded, Safe, Optional and Responsive*

Consensus statements were presented highlighting points of agreement between the two Viewpoints.

The following chapter will discuss strengths and limitations, the findings in the context of the existing literature and the implications of the findings, and will also offer recommendations for future research.

5 Discussion

The aim of this chapter is to evaluate the use of Q-methodology in answering the research question and discuss the findings and implications of the current study.

The strengths and limitations of the research will be discussed with reference to the qualitative quality indicators described in Chapter 3. Findings will be discussed in relation to the existing literature presented in Chapter 2. Finally, professional practice implications for EPs, schools and policy makers will be considered and recommendations for future research will be offered.

5.1 Strengths and Limitations of the Research

The research will now be considered in relation to Tracy's (2010) qualitative quality indicators presented in Chapter 3. The strengths and limitations of online Q-methodology will also be discussed.

5.1.1 Worthy Topic

Chapter 2 highlighted the relevance and significance of focusing on supervision in the context of staff wellbeing, in light of statistics suggesting school staff experience high levels of stress (Education Support, 2020), and considering the link between staff wellbeing and pupil outcomes (Briner & Dewberry, 2007; Glazzard & Rose, 2019; Rae et al., 2017). Within Chapter 2 arguments were made for the potential benefits of supervision for school staff (Barnardo's, 2020; Ellis & Woolfe, 2020), and the need to explore staff views given limited uptake in schools. The research is particularly timely, however, given the potential impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on school staff (Education Support, 2020).

5.1.2 Rich Rigor

In developing the concourse, a variety of sources were utilised to ensure coverage of all topics, including a focus group with EPs and semi-structured interviews with two school staff. While the researcher hoped to interview more school staff, recruitment was difficult due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The researcher acknowledges the potential of social desirability bias within this stage of the research, however, the researcher made clear to all participants that there were no 'right or wrong answers'.

Structured sampling was used to reduce the concourse to a comprehensive 61 item Q-set, and the researcher consulted with two other TEPs and their academic and placement supervisors to ensure rigor. The original wording from participants was retained as much as possible, consistent with the guidance of Webler et al. (2009). The Q-set and Q software were piloted, and feedback was sought and acted upon.

For the Q-methodological study itself, two data sets were omitted and data from 21 participants was analysed. While this was an appropriate sample size consistent with the suggested ratios within the literature, the researcher notes a larger sample may have led to the identification of further viewpoints. Opportunity sampling was employed, which led to a self-selecting sample. It is possible this self-selecting sample might have had a particular interest in the topic and, therefore, the views of participants *without* an interest in supervision may not have been captured. However, the final P-set was varied in terms of school setting, job role and experience of supervision, and therefore likely represented a variety of voices within the research. Furthermore, the use of the online software for data collection reduced the possibility of social desirability bias, as participants completed the activity independently and data was anonymous.

Qualitative comments from participants within the post-sort questionnaire suggested that some felt that the normal distribution grid they were directed to employ felt constraining:

'There were some that I wanted to put further over on the agree side but there weren't enough boxes.'

(Participant 13)

'The pyramid made it difficult to put statements where I would have preferred.'

(Participant 18)

This issue will be further discussed in section 5.2.

Qualitative comments in the post-sort questionnaire suggested two additional statements which could have been included in the Q-set:

'Each school should have a supervision policy'.

(Participant 5)

'I feel judged by senior management for accessing supervision.'

(Participant 6)

The post-sort questionnaire used predominantly open questions to allow participants to self-categorise (Watts & Stenner, 2012). However, this made some of the demographic information difficult to handle. For example, when it came to job roles, participants often listed several roles, therefore a judgement had to be made as to their primary role. Further, while the post-sort questionnaire asked participants about their experiences of supervision, on reflection, further information about how they found these experiences would have aided interpretation.

Inter-rater reliability was sought when interpreting the Scree Plot. During the factor interpretation stage (see section 4.6) several actions were taken to enhance credibility. These included working with other researchers to ensure crystallization and using Watts and Stenner's (2012) crib sheet approach to reduce the influence of the researcher's personal views and biases.

5.1.3 Sincerity

Transparency was ensured throughout by presenting detailed information about how each stage of the research was carried out and about how key decisions were made. The researcher was transparent regarding difficulties encountered with recruitment and constraints of the Covid-19 national restrictions on the format of activities.

Self-reflexivity was ensured through the presentation of the researcher's views, personal and professional motivations, and interests on the research topic within Chapter 1. Actions were taken during the interpretation stage (see section 4.6) to reduce researcher bias.

5.1.4 Credibility

Credibility was maximised by providing the reader with thick description throughout the research. This included within the methodology, the demographic information and the final viewpoints. The qualitative responses and reflections of participants gained through the post-sort questionnaire were used to triangulate the factor interpretations.

5.1.5 Resonance

It is hoped that the current research and its subsequent findings will resonate with, and be of value to, a number of audiences including schools and school staff, EPs and EPSs, and wider government and LAs. It is hoped that the findings can be of theoretical and practical use and can inform the delivery of supervision offered to school staff. The implications of the research for these stakeholder groups will be discussed in section 5.5.

5.1.6 Significant Contribution

The research makes a unique and significant research contribution by identifying some of the viewpoints present amongst school staff regarding supervision, which may begin to further current understanding of why supervision is not commonplace within schools. Existing research gathering the views of staff regarding supervision has generally been within the context of a particular model, used questionnaires or interviews and has focused on particular roles and/or school settings. Q-methodology has been used previously to explore the viewpoints of Early Years staff (Madeley, 2014) and ELSAs (Atkin, 2019) on the topic of supervision - two groups for whom supervision is compulsory. Therefore the current research is unique in its use of Q-methodology to explore the viewpoints of school staff in a range of roles and settings, with varying experience of supervision. The research has a number of practical implications which will be discussed in section 5.5.

5.1.7 Ethical

Ethical guidelines from the BPS (2004; 2018), HCPC (2016) and the University of Nottingham (2009) were adhered to throughout. The researcher discussed changes to the recruitment strategy, including additional ethical considerations, with their research supervisor. Ethical guidelines were adhered to during the write up of the research, ensuring confidentiality was maintained. The researcher will produce a summary of findings for any interested participants or stakeholders.

5.1.8 Meaningful Coherence

The research achieved its purpose to explore school staff's viewpoints of supervision and hear as many voices as possible. The methods and procedures were

appropriate in achieving this purpose. The researcher has worked to ensure that all sections of the research write up are interconnected and coherent.

5.2 The Use of Online Q-Methodology

Due to the national context of the Covid-19 pandemic, this research utilised online Q-methodology software. The online Q-sort activity allowed participants flexibility as they were able to complete the activity at their leisure. Participants were able to view written and video instructions, and were able to access the consent form, sorting activity and post-sort questionnaire on the same interface. Two participants made comments within the post-sort questionnaire as to their experience of the online Q-sorting activity. One participant commented:

'The Q-sort is very concise and straightforward to complete.'

(Participant 9)

However, comments from another participant suggested they did not find the software as easy to use:

'I think the sorting experience was very difficult to complete, it would have been helpful to have less statements and to be able to see them side by side instead of having to click on each one. I think it's difficult to be accurate in choices as you can't see each one together to make a comparison, you have to remember what you're previously read and there are lots to remember.'

(Participant 3)

While the online software had its strengths, it was not without limitations. The online Q software did not allow participants to indicate their zero-point of salience. The researcher attempted to overcome this by including a question in the post-sort questionnaire to access this information, however, piloting feedback suggested this was not fit for purpose. The absence of this information made it difficult to interpret whether zero was truly indicative of neutrality. Two qualitative comments suggested that some of the statements agreed with may have been placed in columns towards neutrality or even disagreement:

'There were some that I wanted to put further over on the agree side but there weren't enough boxes.'

(Participant 13)

'Needed more spaces on the + side'

(Participant 7)

While the use of a forced distribution is to encourage participants to think carefully about each item (Webler et al., 2009), the use of online Q-methodology limited the opportunities for interaction with participants and thus, opportunities to explain these nuances.

5.3 Summary of Research Findings

The research question was:

What are the viewpoints held by school staff regarding supervision?

Two Viewpoints were identified, these being:

- Viewpoint 1 - *Achievable and Necessary: Quality Supervision Benefits the Whole-School System*
- Viewpoint 2 - *Cautious Optimism: To be Successful Supervision Must be Clearly Defined, Embedded, Safe, Optional and Responsive*

The use of Q-methodology allowed for the identification of nuanced holistic viewpoints regarding the topic of supervision that arguably would not have been identified with alternative methodologies such as interviews or questionnaires.

All but two participants significantly loaded onto one of the two factors, enabling the majority of the voices gained to be represented in the final account. In analysing the confounding and non-significantly loading Q-sorts, it seems plausible that other viewpoints on this topic may exist amongst school staff which may not have been captured within this sample.

While the two viewpoints identified cannot be generalised to the wider population, and whilst one cannot definitively state that these are the only viewpoints which exist, the presence of these two viewpoints suggests that supervision is construed in different ways by school staff.

Despite the two viewpoints being moderately correlated, they were distinctive enough that qualitative analysis has been able to reveal nuances in how school staff holding these different viewpoints construe supervision. This includes differences regarding some of the perceived benefits, purposes and logistical aspects of supervision, and regarding how achievable supervision for school staff may be given the existing resources and pressures on schools. Areas of consensus amongst this sample of school staff were also identified, suggesting some agreement on how some aspects of the topic of supervision is construed. This included some agreement around the following themes:

- A general positive perception of supervision
- The need for supervision within schools
- Purposes and benefits of supervision
- The role of school culture
- Supervisor factors
- Logistics and practical considerations

5.4 The Research Findings in Relation to the Existing Literature

5.4.1 Perceived Value and Achievability of Supervision

A consensus that supervision is generally perceived as positive, valuable and welcomed by school staff was evident across both viewpoints. These findings are consistent with existing research (Austin, 2010; Soni, 2015) and imply that the suggestions made both within the EP profession (Ellis & Wolfe, 2020) and in wider contexts (Barnardo's, 2020; Leeds Beckett University, 2021; Talking Heads, 2020) with regard to implementing supervision for school staff are likely to be welcomed.

Despite this general consensus regarding the overall value of supervision, subtle and interesting differences distinguish the viewpoints. While Viewpoint 1 appeared to construe supervision as unwaveringly positive, Viewpoint 2 appeared to be more 'cautiously optimistic' holding some reservation and a level of caution towards supervision. One area of particular divergence between the viewpoints relates to how achievable implementing supervision in school settings is perceived to be. Staff subscribing to Viewpoint 2 perceived practical barriers to be of importance including a lack of time, funding and space for supervision in schools. Practical barriers have been

identified within the wider literature as one possible explanation for the absence of supervision in schools (Hulusi & Maggs, 2015), including school duties, workload (Soni, 2015) and funding (Bainbridge et al., 2019).

Viewpoint 1 was seemingly more positive in relation to implementing supervision within schools, disagreeing that such practical concerns are a barrier. This finding is particularly interesting within the wider context of the viewpoint, as participants holding this more resolutely positive viewpoint also perceived wide-ranging benefits for the whole-school system. One possible explanation may be that school staff holding Viewpoint 1 perceived the benefits to outweigh any potential barriers. Further, while no generalisations can be made, the majority of senior leaders in the sample loaded onto Viewpoint 1 suggesting that they felt supervision was achievable within school resources. This seems particularly important, given that senior leaders control budgets and spending within schools.

Both viewpoints, and particularly Viewpoint 2, perceived that embedding supervision into whole-school culture is critical if supervision is to be successful. Both viewpoints highlighted senior leadership support and training as important factors. These findings are consistent with recommendations in the existing literature suggesting that building a culture of supervision in schools is important (Leeds Beckett, 2021).

5.4.2 Awareness, Understanding and Experience of Supervision

The current findings suggest that despite an ongoing narrative about the need for supervision in schools, there still appears to be a lack of a shared understanding of what supervision *is*. This is perhaps not surprising, since supervision is apparently still uncommon in schools, with only 8% of education staff surveyed in the latest *TWI* reporting that they have received supervision (Education Support, 2020).

Viewpoint 2 strongly agreed that the term supervision is misunderstood in schools which could offer further explanation as to Viewpoint 2's more cautiously optimistic perception of supervision. While Viewpoint 1 agreed with this to a lesser extent, the current findings support existing research which suggests there is a lack of a shared understanding of the term supervision (Austin, 2010; France & Billington, 2020; Rae et al., 2017), which could serve as a possible barrier for schools implementing or accessing supervision (Soni, 2019; Steel, 2001). Indeed, qualitative comments

suggested that supervision is often misunderstood as being akin to therapy or counselling and, interestingly, one participant holding Viewpoint 2 reported that their supervisor had been a psychotherapist/counsellor. These findings are consistent with those by Rae et al. (2017) that teachers used the terms supervision and counselling interchangeably.

Previous findings suggest that other potential barriers to supervision in schools relate to previous experiences of supervision (Madeley, 2014); both a lack of experience (Madeley, 2014) and negative experiences (De Hann, 2012; Hawkins & Shohet, 1989; Willis & Baines, 2018). One possible hypothesis as to Viewpoint 2's more cautious view of supervision may relate to previous experience - only 50% of participants holding Viewpoint 2 had experienced supervision in comparison to 76.9% of participants holding Viewpoint 1. Further, participants holding Viewpoint 2 showed some agreement that the more experience of supervision one has the more one can get out of it. These findings are somewhat consistent with the existing research that experience may influence uptake of supervision. The implications of this will be discussed in section 5.5.

Despite Viewpoint 2's strong agreement that the term supervision is often misunderstood and Viewpoint 1's agreement with this to some extent, both viewpoints disagreed that supervision is a space for performance management. This appears to contrast suggestions within the literature that supervision is often wrongly conflated with monitoring and evaluation (Page & Wosket, 2001). Further, the existing literature suggests that school staff may be wary of the psychological processes central to supervision (Hulusi & Maggs, 2015) and may associate supervision with being analysed (Rafferty & Coleman, 2001). Both viewpoints disagreed with statements suggesting that accessing supervision is daunting. Finally, both viewpoints disagreed that accessing supervision would make peers think they cannot cope, somewhat contrasting suggestions within the existing literature that there may be a perceived stigma in schools around accessing support (Sharrocks, 2014).

Both viewpoints perceived supervision as serving multiple functions, namely the supportive and educative functions, consistent with the literature (Hawkins & Smith, 2013; Kadushin, 1976; Proctor, 1988). However, some interesting differences were evident between the viewpoints regarding these functions.

5.4.3 Educative Function of Supervision

While both viewpoints ranked statements suggesting that they perceived an educative function of supervision, the extent to what this covered varied between the viewpoints. Consistent with existing research, both viewpoints ranked statements in a way that suggested that they perceived supervision as helping supervisees to learn and develop as professionals (Bainbridge et al., 2019; Kennedy & Laverick, 2019; Osborne & Burton, 2014; Rae et al., 2017; Reid & Soan, 2019; Willis & Baines, 2018); as a space to reflect on practice (Bainbridge et al., 2019; France & Billington, 2020; Scaife, 2003; Willis & Baines, 2018); and as encouraging supervisees to think differently (Reid & Soan, 2019). These findings are encouraging in the context of attribution theory discussed in Chapter 2.

While the existing literature suggests that supervision facilitates both personal and professional development (Dunsmuir & Leadbetter, 2010), the viewpoints differed in terms of recognising the role of supervision in supporting personal development. Viewpoint 1 emphasised the empowering nature of supervision, and supervision as a space where strengths and achievements could be recognised. This finding may add to the existing research as while empowerment is mentioned, this has tended to be when presenting definitions of supervision (for example, Austin, 2010; Reid & Soan, 2019), and in the occasional qualitative comment (Austin, 2010). Further, Viewpoint 1 perceived supervision as supportive of becoming more self-aware, consistent with previous research (Austin, 2010; Bartle & Trevis, 2015; Osborne & Burton, 2014; Wheeler & Richards, 2007).

On the contrary, Viewpoint 2 appeared to perceive supervision as having less of a role in facilitating personal development, disagreeing that supervision was empowering or a place to consider strengths or as supportive in developing self-awareness. One potential explanation of this difference between the viewpoints may relate to Viewpoint 2's perceived importance of supervision being non-judgemental and free from evaluation. These findings may suggest that staff holding this viewpoint do not perceive supervision to be a space for any kind of judgement; regardless of whether this is positive or negative. Further, Baulch (2021) suggests that self-awareness can be uncomfortable given its requirement to focus and reflect upon oneself. In the context of

Viewpoint 2's perception that supervision is not for any kind of evaluation or value judgement, this may be a plausible explanation.

5.4.4 Supportive Function of Supervision

Both viewpoints appeared to recognise that supervision serves a supportive function, however there was some divergence regarding what specifically this supportive function encompassed. Both viewpoints expressed some agreement that supervision can support staff wellbeing, consistent with the literature (Carroll et al., 2020), and that supervision is a space for exploring worries. However, while Viewpoint 1 perceived that supervision could support with managing stress, consistent with much of the existing research (Austin, 2010; Bainbridge et al., 2019; Reid & Soan, 2019; Willis & Baines, 2018), Viewpoint 2 showed some level of disagreement with this. This seemed to be somewhat contradictory in the context of the ranking of other statements by Viewpoint 2. Similarly, Viewpoint 1 also perceived supervision as supporting supervisees to feel less alone, alluding to supervision as a potentially connecting experience. This was not highlighted to be of particular importance to Viewpoint 2.

While both viewpoints perceived a supportive function of supervision in terms of exploring worries and supporting staff wellbeing, both viewpoints disagreed that supervision is a chance to offload. This may suggest that school staff perceive offloading and exploring worries differently. Qualitative comments from one participant holding Viewpoint 2, suggested that offloading may result in supervision becoming a negative experience for the supervisor and also referred to supervisees needing to remain professional, suggesting there may be something about offloading which could be perceived as unprofessional by some school staff. In the context of emotional labour theory (Hochschild, 2003), this need to appear professional may be incongruent with the emotions school staff feel in relation to their work. This need to remain professional expressed in qualitative comments appears somewhat contradictory in the context of the wider viewpoint, given that, supervision was perceived by both viewpoints as not limited to discussing professional matters.

School staff have expressed views within previous research suggesting perceived restorative (Reid & Soan, 2019) and therapeutic (Willis & Baines, 2018) benefits of supervision. Within the current research, school staff did not appear to perceive supervision as having these benefits. For example, Viewpoint 2 disagreed, and

Viewpoint 1 responded neutrally, to the suggestion that supervision is re-energising and both viewpoints disagreed that supervision is supportive of physical wellness or facilitative of work-life balance. The latter is inconsistent with previous research, in which head teachers perceived that supervision improved their work-life balance (Bainbridge et al., 2019). One possible explanation of this finding may be that, while supervision may offer emotional support, it may not influence or alter the high workloads of school staff (OFSTED, 2019; Roffey, 2015), which may affect perceived work-life balance (OFSTED, 2019).

The existing literature suggests that supervision is viewed by school staff as supportive of staff self-esteem (Willis & Baines, 2018), confidence (Osborne & Burton, 2014) and self-efficacy (Wheeler & Richards, 2007). However, both viewpoints here perceived that supervision does not necessarily increase supervisee confidence. One possible explanation of these findings could relate to theories of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977) and burnout (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). The *TWI* (Education Support, 2020) reports that between 62-84% and 77-89% of staff and senior leaders respectively, described themselves as stressed, and 52% of staff reported considering leaving the sector in the past two years due to pressures on wellbeing. It seems reasonable to infer from these statistics, that many staff working in schools may be burnt out. Burnout is linked to reduced self-efficacy (Friedman, 2003), thus one plausible explanation that school staff didn't perceive that supervision increases confidence may relate to feelings of burnout and stress.

5.4.5 Role of the Supervisor

Consistent with the literature, staff holding both viewpoints identified the importance of supervisor skill (France & Billington, 2020; Osborne & Burton, 2014; Willis & Baines, 2018) and training, and the importance of the supervisor understanding the role of the supervisee. While this seems to emphasise the importance of quality when it comes to supervision, the viewpoints appeared to perceive the impact this quality may have differently. While Viewpoint 1 perceived that poor quality supervision could have a negative impact, Viewpoint 2 somewhat disagreed with this. One possible explanation here could be that for some staff, namely those holding Viewpoint 2, access to supervision of some description, regardless of quality, is perceived to be better than having access to no supervision at all. However, conversely, for some staff, namely

those holding Viewpoint 1, access to supervision per se is not enough, rather, access to good quality supervision is of paramount importance.

While the benefits of inter-professional supervision are highlighted within the literature (Scaife, 2009), with school staff in previous research viewing an external supervisor as essential (Austin, 2010) and beneficial (Willis & Baines, 2018), the current findings present alternative views. Viewpoint 1 disagreed that an external supervisor is ideal and Viewpoint 2 responded neutrally to this. It could be hypothesised that the skill-set and training of the supervisor are perceived to be more important than their position within the school system. Further, given that both viewpoints distinguished supervision from performance management, it may be that staff do not deem supervision from a line manager to be problematic. The implications of this will be discussed in section 5.5.

5.4.6 The Supervisory Relationship

Both viewpoints perceived that supervision should be non-judgemental, consistent with findings by Willis and Baines (2018). This was emphasised by Viewpoint 2 and statements which alluded to evaluation – both positive and negative – were disagreed with. Further, Viewpoint 2 perceived that supervision is not a place to feel challenged. This is at odds with existing literature which suggests that supervision is a space to be both challenged and stimulated (Steel, 2001) and with some supervision models which explicitly refer to ‘challenge’ as part of the process (Page & Wosket, 2001).

Consistent with the existing literature, both viewpoints, through the ranking of statements and qualitative comments, hinted at the need for trust (Kennedy & Laverick, 2019), honesty (Bartle & Trevis, 2015) and feelings of safety (Austin, 2010; Kennedy & Laverick, 2019) in supervision to some extent. However, what was perceived to be important in ensuring this trust and safety appeared to differ between the viewpoints. While both viewpoints, and particularly Viewpoint 1, perceived confidentiality to be key, consistent with both Rae et al. (2017) and Reid and Soan (2019), Viewpoint 2 appeared to allude to safety in the ranking of statements relating to logistical matters. For example, qualitative comments suggested that the importance of a written record and of accessing one-to-one supervision was, at least in part, related to feelings of safety.

In the existing literature the supervisory relationship is highlighted as important in creating feelings of safety (Scaife, 2009), and is consistently identified as critical to successful supervision (Beinart & Clohessy, 2017). Interestingly, school staff holding both viewpoints ranked statements relating to the supervisory relationship neutrally. This may suggest that while staff perceived supervision as needing to be conducted in a safe and trusting space, they did not directly attribute this to the supervisory relationship itself. One possible explanation of this could be that the term supervisory relationship, and the psychological processes behind this, may not be shared across professions.

In understanding the supervisory relationship and processes behind supervision, psychodynamic theory is often applied (Wood, 2016). The existing literature suggests that, consistent with Bion's (1959) concept of containment, the supervisor is tasked with facilitating a containing environment, so that the supervisee feels safe and held, enabling them to reflect on their work. Within consultation, West and Idol (1987) suggest that consultants draw upon two knowledge bases; *knowledge base one*, referring to the process skills which inform the interaction, and *knowledge base two*, referring to domain-specific skills and knowledge of psychological theory and evidence. One possible hypothesis which may support in understanding the current findings, is that similar knowledge bases could be utilised within supervision. It seems reasonable to hypothesise that the supervisor may draw upon *knowledge base one* to facilitate a relationship ensuring supervisees feel safe, as well as more overt *knowledge base two* skills. These process skills may be so subtle that they may, potentially, be overlooked in the absence of these processes being explicit to supervisees.

5.4.7 Practicalities and Access to Supervision

There have been some suggestions that supervision should be compulsory for school staff as it is for other professionals working with CYP (for example, Austin, 2010), however both viewpoints showed disagreement with this through the ranking of various statements. While Viewpoint 1 perceived that supervision does not need to be voluntary, staff holding this viewpoint also perceived that supervision was not needed by all staff. While Viewpoint 2 also perceived that not all staff need supervision they also, conversely, perceived that supervision must be voluntary and accessed by staff as and when needed. Both viewpoints did, however, perceive that supervision is not just needed in schools in difficult contexts, suggesting *universal access* to some extent. Such

appears to be consistent with previous findings where staff have expressed positive views in terms of extending supervision access within schools (Barnardo's, 2020; Willis & Baines, 2018). Taken together, these views could suggest that school staff holding both viewpoints perceived that while supervision should be *available for all* it should not be *compulsory for all*.

Consistent with previous research, subtle differences were evident between the viewpoints regarding practical and logistical arrangements of supervision sessions (Bartle & Trevis, 2015; France & Billington, 2020; Osborne & Burton, 2014; Willis & Baines, 2018). With regard to formats of supervision, while the literature notes positive perceptions amongst staff regarding group supervision (for example, France & Billington, 2020; Osborne & Burton, 2014), this stance was less apparent in the current findings, with Viewpoint 2 perceiving that one-to-one supervision is more valuable. With regard to practical and logistical aspects, the viewpoints showed some level of consensus on *some* issues, for example, relating to the need for a formal record, a clear purpose and a flexible structure in supervision. However, the viewpoints perceived the need for a fixed time for supervision and regular sessions slightly differently.

Taken together, the differing viewpoints suggest that school staff construe what may be useful and valuable in supervision differently. Consequently, consistent with the literature, a 'one-size-fits-all' approach to supervision does not seem appropriate (Hanley, 2017). Rather, flexibility appears to be necessary in order to best meet the needs of the supervisee (Dunsmuir & Leadbetter, 2010). The implications of the viewpoints for practice in terms of the need to offer *choice* regarding models, formats and logistics will be discussed further in section 5.5. Further, these subtle but important differences in construing between the viewpoints seem to support suggestions within the literature highlighting the importance of contracting (Scaife, 2001).

5.4.8 Wider Impact of Supervision

Divergence between the viewpoints in relation to the potential wider impact and benefits of supervision was evident. Viewpoint 1 ranked statements in a manner suggesting they perceive supervision as potentially beneficial across different levels of the school system including benefits for CYP and benefits for retention of staff and helping staff to feel valued. These findings are consistent with the existing literature in

which staff perceived the benefits of supervision to reach beyond the individual practitioner, and to indirectly reach CYP (Austin, 2010; Osborne & Burton, 2014; Reid & Soan, 2019; Willis & Baines, 2018;) and benefit the wider school systems (Bainbridge et al., 2019; France & Billington, 2020; Osborne & Burton, 2014; Reid & Soan, 2019). More specifically, Carroll et al. (2020) suggest that supervision in schools may support staff retention and promote inclusion. While Viewpoint 2 agreed to some extent that supervision may indirectly benefit CYP, this viewpoint did not seem to place the same importance and emphasis on the potential benefits of supervision to the wider school system.

The findings have been discussed in the context of the existing literature. The implications of the findings for professional practice will now be discussed.

5.5 Implications for Practice

5.5.1 Implications for EPs and EPSs'

5.5.1.1 Creating a Supervision Offer.

The viewpoints highlight largely positive perceptions of supervision amongst school staff, the implication of this being that EPs and EPSs can feel reasonably confident that supervision is something worth offering as part of their service delivery and that it will be welcomed and embraced by some schools and school staff. The existence of two distinct viewpoints however highlights that, while there is an opportunity for EPs to promote and offer supervision to schools, they should be aware of the different viewpoints and tailor their offer accordingly. In offering inter-professional supervision, EPs need to be alert to the likelihood that some school staff may be more cautious about engaging with supervision.

5.5.1.2 Developing a Shared Understanding of Supervision.

While not a new finding, both viewpoints, and in particular Viewpoint 2, indicate the ongoing need for a shared definition and understanding of the term supervision within schools. The implications of this for EPs is that they have a key role in ensuring that there is a shared definition when offering inter-professional supervision to school staff. More specifically, EPs need to find ways to ensure that supervision is clearly defined, in terms of what it is, and what it is not, what the benefits and purposes

are, and what different options are available. This will be particularly important when contracting with schools or individual school staff, and at a wider level, through information on websites and other ways EPSs showcase the services they offer.

5.5.1.3 Demonstrating Impact and Sustainability.

A major distinction between the two viewpoints identified relates to the perceived achievability of implementing supervision within school systems. The viewpoints can therefore alert and orientate EPs to expect that some schools and school staff may perceive practical barriers to successful implementation of supervision. EPs can use their consultative skills and knowledge of school systems to help overcome these perceived barriers. A further implication of this finding for EPs may relate to sharing good practice between schools. EPs are well placed to share good practice including workable models and testimonials of how supervision can successfully work within the current resources of schools.

Further, EPs are well placed to use their research skills to support schools to implement and evaluate supervisory systems. This may include helping schools to measure impact and evaluate success, which in turn may help schools to see whether the benefits outweigh the perceived barriers and costs. As previously noted, the majority of senior leaders in the study held Viewpoint 1, perceiving supervision as achievable within current resources. While this is positive, as leaders will likely make decisions regarding resourcing, EPs can share the knowledge that there is an alternative viewpoint who may perceive potential barriers. In sharing this, senior leaders can ensure that these barriers are addressed.

5.5.1.4 Ensuring Quality Supervision.

Both viewpoints highlighted the need for quality supervision in terms of the supervisor's skill and training. Furthermore, Viewpoint 1 also indicated that poor supervision could make things feel worse. The current findings, in terms of these viewpoints, could have several implications for EPs offering inter-professional supervision to school staff. One implication being that EPs need to ensure that they are suitably skilled and trained, engaging in ongoing Continuing Professional Development, and auditing their skills to ensure they are delivering quality supervision. A second implication might involve EPs ensuring that systems are in place for supervisees to

provide feedback as to how they are finding supervision, as a type of quality assurance and evaluation tool.

5.5.1.5 Informing Choice of Models and Formats.

The two viewpoints have practical implications for EPs in terms of potentially informing models and formats which may be most appropriate when delivering staff supervision.

Within the literature review, three process models were briefly outlined which were highlighted in Dunsmuir et al.'s (2015) survey as the most used when EPs provide and receive supervision. The viewpoints identified in the current study have potential implications as to the use of these models. Scaife's (2001) General Supervision Framework, for example, would appear to be less appropriate for - and possibly less attractive to - staff holding Viewpoint 2, given the model includes a focus on personal qualities, which may be incongruent with Viewpoint 2's strong disagreement that supervision is a space for evaluation of any kind. Similarly, Page and Wosket's (2001) Cyclical Model explicitly includes challenge within the space stage, which may be less appropriate for staff holding Viewpoint 2 who do not deem supervision as a space to be challenged. Hawkins and Shohet's (2007) Seven-Eyed Model, on the other hand, may be an appropriate model for staff holding both viewpoints, given its focus on the supervisory relationship. The model could be supportive in making explicit what processes are happening within this supervisory relationship which may, in turn, support with understanding the supervision process and understanding what supervision is.

The two viewpoints may have practical implications for EPs regarding the format of supervision offered to school staff, and regarding whether group consultation models may be appropriate. As highlighted in Chapter 2, whether consultation is a form of supervision could be debated, given that consultation typically focuses on the individual CYP rather than the experiences and needs of individual staff (Blick, 2019). However, consultation seems to possess similarities with supervision and arguably fulfils some similar functions. For example, consultation facilitates reflection and aims to enhance understanding of problem situations (Farouk, 2004; Hanks, 1999), this being somewhat congruent with the educative function of supervision. Gibbs and Miller (2014) argue that consultation groups can support in validating difficult emotions, this being somewhat congruent with the supportive function of supervision.

The viewpoints revealed here may inform inter-professional supervision delivered by EPs to school staff in terms of whether consultation groups may be an appropriate form of supervision. While both viewpoints valued aspects of the educative and supportive functions of supervision, Viewpoint 1 perceived supervision as supporting supervisees to feel less alone, empowering staff, developing self-awareness and disagreed that one-to-one supervision is more valuable. Given that the consultation research suggests school staff perceive group consultation as supportive in reducing feelings of isolation (Stringer et al., 1992), learning from colleagues (Bozic & Carter, 2002), developing self-awareness (Dawson, 2013) and as empowering (Kempsell, 2018), the use of group consultation models as a form of peer or group supervision may be appropriate for, and attractive to, staff holding Viewpoint 1.

Conversely, staff holding Viewpoint 2 disagreed that supervision supported supervisees to feel less alone, was an empowering space or facilitated self-awareness. Further, they agreed supervision was more valuable one-to-one and strongly endorsed statements suggesting that supervision should be safe and free from judgement of any kind. This may suggest that for school staff holding this viewpoint, group consultation may not be an appropriate or attractive form of supervision and, rather, staff holding this viewpoint would value a one-to-one supervision approach which explicitly focuses on both the educative and supportive functions (Rae et al. 2017).

Literature investigating consultation groups has highlighted the importance of group readiness to embrace models such as WDGs (Ellis & Wolfe, 2019) and fears of conflict and exposure in response to SCs (Brown & Henderson, 2012). The findings of this study may further reinforce the idea that, for some school staff consultation groups may be enough, whereas other school staff may appreciate and value a more holistic approach to supervision to fulfil the educative and supportive functions.

5.5.1.6 EP Role: Direct versus Indirect Service Delivery.

Viewpoint 1 disagreed that a supervisor who is external to the school system is ideal and Viewpoint 2 responded neutrally. This finding may have some key implications for the EP role regarding inter-professional supervision. While previous research has suggested that EPs are well placed to deliver supervision in schools, the findings in the current research may suggest that EPs may be better placed to have a more indirect role. This more indirect role could involve contributing to developing

supervisory systems within schools, as suggested by Faulconbridge et al. (2017). This finding, taken with the importance that both viewpoints - and in particular Viewpoint 2 - placed on supervision being embedded in whole-school culture, may have implications as to where EPs are best placed.

Considering the five core roles often identified when defining what EPs do (consultation, assessment, intervention, research, and training (Scottish Executive, 2002)), EPs are arguably well placed to support supervision at a systemic level through research and training. EPs could use these skills in a variety of ways including; using their research skills to help ascertain what staff want supervision to look like within schools; using action research to set up, implement and evaluate supervisory systems; co-constructing supervision policies with schools; offering training on what supervision is (and is not) for all staff; offering supervisor training and coaching; and sharing different models of supervision and group problem-solving approaches. More specifically, Hawkins and McMahon (2020) identify seven stages in introducing supervision to organisations and directly reference the use of change tools familiar to EPs within these stages, including, Appreciative Inquiry (Cooperrider et al., 2008) and Force Field Analysis (Lewin, 1951).

While the current findings may pose questions as to where EPs are best placed regarding supervision for school staff, which then has a range of implications, this highlights the potential breadth that the EP role could have in this area. It is possible that some staff may still value an external supervisor, and EPs may have a role in 'supervising the supervisors'. Looking at the demographic information, many staff, when supervised by internal members of staff, tended to be supervised by senior leaders, who were supervised by head teachers. Head teachers in the current sample referred to supervision from outside of the school setting. Given the findings that head teacher stress has increased over the Covid-19 pandemic (Education Support, 2020), and that head teachers may not have someone appropriate within the school system to supervise them, EPs may have a potential role in directly supervising head teachers. EPs are also well-placed to support in setting up head teacher forums or supervisory networks, which could include building supervisory relationships between head teachers.

5.5.1.7 Contracting Supervision.

The different viewpoints indicate the need for flexibility and to avoid a one-size-fits all approach to supervision. This may inform EP practice in terms of highlighting the need to offer staff choice and flexibility. As previously discussed, the viewpoints may support EPs to choose models and formats of supervision which fit with what staff appear to value, however, the fact that school staff construe supervision differently suggests that EPs need to ensure they offer choices within contracting. In relation to Viewpoint 2 in particular, where it was strongly agreed that the term supervision is misunderstood and agreed that experience of supervision enables supervisees to gain more from the process, EPs could offer staff choices regarding models and even try a number of models to support supervisees to see which they perceive to best suit their needs.

The viewpoints might also inform inter-professional supervision offered by EPs in terms of the formal arrangements for sessions. Given that Viewpoint 2 perceived that supervision should be accessed as and when required, EPs may offer the option of ongoing and regular sessions as well as more flexible drop-in sessions. The findings suggest several other areas where school staff's viewpoints may vary when it comes to logistics, and therefore could inform EP practice in highlighting key issues to discuss during contracting. These may include:

- The purpose of supervision from the perspective of the supervisee
- Arrangements for formal records
- Preferred and possible structures
- The limits of confidentiality

The implications for EPs have been summarised in Appendix U in the form of a staff supervision development protocol.

5.5.2 Implications for Schools

The current findings suggest that supervision is something worth considering as a way of supporting staff development and wellbeing, as well as pupil outcomes. The current findings highlight to schools who already have supervision in place, or are

considering setting it up, the need to be alert to the different viewpoints which school staff may hold, in order to tailor supervision accordingly.

One implication of the current findings is that schools need to carefully consider whether supervision should be compulsory or voluntary. As school staff holding Viewpoint 2 perceived supervision as being an approach that should be voluntarily accessed, this suggests that not all staff will respond positively if supervision is compulsory.

The viewpoints confirmed existing findings that there may be a lack of a shared understanding of the term ‘supervision’ amongst school staff. A further implication for schools who wish to implement supervision, is therefore the need to develop a shared whole-school understanding of supervision, in terms of what exactly supervision is, and what it is not.

Consensus that supervision must be embedded in whole-school culture to be successful, supported by leaders and supported by whole-school training, may have several potential implications for schools, including:

- School leaders ensuring that supervision is introduced and developed in a collaborative way, with all school staff involved in decision making.
- School leaders ensuring that training is accessed to understand what supervision is, and is not, the potential benefits and purposes. This could be provided for all school staff to support them to consider if supervision is something they want to engage with.
- School leaders to model accessing supervision to ensure it is seen as something for all.

The findings suggest that school staff have different perceptions as to how achievable supervision is in schools, the implications for schools being, that they may need to consider how these barriers, such as a lack of time or space, could be overcome. This may include schools considering how time can be protected or built in for staff to access supervision, to reassure staff that the time is available and that supervision is not something else which they need to fit within their workload. A further implication of this finding may be that school leaders could share workable models of supervision that

have been successful in other school settings, to support staff to see how supervision can be successfully achieved.

While the current findings suggest some consensus amongst school staff, the identification of two separate viewpoints highlights that school staff can be expected to construe supervision in different ways. The main implications of this for schools is the need to ensure that supervision is offered flexibly, rather than implementing a one-size-fits-all approach. As highlighted in section 5.5.1, the findings presented here identify areas for discussion when contracting with staff, including:

- The frequency and regularity of sessions
- The purpose of supervision from the perspective of the supervisee which may inform models and approaches
- Arrangements for formal records
- Preferred and possible structures
- The limits of confidentiality

The findings here also indicate that supervisors must be suitably skilled and trained, with the implication that senior leaders must ensure that whoever is providing supervision, whether internal or external, has accessed supervision training and are themselves in regular receipt of appropriate support and Continuing Professional Development.

5.5.3 Implications for Government and LAs

Given the UK government's commitment to improving the mental health and wellbeing of CYP (DfE, 2018), and more recently, commitment to the wellbeing of school and college staff (DfE, 2019), the current findings should be of significant interest to policy makers.

The research has identified two distinct viewpoints amongst school staff regarding supervision, alongside a shared positive perception of supervision as a potential way to facilitate staff wellbeing and development and student outcomes. Such findings add further weight to the existing arguments for wider supervision within schools.

While only present in one of the viewpoints, the current findings highlight the wide-ranging benefits which supervision structures are perceived to have at a systems level, in terms of retention and making staff feel valued. This should be of relevance to policy makers and government, given their focus on teacher recruitment and retention (DfE, 2019).

The viewpoints in the current study also highlight that while school staff perceive supervision as being beneficial and positive, there are differences between school staff's understanding of the term supervision, and different perceptions as to what supervision should look like in practice. If government or LAs are to promote supervision in schools through the development of policy, such a policy would need to acknowledge the need for flexibility and sensitive contracting - rather than a one-size-fits all approach. Further, the findings that some school staff perceive supervision as needing to be voluntary suggests that any policy should be developed with consideration to promote choice, given that compulsory supervision may not be positively received by all.

The current findings highlight varying perceptions amongst school staff as to how achievable supervision is in the context of current resourcing. These findings may have potential implications for government should they consider embracing supervision as a way to support staff and pupil wellbeing. Specifically, serious consideration should be given as to how schools can protect and allocate time for supervision, and consideration of additional funding for schools to successfully implement supervision will be beneficial. Schools should also be encouraged to share and build on best practice.

The current findings highlight the critical nature of supervision being embedded in school culture in order for it to be successful. As previously highlighted, while supervision is commonplace in many of the helping professions, and since 2012 in Early Years settings, a culture of supervision is absent within education (Carroll et al. 2020). These implications highlight the need for government to take steps at a policy level to ensure that supervision begins to be established within the culture of schools, as it is in other sectors and workforces. Specifically, this could be supported by the creation of policy at an LA or at a central government level, and by actively

encouraging the sharing of good practice between schools to support sustainable and achievable systems.

5.6 Implications for Future Research

5.6.1 Adaptations to the Q-Methodological Design

In the current study, the use of Q-methodology was effective in meeting the research aims, however, repeated improvements could be made to the design in a number of ways: for example, by including the additional Q-statements suggested by participants, by utilising a larger sample, by obtaining clearer demographic information in terms of job role and by collecting more information regarding the value of previous supervision experiences.

While the aim of the current study was to explore a *range* of voices, future research could build on the current findings, and employment of Q-methodology in this context, perhaps seeking to elicit viewpoints with a focus on particular staff roles. Within the current study, the majority of senior leaders significantly loaded onto Viewpoint 1 suggesting, encouragingly, that supervision is perceived to be positive and achievable in schools. Given that they are responsible for decision making around allocation of resources, future research might focus specifically on senior leaders' viewpoints of supervision to better understand how different viewpoints may inform engagement with supervision at a systems level.

The viewpoints of teachers *and* support staff were accessed within this sample, however in comparison to the percentage of the workforce in schools that they make up, they were arguably under-represented. Therefore, future research could aim to focus on the viewpoints of teachers and support staff to better understand how different viewpoints may inform engagement with supervision at an individual level.

The opportunity sampling employed in this study resulted in a self-selecting sample which might mean that participants held a particular interest in supervision. It would be useful for future research to ensure that the viewpoints of those *without* a specific interest in supervision are also represented in the literature. This could be achieved by repeating the current research using a face-to-face design within one school setting – thus allowing for the collection of Q-sorts from all school staff, regardless of previous experience of, or interest in, supervision.

Through conducting the current research much has been learnt about Q-methodology and, in particular, about Q-methodology as delivered remotely. Future research might consider adapting the Q-methodology software employed here, so as to allow for participants to report their zero-salience point. Further, the current research had limited opportunity for follow up with participants. Future research utilising online Q-methodology might consider adapting the design so as to include follow-up interviews and member checks to explore some of these interesting findings. While the post-sort questionnaire gathered some information, more information would be useful to further understand these viewpoints.

5.6.2 Use of Alternative Designs

Future research could build on the current findings using other methodological designs. A survey design collecting quantitative data could be used to look at the potential prevalence of these viewpoints within a wider population, given that generalisations from this study are not appropriate. A survey design could be used to further explore whether previous experience of supervision, and whether this was perceived to be a positive or negative experience, impacts on the participant's views of supervision. Similar designs could be employed to explore relationships between viewpoints and feelings of burnout, to ascertain whether this may impact on how supervision is perceived.

Alternative qualitative designs could also be utilised to enhance some of the findings of this study. Semi-structured interviews or focus groups, for example, could be used to further explore staff perceptions of the technical language of supervision, which may in turn, support a further understanding of some of the common misinterpretations of the term supervision. The researcher refrained from using technical language within the Q-set which EPs and other psychologists may traditionally associate with supervision. For example, concepts such as *containment*, *holding*, *transference* and *contracting* were not included in the Q-set. While the terms *offload* and *supervisory relationship* featured in the Q-set, the ranking of items including these terms left questions as to whether some concepts may be understood differently amongst school staff. Staff's understanding of these concepts could be explored through interviews or focus groups and analysed using thematic or discourse analysis.

Given that a key difference between the two viewpoints within the current findings related to how achievable implementing supervision in schools was perceived to be, future research could explore achievable and sustainable models of supervision within school settings. Action research could support schools to develop, implement and evaluate supervision systems within schools. Action research cycles could be utilised to set up and deliver different approaches to supervision within the same setting or, perhaps, work through cycles to ensure a phased introduction including clarification as to what supervision is, leading to the design, implementation and evaluation of bespoke supervision. Such may also include the use of Appreciative Inquiry (Cooperrider et al. 2008) within the action research process.

5.7 Conclusions

This research sought to explore the holistic viewpoints of school staff regarding supervision, and to consider how these viewpoints may inform practice.

Twenty one participants working in a variety of roles and school settings, with varying experiences of supervision, completed an online Q-sort activity. Two viewpoints were identified within the sample; Viewpoint 1 as named *Achievable and Necessary: Quality Supervision Benefits the Whole-School System*, and Viewpoint 2 as named *Cautious Optimism: To be Successful Supervision Must be Clearly Defined, Embedded, Safe, Optional and Responsive*. The viewpoints highlighted a number of areas of consensus amongst school staff regarding supervision, but also exposed some nuanced but not insignificant differences.

The current research is timely, relevant and makes a unique contribution to the existing literature on supervision for school staff. While existing research has investigated the views of school staff regarding supervision, this has often been through gathering retrospective views following the delivery of a particular supervision model, and has more often than not utilised questionnaires and interviews. The use of Q-methodology identified holistic viewpoints amongst school staff regarding supervision and enabled a range of voices to be heard. The quality of the research has been appraised and the limitations of the research have been acknowledged, highlighting the challenges of real-world research, particularly in the context of a global pandemic.

The findings reported have potentially significant implications for policy makers. Further weight has been added to the argument that a ‘culture of supervision’ is needed within schools. This may be supported by the development of a supervision policy for schools which, based on the findings, would need to facilitate a shared understanding of supervision and emphasise the need for flexibility, choice and sensitive contracting.

The current findings highlight the importance of embedding supervision structures within whole-school culture which therefore has implications for schools. The current findings suggest that schools should ensure the development of supervision structures through collaborative discussions, facilitating access to training, visible support from senior leaders and joint problem solving to highlight and overcome any perceived barriers. The identification of distinct viewpoints have implications for schools in terms of ensuring sensitive and careful contracting and promoting flexibility and choice over a one-size-fits all approach.

The findings have potential implications for the EP role suggesting that EP’s research and training skills are likely to be useful in this area. EPs appear well placed to support schools to develop, implement and evaluate sustainable systems, review impact and offer training. The viewpoints highlight the need for EPs to avoid a one-size-fits all approach to staff supervision and tailor their offer to meet individual need. In discussing supervision with schools, EPs could play a role in developing a shared understanding of supervision and are well placed to share models used successfully in other schools.

Supervision has been highlighted as potentially beneficial for school staff. The wider literature suggests that supervision may play a role in preventing stress and burnout (Hawkins & McMachon, 2020) and supports wellbeing and professional development (Dunsmuir & Leadbetter, 2010). Specifically, Carroll et al. (2020) suggest that supervision of school staff can support wellbeing, retention and promote inclusive practice.

The importance of widening the offer of supervision to school staff has been noted in numerous contexts (Barnardo’s, 2020; Ellis & Wolfe, 2020; Leeds Beckett University, 2021; Talking Heads, 2020) and the DfE (2019) has made some reference to supervision as having potential for school staff. However, no formal policy has sought to facilitate this currently. That so few educational professionals currently access

supervision (Education Support, 2020) suggests a discrepancy between the espoused potential and current uptake of supervision and that, ultimately, barriers to supervision take up in schools remain.

It is hoped that the findings reported here can contribute to a growing understanding of how school staff construe supervision, and that this increased understanding will be of use to educational policy makers and professionals, including EPs. Specifically, the researcher hopes the findings will be supportive in overcoming barriers, and facilitating wider access and engagement with supervision, hence achieving greater wellbeing and improved outcomes both for the professionals themselves, and the CYP whose education they provide.

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7 Appendices

Appendix A: SLR Search Terms/Syntax

Database	Search syntax
Web of Science	<p>(TI= (“school staff” OR “support staff” OR teach* OR “learning mentor” OR “learning support assistant” OR principal OR “teacher’s aide*”) OR AB= (“school staff” OR “support staff” OR teach* OR “learning mentor” OR “learning support assistant” OR principal OR “teacher’s aide*”)) AND LANGUAGE: (English)</p> <p>AND</p> <p>(TI= (view* OR attitude* OR outlook* OR perspective* OR opinion* OR belief* OR judgement* OR thought* OR feeling* OR perception* OR viewpoint*) OR AB= (view* OR attitude* OR outlook* OR perspective* OR opinion* OR belief* OR judgement* OR thought* OR feeling* OR perception* OR viewpoint*)) AND LANGUAGE: (English)</p> <p>AND</p> <p>(TI= supervision OR AB= supervision) AND LANGUAGE: (English)</p> <p>AND</p> <p>(TI= school OR AB= school) AND LANGUAGE: (English)</p> <p>AND</p> <p>(AK= supervision) AND LANGUAGE: (English)</p>
PsycINFO	<p>(school staff or support staff or teach* or learning mentor or learning support assistant or principal or teacher * aide*).mp.</p> <p>AND</p> <p>(view* or attitude* or outlook* or perspective* or opinion* or belief* or judgement* or thought* or feeling* or perception* or viewpoint*).mp</p> <p>AND</p> <p>School.mp</p>

	AND exp Professional Supervision/ or exp Practicum Supervision/
EBSCO (ERIC)	TI (("school staff" OR "support staff" OR teach* OR "learning mentor" OR "learning support assistant" OR principal OR "teacher's aide*")) OR AB (("school staff" OR "support staff" OR teach* OR "learning mentor" OR "learning support assistant" OR principal OR "teacher's aide*")) AND TI ((view* OR attitude* OR outlook* OR perspective* OR opinion* OR belief* OR judgement* OR thought* OR feeling* OR perception* OR viewpoint*)) OR AB ((view* OR attitude* OR outlook* OR perspective* OR opinion* OR belief* OR judgement* OR thought* OR feeling* OR perception* OR viewpoint*)) AND (TI school OR AB school) AND (TI supervision OR AB supervision)
Scopus	TITLE-ABS ({school staff} OR {support staff} OR teach* OR {learning mentor} OR {learning support assistant} OR principal OR {teacher* aide*}) AND TITLE-ABS (view* OR attitude* OR outlook* OR perspective* OR opinion* OR belief* OR judgement* OR thought* OR feeling* OR perception* OR viewpoint*) AND TITLE-ABS (school) AND KEY (supervision)

Appendix B: Studies Excluded at Full Text Review

Studies were screened at full text against the inclusion/exclusion criteria presented in section 2.6.2. This is tabulated below with a corresponding number.

Reason code	Include	Exclude
1. Population	<p>School staff based and working in primary, secondary or specialist school settings.</p> <p>School staff working in teaching, support or leadership roles.</p>	<p>Staff who work in other educational settings (e.g. early years settings, higher or further education).</p> <p>Staff who are not based in the school setting (e.g. speech and language therapists, EPs, etc).</p>
2. Phenomenon of interest	<p>Research focuses on supervision as congruent with the 3 functions identified in the earlier literature review (educative, supportive and managerial).</p>	<p>Research focuses on supervision which makes reference to managerial aspects (e.g. evaluation, observation, monitoring or performance management) at the expense of the other functions.</p> <p>Research discussing coaching or consultation.</p>
3. Context	<p>UK schools</p>	<p>Non-UK schools</p>

4. Research design	Qualitative or mixed methods.	Quantitative methods only.
5. Publication type	Peer reviewed or grey literature which details a research study.	Peer reviewed or grey literature which is theoretical or a discussion paper. Other publications (e.g. magazines, books, book reviews, policies, conference proceedings).
6. Date of publication	Published 1990 onwards	Published prior to 1990

The table below presents the author and title of the paper and the database it was retrieved from. The final column gives a numerical code relating to the inclusion/exclusion criteria above by which it was excluded. For example, paper 1 was excluded as it did not meet the inclusion criteria for the phenomenon of interest (2) or the context (3).

	Author and title of paper	Database	Excluded with reason code
1.	Brandon, J., Hollweck, T., Donlevy, J. K., & Whalen, C. (2018). Teacher supervision and evaluation challenges: Canadian perspectives on overall instructional leadership. <i>Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice</i> , 24(3), 263-280.	PsycINFO	2, 3
2.	Watters, C. M. (2018). Perceptions of supervision processes and practices in initial contract, tenured, and distinguished-rated teachers as they relate to self-learning and growth in one large suburban school district. <i>Dissertation Abstracts International Section A: Humanities and Social Sciences</i> , 79(3-A(E)).	PsycINFO	2, 3
3.	Graybeal, A. E. (2018). Independent school teacher's perceptions of supervision and evaluation. <i>Dissertation Abstracts International Section A: Humanities and Social Sciences</i> , 79(1-A(E)).	PsycINFO	2, 3
4.	Neale, J. (2012). To see and be seen: Exploring layers of instructional leadership and supervision in the enactment of a district-wide teacher evaluation reform. <i>Dissertation Abstracts International Section A: Humanities and Social Sciences</i> , 73(3-A), 933.	PsycINFO	2, 3
5.	Watkins, S. E. (2012). Successful Title I schools: Teacher and supervisor perceptions of the supervision and evaluation processes. <i>Dissertation Abstracts International Section A: Humanities and Social Sciences</i> , 73(3-A), 888.	PsycINFO	2, 3
6.	Range, B. G., Scherz, S., Holt, C. R., & Young, S. (2011). Supervision and evaluation: The Wyoming perspective. <i>Educational Assessment, Evaluation and Accountability</i> , 23(3), 243-265.	PsycINFO	2, 3
7.	Celebi, N. (2010). Public high school teachers opinions on school administrators' supervision duty in Turkey. <i>Cypriot Journal of Educational Sciences</i> , 5(3), 212-231.	PsycINFO	2, 3
8.	Rosendale, E. G. (2010). Supervision of cyber teachers: Examining U.S. based cyber school policy and practice. <i>Dissertation Abstracts International Section A: Humanities and Social Sciences</i> , 70(10-A), 3725.	PsycINFO	2, 3
9.	Minnear-Peplinski, R. M (2010). Principals' and teachers' perceptions of teacher supervision. <i>Dissertation Abstracts International Section A: Humanities and Social Sciences</i> , 70(10-A), 3721.	PsycINFO	2, 3

10.	Begum, F. (2009). Assistant principals and teacher supervision: Roles, responsibilities, and regulations. <i>Dissertation Abstracts International Section A: Humanities and Social Sciences</i> , 69(12-A), 4572.	PsycINFO	2, 3
11.	O'Neal, E. M. (2008). Middle school teachers' understandings of supervision: Exploring feedback for professional growth in teacher performance and student achievement. <i>Dissertation Abstracts International Section A: Humanities and Social Sciences</i> , 69(4-A), 1242.	PsychINFO	Can't access
12.	Walton, V. (2008). The assistant principal's role in special education: An inquiry into the supervision of special education at the building level. <i>Dissertation Abstracts International Section A: Humanities and Social Sciences</i> , 69(3-A), 844.	PsycINFO	2, 3
13.	Clancy, A. T. (2006). The effect of collaboration, resources, and supervision on second year teachers' perceived teaching efficacy. <i>Dissertation Abstracts International Section A: Humanities and Social Sciences</i> , 67(1-A), 42.	PsycINFO	Can't access
14.	Holland, P. (2005). The case for expanding standards for teacher evaluation to include an instructional supervision perspective. <i>Journal of Personnel Evaluation in Education</i> , 18(1), 67-77.	PsycINFO	1, 2, 3
15.	Berner, A. M. (2005). Does it Work? - Facilitative supervision in a consultative framework. <i>Psykologisk Paedagogisk Radgivning</i> , 42(1), 69-76.	PsycINFO	Can't access
16.	Bennett, G. T. (1991). Clinical supervision practices and the leadership behaviors of elementary principals as reported by the principals, their superintendents and teachers. <i>Dissertation Abstracts International Section A: Humanities and Social Sciences</i> , 52(2-A), 353.	PsycINFO	Can't access
17.	Browning, P. J. (1990). Selected teachers' and administrators' perceptions of the components of clinical supervision. <i>Dissertation Abstracts International Section A: Humanities and Social Sciences</i> , 50(9-A), 2716.	PsycINFO	Can't access
18.	Bureau, W. E. (1992). Seeing supervision differently: The processes of facilitating change in a veteran teacher's beliefs. <i>Dissertation Abstracts International Section A: Humanities and Social Sciences</i> , 53(5-A), 1331.	PsycINFO	2, 3
19.	Rabideau, A. W. (1993). Teachers' satisfaction with instructional supervision and related key variables. <i>Dissertation Abstracts International Section A: Humanities and Social Sciences</i> , 54(5-A), 1623.	PsycINFO	Can't access

20.	Popp, A. (1997). Approaches of Adlerian-psychology-oriented strategies in a class of a special education school in Hamburg. Report on a supervision. <i>Zeitschrift fur Individualpsychologie</i> , 22(3), 193-203.	PsycINFO	Can't access
21.	Glaserapp, S. V. (1997). Understanding means changing--Supervision as a method of continuing teacher education. <i>Zeitschrift fur Individualpsychologie</i> , 22(3), 172-183.	PsycINFO	Can't access
22.	Whitson, D. L., & Yocom, D. J. (1995). Coaching/mentoring preservice teachers: A case study. <i>College Student Journal</i> , 29(2), 202-206.	PsycINFO	1, 2, 3
23.	Sandell, M., & Sullivan, K. (1992). Teacher disillusionment and supervision as a part of professional development. <i>Alberta Journal of Educational Research</i> , 38(2), 133-140.	PsycINFO	Can't access
24.	Baris, A. E., & Atanur Baskan, G. (2020). Adaptation of internal audit system to supervisory system in the provincial directorate of national education and a model proposal. <i>Pegem Egitim Ve Ogretim Dergisi</i> , 10(1), 103-146.	WoS	1, 2, 3
25.	Rigby, J., Walsh, E. D., Boten, S., Deno, A., Harrison, S. M., Merrell, R., Pritchett, S., & Seaman, S. (2019). A view from the field: the process of improving equitable systems leadership. <i>Journal of Educational Administration</i> , 57(5), 484-500.	WoS	1, 2, 3
26.	Musundire, A., & Dreyer, J. M. (2019). Effectiveness of the clinical supervision strategy as a tool for improving teaching quality: Perceptions of South African school-based managers and educators. <i>Africa Education Review</i> , 16(2), 109-125.	WoS	1, 2, 3
27.	Kose, A. (2017). Problematic course supervision within Turkish Education System. <i>Cukurova University Faculty of Education Journal</i> , 46(2), 298-367.	WoS	1, 2, 3
28.	Husain, H. (2017). Teachers clinical supervision model at elementary school 11 Langsa City of Aceh Province. <i>Advances in Social Science Education and Humanities Research</i> , 104, 188-192.	WoS	2, 3
29.	April, D., & Bouchamma, Y. (2017). Influence of pedagogical supervisors' practices and perceptions on the use of results-based management. <i>Canadian Journal of Educational Administration and Policy</i> , 183, 82-98.	WoS	2, 3
30.	Memisoglu, S. P., & Kaya, A. (2016). Metaphoric perceptions of private schools employee teachers about concepts of supervision and supervisor. <i>2nd International Conference on Lifelong Learning and Leadership for All</i> . 833-846.	WoS	Can't access

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55.	Hulusi & Maggs. (2015). Containing the containers: Work Discussion Group supervision for teachers – a psychodynamic approach.	Scopus	5

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60.	Kutsyuruba, B. (2009). Getting off on the right foot: Guiding beginning teachers with supervision and professional development. <i>International Journal of Learning</i> , 16(2), 257-278.	Scopus	Can't access
61.	Haubl, R. (2007). School as a pathogenic place. <i>Gruppenpsychotherapie und Gruppendynamik</i> , 43(4), 259-276.	Scopus	Can't access

Appendix C: WoE Form with Scoring System Explained

To appraise the quality of studies included in the SLR, Gough's (2007) WoE framework was used. A combination of other frameworks were used to break the four WoE ratings down further in a systematised way

WoE A

In order to judge WoE A, a combination of Pawson et al.'s (2003) TAPUPAS model and the Mixed Method Appraisal Tool (Pluye et al. 2011) were used:

Papers were judged for Transparency, Accuracy and Accessibility against Pawson et al.'s (2003) descriptors and were given a score of 1 (low), 2 (medium) and 3 (high) for each.

Papers were judged for Specificity using the Mixed Methods Appraisal Tool (MMAT) (Pluye et al. 2011). The MMAT was used as follows:

- For all studies the screening questions were completed.
- For qualitative studies section 1 (qualitative) section was completed.
- For mixed method studies section 1 (qualitative) and section 4 (quantitative descriptive) and section 5 (mixed methods) was completed.

The MMAT scoring system was used as recommended:

- For qualitative or quantitative only – divide the number of criteria met by 4 to give a percentage of between 0-100%
- For mixed-methods – calculate the qualitative and quantitative sections as above and complete the mixed-methods section and give rating as number of criteria met. The MMAT recommends that the overall rating of a study cannot exceed its weakest component. Therefore the overall score is the lowest score of the study components.
- 25% when qualitative or quantitative component = 1 or mixed methods component = 0
- 50% when qualitative or quantitative component = 2 or mixed method component = 1
- 75% when qualitative or quantitative component = 3 or mixed method component = 2
- 100% when qualitative or quantitative component = 4 or mixed method component = 4

An overall WoE A judgement was calculated using the following system:

For transparency, accuracy, accessibility, a 1 = low, 2 = medium, 3 = high.

For specificity, a MMAT score of 0-33% = low, 34-66% = medium 67-100% = high.

An average of low, medium, or high was given based on the 4 sub-components of WoE A.

The following were completed for each study to generate a WoE rating:

Weight of Evidence A: Generic judgment about coherence and integrity of evidence in its own terms		
Corresponding TAPUPAS criteria :	Rating (1=low, 2=medium, 3=high)	Comments
<u>Transparency:</u> “The process of knowledge generation should be open to outside scrutiny. For knowledge to meet this standard, it should make plain how it was generated, clarifying aims, objectives and all the steps of the subsequent argument, so giving readers access to a common understanding of the underlying reasoning.” (Pawson et al., 2003, as cited in Long et al., 2006)		
<u>Accuracy:</u> “All knowledge claims should be supported by and faithful to the events, experiences, informants and sources used in their production. For knowledge to meet this standard, it should demonstrate that all assertions, conclusions and recommendations are based upon relevant and appropriate information.” (Pawson et al., 2003, as cited in Long et al., 2006)		

<u>Accessibility:</u> “Knowledge should be presented in a way that meets the needs of the knowledge seeker. To meet this standard, no potential user should be excluded because of the presentational style employed.” (Pawson et al., 2003, as cited in Long et al., 2006)		
<u>Specificity:</u> “The knowledge must pass muster within its own source domain, as perceived by its participants and proponents.” (Pawson et al., 2003, as cited in Long et al., 2006)		To assess this the MMAT was completed for each study (see table below) and a score given based on the MMAT scoring criteria. A MMAT score of 0-33% = low, 34-66% = medium 67-100% = high

Mixed Methods Appraisal Tool (MMAT) (Pluye et al. 2011)			
Types of mixed methods study	Methodological quality criteria	Meets criteria: (Yes/no/unsure)	Comments

components or primary studies			
Screening questions (to be completed for all types of study)	Are there clear qualitative and quantitative research questions/objectives or a clear mixed methods question/objective?		
	Do the collected data address the research questions/objective?		
1. Qualitative	1.1 Are the sources of qualitative data (archives, documents, informants, observations) relevant to address the research questions/objective?		
	1.2 Is the process for analysing qualitative data relevant to the research question/objective?		
	1.3 Is appropriate consideration given to how findings relate to the context, e.g., the setting, in which the data were collected?		
	1.4 Is appropriate consideration given to how findings relate to researchers' influence, e.g., through their interactions with participants?		
2. Quantitative (RCT)	N/A	N/A	N/A

3. Quantitative non-randomised	N/A	N/A	N/A
4. Quantitative descriptive	4.1 Is the sampling strategy relevant to address the quantitative research question (quant aspect of mixed methods q)?		
	4.2 Is the sample representative of the population under study?		
	4.3 Are measurements appropriate (clear origin, or validity known, or standard instrument)?		
	4.4 Is there an acceptable response rate?		
5. Mixed methods	5.1 Is the mixed methods research design relevant to address the qualitative and quantitative research questions/objectives or the qualitative and quantitative aspects of the mixed methods question/objective?		
	5.2 Is the integration of qualitative and quantitative data (or results) relevant to address the research question/objective?		
	5.3 Is appropriate consideration given to the limitations associated with this integration, e.g., the divergence of qualitative and quantitative data (or results) in a triangulation design?		
	<u>Criteria for qual and approp quant component must also be applied.</u>		

WoE B

In order to judge WoE B, Pawson et al.'s (2003) TAPUPAS model was used.

Papers were judged for Purposivity against Pawson et al.'s (2003) descriptors and were given a score of 1 (low), 2 (medium) and 3 (high). This score became the overall WoE B judgment.

The following was completed for each paper:

WoE B: Review specific judgement of research design – appropriateness of that form of evidence in answering the review questions, i.e. the fitness for purpose of that form of evidence	
Corresponding TAPUPAS criteria:	Score (1= low, 2=medium, 3=high)
<u>Purposivity:</u> “The approaches and methods used to gain knowledge should be appropriate to the task in hand, or 'fit for purpose'. For knowledge to meet this standard, it should demonstrate that the inquiry has followed the apposite approach to meet the stated objectives of the exercise” (Pawson et al., 2003, as cited in Long et al., 2006)	

WoE C

In order to judge WoE C, a combination of Pawson et al.'s (2003) TAPUPAS model and author-generated criteria were used.

Papers were judged for Propriety against Pawson et al.'s (2003) descriptor and were rated as yes or no.

Papers were judged for Utility using author-generated criteria relevant to the review question. Each paper was given a score of 1 (low), 2 (medium) or 3 (high).

An overall WoE C judgement was calculated using the following system:

For propriety, no = low, yes = high.

For utility, an overall score on the 3 criteria of between 1-3= low, 4-6= medium, and 7-9=high.

An average of low, medium, or high was given based on the 4 sub-components of WoE C.

The following was completed for each paper:

WoE C: Review specific judgement of evidence focus – relevance of focus of evidence to review question	
Corresponding TAPUPAS criteria:	
<u>Propriety:</u> “Knowledge should be created and managed legally, ethically and with due care to all relevant stakeholders. For knowledge to meet this standard, it should present adequate evidence, appropriate to each point of contact, of the informed consent of relevant stakeholders. The release (or withholding) of information should also be subject to agreement” (Pawson et al., 2003, as cited in Long et al., 2006)	Rated as yes or no

<u>Utility:</u> “Knowledge should be appropriate to the decision setting in which it is intended to be used, and to the information need expressed by the seeker after knowledge. For knowledge to meet this standard, it should be 'fit for use', providing answers that are as closely matched as possible to the question.” (Pawson et al., 2003, as cited in Long et al., 2006)	See the table below for researcher developed criteria which was used to make this judgement 1-3= low 4-6 = medium 7-9 = high
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Utility		
Criteria	Weighting	Rationale
Population	3= Views from school staff in a range of roles and a range of setting types 2= Views from school staff in a range of roles or a range of setting types 1= Views of school staff limited to a particular role and particular setting type	The review focuses on school staffs’ views generally thus those studies which gained views from a range of school staff in terms of setting and role were rated higher due to the fact they were given a wider and broader understanding.
Phenomenon of interest	3= Views around the concept of supervision generally and broadly with all aspects of the paper relevant 2= Views around a type of supervision received, e.g. group/one-	The review focuses on views of supervision generally and broadly rather than views on a particular model or format of supervision. Therefore, those studies which focused on views of supervision generally were given a higher rating.

	<p>to-one/a particular model with all aspects of the paper relevant</p> <p>1= Views around a type of supervision received, e.g. group/one-to-one/a particular model with only some aspects of the paper relevant</p>	
Content of paper	<p>3= Views are presented in a lot of depth and discussion</p> <p>2= Views are presented in some depth</p> <p>1= Views are presented at a surface level description</p>	<p>The review questions are focused around views only thus papers which presented views in depth and with discussion are rated higher than those which were more surface level and descriptive.</p>

WoE D

In order to judge WoE D, an average was calculated for each paper based on their WoE A, B, and C ranking.

Appendix D: Focus Group Schedule

Welcome and overview of topic

Firstly, I would like to say thanks again for taking the time and choosing to participate in this research, it is greatly appreciated. As a reminder my name is Kirsty Beech and I am a trainee Educational Psychologist at the University of Nottingham and on placement with XX Educational Psychology Service.

The purpose of the research is to explore viewpoints by staff working in schools around the topic of supervision. It is well recognised that school staff have a key role in supporting some of the most vulnerable children and young people and it is also recognised that this can have a marked impact on staff wellbeing. The research has also shown that there are links between pupil outcomes and staff wellbeing. Unlike helping professions, including psychologists, supervision is not a requirement in schools, however the literature has begun to recognise the potential it has, and some schools have begun to offer this to their staff. While some research has delivered supervision to school staff and asked for their views, no research as of yet has looked at the wider viewpoints held across the profession.

In order to do this the research is employing something called Q methodology which will ask 30 members of school staff to sort statements about supervision in terms of level of agreement and this data will then be used to understand the viewpoints which exist. In order to do this, I first need to generate statements around supervision which encompass the full range of views which may be held around the topic. As part of this the literature has been consulted however it is important for statements to be generated from school staff themselves and this is the purpose of our focus group today. I will be running focus groups with staff in other roles as well as Educational Psychologists. This focus group today will take approximately one hour, and I want it to be as informal and conversational as possible. Please remember that you are free to leave at any time and your participation is completely optional.

Establish ground rules

Before we begin today it would be useful for us to have some ground rules before we begin. I will start by suggesting some and please feel free to add any more.

- There are no right or wrong answers. I am interested in capturing the full range of views that *may* be held by staff working in schools.
- You are encouraged to share your own views, other views you've heard whilst working in schools, or just views which you think may exist. If you do share views expressed by others, please ensure this is confidential and no names are used.
- Try not to speak over one another – we could use the mute function if this is needed
- I will not be recording but rather noting down your views as we progress. I will share the document I make these notes on via screen share and will check these

have been recorded accurately as soon as there feels an appropriate opportunity in the conversation.

Does anyone wish to add any other additional rules? Or ask any additional questions?

Questions

1. What does the term 'supervision' mean to you?

Optional follow up questions:

- Do you think most (staff role) would agree with this definition?
- Do you feel there is a shared understanding of the term 'supervision'?

2. How have you experienced supervision?

Follow up prompts may include:

- What format or approach did this supervision take?
- Who delivered?
- What was the purpose?

3. What aspects of supervision are valuable?
4. What aspects of supervision do you not value?
5. How does/has supervision impacted your role?
6. What factors allow some schools to prioritise supervision?
7. What factors prevent some schools prioritising supervision?

Conclusion

Thankyou I really appreciate your thoughts and insight. I will email you a debrief sheet following this – please contact me if you have any questions. I will be in touch to ask participants to volunteer to pilot the research tool which will be created from todays and other discussions. If this is something you are interested in, please do express an interest.

Appendix E: Semi-Structured Interview Schedule

Welcome and overview of topic

Firstly, I would like to say thanks again for taking the time and choosing to participate in this research, it is greatly appreciated. As a reminder my name is Kirsty Beech and I am a trainee Educational Psychologist at the University of Nottingham and on placement with XX Educational Psychology Service.

The purpose of the research is to explore viewpoints by staff working in schools around the topic of supervision. It is well recognised that school staff have a key role in supporting some of the most vulnerable children and young people and it is also recognised that this can have a marked impact on staff wellbeing. The research has also shown that there are links between pupil outcomes and staff wellbeing. Unlike helping professions, including psychologists, supervision is not a requirement in schools, however the literature has begun to recognise the potential it has, and some schools have begun to offer this to their staff. While some research has delivered supervision to school staff and asked for their views, no research as of yet has looked at the wider viewpoints held across the profession.

In order to do this the research is employing something called Q methodology which will ask 30 members of school staff to sort statements about supervision in terms of level of agreement and this data will then be used to understand the viewpoints which exist. In order to do this, I first need to generate statements around supervision which encompass the full range of views which may be held around the topic. As part of this the literature has been consulted however it is important for statements to be generated from school staff themselves and this is the purpose of our interview today. I will be running interviews and focus groups with staff in other roles as well as Educational Psychologists. The interview today will take no more than one hour and I want it to be as informal and conversational as possible. Please remember that you are free to leave at any time and your participation is completely optional.

Before we begin, I would like to remind you that:

- There are no right or wrong answers. I am interested in capturing the full range of views that *may* be held by staff working in schools.
- You are encouraged to share your own views, other views you've heard whilst working in schools, or just views which you think may exist. If you do share views expressed by others, please ensure this is confidential and no names are used.
- I will not be recording but rather noting down your views as we progress. I will share the document I make these notes on via screen share and will check these have been recorded accurately as soon as there feels an appropriate opportunity in the conversation.

Do you have any questions?

Questions

1. What does the term ‘supervision’ mean to you?

Optional follow up questions:

- Do you think most (staff role) would agree with this definition?
- Do you feel there is a shared understanding of the term ‘supervision’?

2. How have you experienced supervision?

Follow up prompts may include:

- What format or approach did this supervision take?
- Who delivered?
- What was the purpose?

3. What aspects of supervision are valuable?

4. What aspects of supervision do you not value?

5. How does/has supervision impacted your role? How do you think supervision helps school staff? In what ways may supervision be less helpful or effective?

6. What factors allow some schools to prioritise supervision?

7. What factors prevent some schools prioritising supervision?

Conclusion

Thankyou I really appreciate your thoughts and insight. I will email you a debrief sheet following this – please contact me if you have any questions. I will be in touch to ask participants to volunteer to pilot the research tool which will be created from todays and other discussions. If this is something you are interested in, please do express an interest.

Appendix F: Final Q Set

Q-Statement Number	Q-Statement
1	Supervision is of no benefit to me.
2	My need for supervision changes over time.
3	All school staff need supervision.
4	Supervision of school staff is integral to achieving the best for children and young people.
5	Supervision safeguards the wellbeing of school staff.
6	Supervision needs to be voluntary for school staff.
7	The term supervision is often misunderstood by school staff.
8	Supervision is already happening in schools under a different name.
9	Supervision enables managers to evaluate staff performance.
10	Accessing supervision will make my peers think that I cannot cope.
11	Supervision is often a tick box exercise being imposed upon school staff.
12	Supervision helps school staff to learn and develop as professionals.
13	There is not enough time for supervision.
14	I find the idea of supervision daunting.
15	For supervision to be successful in schools there would need to be an appropriate space.
16	There is not enough funding for schools to provide supervision for their staff.
17	The support of senior leaders is vital if supervision is to be successful.
18	Supervision is only needed in schools in difficult contexts.
19	Schools need training on supervision if they are going to implement it properly.
20	Supervision needs to be embedded into whole-school culture to be successful.
21	Supervision is not prioritised in schools.
22	Supervisees need to be able to trust that their supervisor will keep things confidential.
23	Supervision sessions need to have a fixed structure.

24	Supervision is more valuable when it is one-to-one.
25	For supervision to be successful the purpose must be clear.
26	A formal written record of supervision is unnecessary.
27	Supervision only works when it is at a planned time.
28	Supervision sessions need to be regular.
29	The skill-set of the supervisor determines the success of supervision.
30	Supervisors should ideally be from outside of the school setting.
31	Supervision must be provided by someone who has been suitably trained.
32	The supervisor must understand my role.
33	The relationship between the supervisor and supervisee is key to how effective supervision is.
34	Supervision enables supervisees' concerns to be heard.
35	Supervision gives supervisees the space to reflect on their practice.
36	Supervision is strictly for discussing professional matters.
37	Supervision needs to be collaborative.
38	Supervision is only helpful when supervisees are given direct answers.
39	Supervision must be non-judgemental.
40	Supervision helps supervisees to develop solutions to problems where they feel stuck.
41	Supervision increases supervisees' confidence.
42	Supervision is not a place to feel challenged.
43	Supervision ensures the supervisees' strengths and achievements are recognised.
44	Supervision makes supervisees more self-aware.
45	Supervision encourages supervisees to think differently.
46	Supervision gives supervisees the chance to offload.
47	Supervision makes supervisees feel valued as professionals.
48	Supervision empowers supervisees.
49	Supervision is a reassuring experience.
50	Supervision allows supervisees to explore their worries.
51	Supervision helps supervisees to feel re-energised.
52	Supervision enables supervisees to cope with the stress of their role.
53	Supervision helps supervisees to feel less alone when facing challenges.
54	Supervision enables supervisees to stay physically well.

55	Supervision facilitates a better work-life balance.
56	Supervision is integral to supervisees being able to do their job effectively.
57	Supervision supports the development of key working relationships.
58	Good quality staff supervision supports staff retention.
59	Poor supervision can make things feel worse.
60	Supervision is a waste of time.
61	The more experience you have of being supervised, the more you are able to gain from the process.

Appendix G: Initial Email to Schools

Exploring school staffs' views of supervision.

Ethics approval number: S1274

Researcher: Kirsty Beech - kirsty.beech@nottingham.ac.uk

Supervisor: Nathan Lambert - nathan.lambert@nottingham.ac.uk

Dear Head teacher

I hope that you are well. I am a final year trainee Educational Psychologist on placement with XXX Educational Psychology Service. As part of my doctoral training, I am conducting some research to explore the views held by a range of school staff in different settings around the topic of supervision. Findings from this study will provide useful insight into how school staff understand and view supervision which will support Educational Psychologists to make necessary considerations when offering this type of work to schools. I am interested in the views of all different members of staff working in schools in a range of different provisions.

I am looking to recruit up to 30 members of school staff, including support staff, teaching staff and senior leaders, to complete a card sorting activity online. The activity and subsequent questionnaire should take approximately 45 minutes to complete. Participants will be asked to read 61 opinion statements about supervision and arrange these from *most agree* to *least agree*. The opinion statements have been taken from school staff, Educational Psychologists and within the wider research literature. Following this, participants will be asked to complete a quick questionnaire to collect demographic information and to explore experiences of the activity.

Schools have been invited to take part and while it is hoped that a mix of staff will be recruited, in terms of experience of supervision, experience of supervision is not necessary. I would be very grateful if you would read the attached Stakeholder Information Sheet to help you decide if you would be happy for me to invite your staff to participate and additionally, whether you yourself would like to participate.

I appreciate that you will be extremely busy at present and thank you in advance for taking the time to consider this.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Best wishes,

Kirsty Beech

Trainee Educational Psychologist

Appendix H: Recruitment Flyer



University of
Nottingham
UK | CHINA | MALAYSIA

Exploring School Staff's Viewpoints of Supervision

What are the viewpoints held by school staff regarding supervision?

I'm a Year Three Trainee Educational Psychologist studying at the University of Nottingham. This research is being undertaken as part of my thesis.

For further information and to volunteer please email me at:

kirsty.beech@nottingham.ac.uk

What is this project?

I'm looking for school staff (teaching staff, support staff and senior leaders) working within a range of settings (primary, secondary and specialist) to participate in an exploratory piece of research.

This research aims to explore the potential viewpoints which exist amongst school staff towards supervision.

You will be asked to reflect on and sort a range of statements regarding supervision by your level of agreement.

You will also be asked to complete a short demographic questionnaire.

What are the benefits?

Increasing the understanding of how a range of school staff in different roles and settings understand and view supervision within the UK.

Informing Educational Psychology Services of the potential shared viewpoints held by school staff regarding supervision which can support in the development of their supervision offer.

Appendix I: On-Screen Q Sort Instructions

Step 0

Supervision is increasingly available to teachers and education support staff in schools. The study is interested in understanding how staff working in schools view supervision. In order to do this, you will be presented with 61 statements about supervision. Each statement is an opinion which has been expressed by a member of school staff, an Educational Psychologist, or the wider research literature. The aim of this task is to individually rank these statements of opinion in relation to how closely they represent your own personal views on this topic. There are no right or wrong answers. Please now read through all of the statements in turn and consider them in relation to the statement below:

“As a member of staff working in a school, it is my view that...”

(If you click on the statement it will appear enlarged in the middle of your screen to make it easier to read)

Step 1

Now that you have familiarised yourself with the statements, please sort them into the three boxes below; those you most agree with, those you most disagree with and those which you neither agree nor disagree with, by clicking on each statement and dragging it into the corresponding box. Please note: the piles do not have to be equal, the number on each statement does not mean anything, and to enlarge the statement simply click it.

Step 2

Click and drag the two statements you most agree with from the Most Agree box into the boxes on the far right hand column of the grid (+6). It doesn't matter which is on the top or the bottom. Click and drag the two statements you most disagree with from the Most Disagree box into the far left column of the grid (-6). Repeat this process working inwards. Eventually you will exhaust your 'Most Agree' and 'Most Disagree' piles. At this point place the items you neither agree nor disagree with in the spaces left considering whether they are closer to agreement or disagreement. Please make a note of the column where the statements you disagree with end and the statements you agree with start – you will be asked this question later. You can move statements around at any time. Do not worry if your 'most agree' statements cross over into the negative rankings or vice versa.

Step 3

Please state your reasons for selecting the two statements you ranked at +6, indicating that you agreed with these statements the most, and the two statements you ranked at -6, indicating that you disagreed with these statements the most.

Step 4

Thank you, you have now completed your Q-sort. In order for it to save and for the results of the research to be interpreted, please complete the post-sort questionnaire

which includes a few questions regarding your job role and experience and some additional questions about your experience of the process.

Step 5

Thanks again for your participation in this study. If you have any questions, please contact the researcher via email (Kirsty.beech@nottingham.ac.uk or Nathan.lambert@nottingham.ac.uk)

Appendix J: Supplementary Instructions



The University of
Nottingham

UNITED KINGDOM • CHINA • MALAYSIA

Exploring school staff's views of supervision.

Ethics approval number: S1274

Researcher: Kirsty Beech - kirsty.beech@nottingham.ac.uk

Supervisor: Nathan Lambert - nathan.lambert@nottingham.ac.uk

Supplementary Instructions for online Q-sort activity

This document has been produced to supplement the on-screen instructions which will be displayed as part of the Q-sort activity. Due to character constraints, instructions have had to be simplified on the online software. Please read the information in the blue box at the very least before beginning the activity. Please refer to the remainder of the document during completion of the online Q-sort activity to clarify any instructions you may be unsure of.

Before you begin:

- The activity must be completed on a desktop or laptop (tablets and mobile phones are *not* supported by the software).
- The activity must be completed in one session (there is no option to save and return later).
- If you click on the statement it will appear enlarged in the middle of your screen to make it easier to read.
- In steps 1 and 2 you must place *all* of the statements before moving to the next step. If you don't, the software will reset the entire activity.
- If you want to move a statement at any time, please do so by dragging it from its original position to the position you want it to be in. Clicking 'redo' will reset the entire activity.

Supervision is increasingly available to teachers and education support staff in schools. The study is interested in understanding how staff working in schools view supervision. In order to do this, you will be presented with 61 statements about supervision. Each statement is an opinion which has been expressed by a member of school staff, an Educational Psychologist or the wider research literature. The aim of this task is to individually rank these statements of opinion in relation to how closely they represent your own personal views on this topic. *There are no right or wrong answers* – the research is interested in what *you* think. Please now read through all of the statements in turn and consider them in relation to the statement below:

“As a member of staff working in a school, it is my view that...”

Step 1: Pre-sorting

Now that you have familiarised yourself with the statements, please sort them into the three boxes below; those you most agree with, those you most disagree with and those which you neither agree nor disagree with. You can do this by clicking on each statement and dragging it into the corresponding box. Please note the following:

- The piles do not need to be equal.
- The number on the statement doesn't mean anything.

Step 2: Sorting on the Grid – please see supporting video instructions

1. Now that you have sorted the statements into the three piles please look at the statements in the 'most agree' box and select the two which are most like your own views. Click and drag each of these statements, one at a time, into the two boxes on the far right hand column of the grid (+6). It doesn't matter which is on the top or the bottom.
2. From your 'most disagree' box, choose 2 statements which are least like your views and click and drag them into the far left column of the grid (-6).
3. Go back to the 'most agree' box and this time choose 3 more statements which are the closest to your views (from those not already placed on the grid). Click and drag them into the boxes in the second column from the right (+5).
4. Return to the 'most disagree' pile and select 3 statements that are least like your view (apart from the two already placed on). Click and drag them into the boxes in the second column from the left (-5).
5. Continue to do this to complete the grid with the statements left over, working your way towards the middle. Eventually you will exhaust your 'most agree' and 'most disagree' piles at this point place the items you neither agree nor disagree with in the spaces left considering whether they are closer to agreement or disagreement.

You are able to rearrange statements as you change your mind you can do this by dragging the statements on and off the grid. Do not worry if your 'most agree' statements cross over into the negative rankings or vice versa. Once you are happy this becomes your Q-sort which is your subjective view of supervision as a topic.

Step 3: Reflections

Please state your reasons for selecting the two statements you ranked at +6, indicating that you agreed with these statements the most, and the two statements you ranked at -6, indicating that you disagreed with these statements the most.

Step 4: Questionnaire

Thank you, you have now completed your Q-sort. In order for it to save and for the results of the research to be interpreted, please complete the post-sort questionnaire which includes a few questions regarding your job role and experience and some additional questions about your experience of the process.

Step 5: Ending message

Thanks again for your participation in this study. Please see the debrief information on the next page. If you have any remaining questions please contact the researcher via email (Kirsty.beech@nottingham.ac.uk or Nathan.lambert@nottingham.ac.uk)

Appendix K: Post-sort Questionnaire

1. Age:
2. Gender:
3. Current job title:
4. What type of school setting do you currently work in? (E.g. primary, secondary, specialist). Please give as much detail as possible.
5. How long have you been working in this current setting?
6. How long have you been working in education? Please give detail of any previous roles.
7. Do you currently receive supervision? (NB: supervision here is defined as separate from line management or performance management meetings).
8. Have you previously received supervision? (This could be in your current role, a previous role or even in a role in another sector). If yes, please give details.
9. If you are currently receiving, or have previously received supervision, how often did you receive this? (Please type N/A if not relevant).
10. If you are currently receiving, or have previously received supervision, what was the job title of the supervisor? (Please type N/A if not relevant).
11. If you are currently receiving, or have previously received supervision, what format did this supervision take (e.g. group/one-to-one)? (Please type N/A if not relevant).
12. Do you feel your completed Q sort accurately captures your perspective of the topic of supervision? Please answer yes or no. (If no, please give reasons).
13. Are there any additional statements which should have been included? If yes, please state what these would be and why you feel these are important.
14. Are there any further comments which you would like to make about any of the statements or the Q sort experience overall?
15. Please indicate which region you work in (for example, East Midlands, West Midlands, etc.).

Appendix L: Ethics Approval Letter



School of Psychology
The University of Nottingham
University Park
Nottingham
NG7 2RD

T: +44 (0)115 9467403 or (0)115 9514344

SJ/tp

Ref: S1274

Monday 13th July 2020

Dear Nathan and Kirsty,

Ethics Committee Review

Thank you for submitting an account of your proposed research "**Exploring school staffs' views of supervision.**"

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 M: Information Sheet for Phase 1 (Focus Group)



The University of
Nottingham

UNITED KINGDOM • CHINA • MALAYSIA

Exploring school staff's views of supervision.

Ethics approval number: S1274

Researcher: Kirsty Beech - kirsty.beech@nottingham.ac.uk

Supervisor: Nathan Lambert - nathan.lambert@nottingham.ac.uk

Purpose and aims of the research

School staff are increasingly supporting vulnerable children and young people (CAMHS, 2009) and research suggests that doing so has a marked impact on staff wellbeing (Bartle & Trevis, 2015). Additionally, the relationship between teacher wellbeing and outcomes for pupils has been demonstrated both nationally and internationally (Rae, Cowell & Field, 2017). While in the helping professions supervision is commonplace, this is less common in schools (Carroll et al, 2020). The purpose of the current research is to find out how a range of school staff in different roles and settings understand and view supervision. Supervision is increasingly being offered to schools by Educational Psychology Services and it is hoped that by understanding how school staff view supervision, services can develop their supervision offer to take these views into account.

Why have I been invited to take part?

You have been invited to take part as it is thought that EPs will have something interesting and valuable to say about how school staff perceive and understand supervision through conversations with your schools.

Do I have to take part?

Participation is completely voluntary however your input would be greatly valued. If you are interested in taking part, you will be provided with the opportunity to ask any questions before giving opt-in informed consent. If you choose to take part you are free to withdraw at any time before, during or after the study.

What would the research involve?

I would like to conduct a focus group with around 3 participants via an online platform such as MS Teams, Zoom or Skype at an arranged time convenient to all participants in the group. The focus group would last approximately one hour and would consist of an informal discussion about the different views which school staff may hold around supervision. There are no correct or incorrect answers. I am looking to gain an idea of the whole range of views which may possibly exist across the profession. Participation is completely voluntary, and you are free to withdraw at any time.

How will the data be used?

The groups **will not** be recorded, rather statements of views will be anonymously recorded on a word document during the focus group. This data will then be used to develop a research tool for phase two of the research.

If you wish to receive a summary of findings for the study upon completion this can be requested, and I will be available to discuss these with you if you wish. The study will be written up as part of my doctoral thesis and may be used in published journals in the future. It is hoped that the results will support the understanding of how school staff view supervision which can be used to inform Educational Psychology practice in the UK.

What are the benefits of taking part?

It is hoped that developing an increased understanding of how school staff perceive supervision can support the service and other services across the UK to develop their supervision offer to schools.

What happens now?

If you have any questions or think you may be interested in taking part, please contact me on email the address above.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Best wishes,

Kirsty Beech
Trainee Educational Psychologist

Appendix N: Information Sheet for Phase 1 (Semi-Structured Interview)



The University of
Nottingham

UNITED KINGDOM • CHINA • MALAYSIA

Exploring school staff's views of supervision

Ethics approval number: S1274

Researcher: Kirsty Beech - kirsty.beech@nottingham.ac.uk

Supervisor: Nathan Lambert - nathan.lambert@nottingham.ac.uk

Purpose and aims of the research

School staff are increasingly supporting vulnerable children and young people (CAMHS, 2009) and research suggests that doing so has a marked impact on staff wellbeing (Bartle & Trevis, 2015). Additionally, the relationship between teacher wellbeing and outcomes for pupils has been demonstrated both nationally and internationally (Rae, Cowell & Field, 2017). While in the helping professions supervision is commonplace, this is less common in schools (Carroll et al, 2020). The purpose of the current research is to find out how a range of school staff in different roles and settings understand and view supervision. Supervision is increasingly being offered to schools by Educational Psychology Services and it is hoped that by understanding how school staff view supervision, services can develop their supervision offer to take these views into account.

Why have I been invited to take part?

You have been invited to take part as you have experienced some form of supervision. I am interested in investigating the views of all school staff in different provisions around supervision.

Do I have to take part?

Participation is completely voluntary however your input would be greatly valued. If you are interested in taking part, you will be provided with the opportunity to ask any questions before giving opt-in informed consent. If you choose to take part you are free to withdraw at any time before, during or after the study.

What would the research involve if I choose to take part?

For head teachers and other senior leaders:

You would be asked to complete a semi-structured interview with the researcher via an online platform such as MS Teams, Zoom or Skype at a time convenient to you. The interview would last no longer than one hour and would consist of an informal discussion about the different views and experiences which you and other staff may hold around supervision. There are no correct or incorrect answers I am looking to gain an idea of the whole range of views which may possibly exist across the profession. Participation is completely voluntary, and you are free to withdraw at any time.

For teaching staff and support staff:

You would be asked to be part of a focus group for teaching staff or support staff, with the researcher and around 2 other staff via an online platform such as MS Teams, Zoom or Skype at a time convenient to all. The focus group would last approximately one hour and would consist of an informal discussion about the different views and experiences which you and other staff may hold around supervision. There are no correct or incorrect answers. I am looking to gain an idea of the whole range of views which may possibly exist across the profession. Participation is completely voluntary, and you are free to withdraw at any time.

All school staff:

The purpose of these interviews and focus groups is to gain an idea of the different views which exist around supervision in order to develop a research instrument consisting of approximately 60 opinion statements for phase two of the research. You will then be contacted once this has been completed and asked to volunteer to pilot this research instrument online, at a time which suits you. The piloting will consist of sorting the 60 statements onto a grid based on how much you agree with them. The researcher will guide you through this and ask for feedback on the items and the process.

How will the data be used?

The interviews and focus groups **will not** be recorded, rather statements of views will be anonymously recorded on a word document during the interview/focus group. This data will then be used to develop a research tool for phase two of the research. Data will not contain your name or your school name.

If you wish to receive a summary of findings for the study upon completion this can be requested, and I will be available to discuss these with you if you wish. The study will be written up as part of my doctoral thesis and may be used in published journals in the future. It is hoped that the results will support the understanding of how school staff view supervision which can be used to inform Educational Psychology practice in the UK.

What are the benefits of taking part?

While the study may not directly benefit you, the research is hoped to increase the understanding of how school staff perceive supervision in order to develop the supervision offer of the Educational Psychology Service. It is hoped the results will extend to other services across the country and may possibly inform policy around supervisory support for school staff.

What happens now?

If you have any questions or think you may be interested in taking part, please contact me on email the address above.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Best wishes,
Kirsty Beech
Trainee Educational Psychologist

Appendix O: Information Sheet for Phase 2 (Q Sort Activity)



The University of
Nottingham

UNITED KINGDOM • CHINA • MALAYSIA

Exploring school staff's views of supervision.

Ethics approval number: S1274

Researcher: Kirsty Beech - kirsty.beech@nottingham.ac.uk

Supervisor: Nathan Lambert - nathan.lambert@nottingham.ac.uk

Purpose and aims of the research

School staff are increasingly supporting vulnerable children and young people (CYP) (CAMHS, 2009) and research suggests that doing so has a marked impact on staff wellbeing (Bartle & Trevis, 2015). Additionally, the relationship between teacher wellbeing and outcomes for pupils has been demonstrated both nationally and internationally (Rae, Cowell & Field, 2017). While in the helping professions supervision is commonplace, this is less common in schools (Carroll et al, 2020). The purpose of the current research is to find out how a range of school staff in different roles and settings understand and view supervision. Supervision is increasingly being offered to schools by Educational Psychology Services and it is hoped that by understanding how school staff view supervision, services can develop their supervision offer to take these views into account.

Why have I been invited to take part?

You have been invited to take part as the research is interested in investigating the views of all school staff in different provisions around supervision.

Do I have to take part?

Participation is completely voluntary however your input would be greatly valued. If you are interested in taking part, you have the opportunity to ask any questions by emailing me on the address above, before giving opt-in informed consent. If you choose to take part you are free to withdraw at any time before, during or after the study. *[Your working relationship with the Educational Psychology Service will be in no way impacted by your decision.]*

What would the research involve if I chose to take part?

I am aiming to recruit a total of 30 school staff from different roles, including teachers, support staff and senior leaders, and different settings, primary, secondary and specialist. You would be asked to complete a card sorting activity online at a time convenient to you. The activity will ask you to read 61 opinion statements about supervision which have been taken from school staff, Educational Psychologists and the wider research literature. You will then be asked to sort these statements into three

piles; views you agree with, views you disagree with, and views you neither agree nor disagree with. You would then be asked to organise these statements on a grid ranging from most agree to least agree. There are no right or wrong answers – I am interested in what you think. You would then be asked to complete a short questionnaire to provide demographic information including the type of provision you work in, whether you have had any experience of supervision as well as a chance to reflect on your experience of the activity. The card sort, and subsequent questionnaire, should take no more than 45 minutes. The activity can be completed in the participant's own time however it would be greatly appreciated if it could be completed by *[dates varied here as study progressed]*. The activity must be completed on either a desktop or laptop device and completed in one session.

How will the data be used?

Data will be anonymous and collected via the online platform. Data from the participant's Q sort and their demographic information from the questionnaire will be linked but there will be no identifiers within this. Data will be combined with data from other school staff prior to analysis. The data from the activity will be subject to factor analysis which will reveal shared viewpoints about supervision among school staff. The demographic data from the questionnaire will be used in the interpretation and description of these viewpoints. No names or identifiers will be used in the write up of the study and all data will be securely disposed of after 3 years. Data stored virtually on the online platform will be deleted following analysis.

If you wish to receive a summary of findings upon completion of the research this can be requested, and I will be available to discuss these with you if you wish. The study will be written up as part of my doctoral thesis and may be used in published journals in the future. You will not be identifiable in these documents. It is hoped that the results will support the understanding of how school staff view supervision which can be used to inform Educational Psychology practice in the UK.

What are the benefits of taking part?

While the study may not directly benefit you, the research is hoped to increase the understanding of how school staff perceive supervision in order to develop the supervision offer of Educational Psychology Services. It is hoped the results will extend to other services across the country and may possibly inform policy around supervisory support for school staff.

What happens now?

Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet. I hope you feel that this is a valuable opportunity. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me on kirsty.beech@nottingham.ac.uk

If you would like to take part and feel that all your questions have been answered within this information sheet, then please use the link below to access and complete the research activity. You will be required to give your informed consent before the activity appears. Please refer to the additional 'supplementary instructions' provided as a link

below prior to beginning the activity.

Link to the activity: <https://vqmethod.com/step0/surveyname/sOIBnimnbA>

Before you begin:

- The activity must be completed on a desktop or laptop (tablets and mobile phones are *not* supported by the software).
- The activity must be completed in one session (there is no option to save and return later).
- If you click on the statement it will appear enlarged in the middle of your screen to make it easier to read.
- In steps 1 and 2 you must place *all* of the statements before moving to the next step. If you don't, the software will reset the entire activity.
- If you want to move a statement at any time, please do so by dragging it from its original position to the position you want it to be in. Clicking 'redo' will reset the entire activity.

Link to the supplementary instructions for the online activity and debrief information:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1v_A87JoRE8rx5_lvMMX-IBELF6U99Rc-/view?usp=sharing

Thank you for your support.

Best wishes,

Kirsty Beech
Trainee Educational Psychologist

Privacy information for Research Participants

For information about the University's obligations with respect to your data, who you can get in touch with and your rights as a data subject, please visit:

www.nottingham.ac.uk/utilities/privacy/privacy.aspx.

Why we collect your personal data

We collect personal data under the terms of the University's Royal Charter in our capacity as a teaching and research body to advance education and learning. Specific purposes for data collection on this occasion are to explore the viewpoints held by a range of staff working in different school settings around the topic of supervision. Your views will be gathered through interview or focus group or a card sort activity. These views will then be analysed to develop an understanding of the potential viewpoints held by school staff on this topic.

Legal basis for processing your personal data under GDPR

The legal basis for processing your personal data on this occasion is Article 6(1a) consent of the data subject.

How long we keep your data

The University may store your data for up to 25 years and for a period of no less than 7 years after the research project finishes. The researchers who gathered or processed the data may also store the data indefinitely and reuse it in future research. Measures to safeguard your stored data include assigning a research code to your data which will then be anonymised. A decoding document for codes will be accessed only by the researcher and stored on a password protected encrypted device.

Who we share your data with

Extracts of your data may be disclosed in published works that are posted online for use by the scientific community. You will not be personally identified in the data. Your data may also be stored indefinitely on external data repositories (e.g., the UK Data Archive) and be further processed for archiving purposes in the public interest, or for historical, scientific or statistical purposes. It may also move with the researcher who collected your data to another institution in the future.

Appendix P: Consent form for Phase 1 (Focus Group and Semi-Structured Interview)



Exploring school staffs' views of supervision.

Ethics approval number: S1274

Researcher: Kirsty Beech - kirsty.beech@nottingham.ac.uk

Supervisor: Nathan Lambert - nathan.lambert@nottingham.ac.uk

The participant should answer these questions independently:

- Have you read and understood the Information Sheet? YES/NO
- Have you had the opportunity to ask questions about the study? YES/NO
- Have all your questions been answered satisfactorily (if applicable)? YES/NO
- Do you understand that you are free to withdraw from the study?
(You may withdraw at any time and without giving a reason) YES/NO
- I give permission for data collected 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."

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:

Appendix Q: Debrief Form

(Phase 1: Emailed to Participants, Phase 2: Referred to in the Information Sheet and Shared via the Supplementary Instructions)

EXPERIMENTAL DEBRIEFING INFORMATION

School of Psychology

University of Nottingham

Name of Experimenter:

Kirsty Beech

Email of Experimenter:

Kirsty.beech@nottingham.ac.uk

Name of Supervisor:

Nathan Lambert

Email of Supervisor:

Nathan.lambert@nottingham.ac.uk

Title of Experiment:

Exploring school staffs' views of supervision.

Background/Hypothesis:

Given that school staff are increasingly involved in supporting vulnerable children and young people (CAMHS, 2009) and that research suggests doing so has an impact on staff wellbeing (Bartle & Trevis, 2015) it is important to consider support for school staff. Further the relationship between pupil outcomes and staff wellbeing has been recognised (Rae, Cowell & Field, 2017). While in the helping professions supervision is commonplace, this is less common in schools (Carroll et al, 2020). The purpose of the current research is to explore the range of viewpoints held by school staff in different roles and settings around supervision. Supervision is increasingly being offered to schools by Educational Psychology Services and it is hoped that by understanding how school staff view supervision, services can develop their supervision offer to take these views into account.

Design and Dependent Measures:

The research uses a Q-methodological design, in which 30 staff working in different roles in different school settings will be sampled to complete a card sort activity online. The dependent variables in the study are the individual's completed Q-sort as well as data collected via a post-sort questionnaire.

Intended Analysis:

PQMethod, an online software, will be used to analyse the data collected. PQMethod will compare the whole Q-sorts of each participant to develop a correlation matrix which will then be subject to factor analysis. The factor analysis will identify which Q-sorts cluster together to form a 'factor'. These factors will then be analysed further and a best fit understanding of a number of different viewpoints will be revealed.

These will then be analysed alongside qualitative information from questionnaires to construct an understanding of each viewpoint.

Will I receive a copy of the research findings?

If you wish to receive a copy of the research findings upon completion, please contact the researcher.

If you have any questions please contact me on the above email address.

Thanks again for your participation.

Kirsty Beech

Trainee Educational Psychologist

Appendix R: Consent Form/Questions on Online Consent for Q Sort Activity

Informed Consent

Exploring school staff's views of supervision.

Ethics approval number: S1274

Researcher: Kirsty Beech - kirsty.beech@nottingham.ac.uk

Supervisor: Nathan Lambert - nathan.lambert@nottingham.ac.uk

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this research. Before you proceed please read and confirm the following:

- I have read and understood the Information Sheet.
- I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study.
- I have had all my questions answered satisfactorily (if applicable).
- I understand that I am free to withdraw from the study at any time and without giving a reason.
- I give permission for data collected from this study to be shared with other researchers provided that my anonymity is completely protected.
- I agree to take part in the study.

By selecting agree and continue below you are agreeing with the above statements and that:

"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."

If you cannot confirm any of the following statements please do not proceed and contact the researcher on the above contact details.

Many thanks

Kirsty Beech

Exit

Agree & Continue

Appendix S: Humphrey's Law Calculations

Factor	Cross-product of two highest loadings (rounded to 2 decimal places)	Exceeds twice the standard error	Exceeds the standard error
1	$0.7923 \times 0.7592 = 0.60$	Yes	Yes
2	$0.4691 \times 0.4440 = 0.21$	No	Yes
3	$0.2262 \times 0.1944 = 0.04$	No	No
4	$0.3999 \times 0.3940 = 0.16$	No	Yes
5	$0.1584 \times 0.1523 = 0.02$	No	No
6	$0.3438 \times 0.2995 = 0.10$	No	No
7	$0.1594 \times 0.1147 = 0.02$	No	No

Appendix T: Crib Sheets³

Factor 1

Demographic information:

Gender:

3 males (23.1%), 10 females (76.9%) – similar to total sample

Age:

4 31-40 (30.8%), 4 41-50 (30.7%), 5 51-60 (38.5%) – similar to total sample

Setting:

1 junior (7.7%), 5 mainstream primary (38.5%), 1 specialist primary (7.7%), 4 mainstream secondary (30.8%), 1 specialist secondary and PRU (7.7%), 1 mixed primary and secondary (7.7%) – similar to total sample – all specialist staff

Experience in education

2 6-10 (15.4%), 4 11-15 (30.8%), 3 16-20 (23.1%), 1 21-25 (7.7%), 3 26-31 (23.1%) – similar to total sample but 100% of higher two experience brackets in this sample

Primary role

2 teachers (50% of total sample), 3 support staff (100% of total sample) 1 safeguarding (20% of total sample), 2 SEND (66% of total sample), 5 senior leaders (83% of total sample) – high levels of support staff and senior leaders

Supervision experiences

10 yes (76.9%) – higher than total sample (61.9%)

6 one-to-one, 1 group, 3 mixed

6 internal supervisor, 3 external supervisor, 1 both

1 case, 1 mixed, 1 half termly, 3 weekly, 2 monthly, 1 twice per month, 1 fortnightly

Items ranked at +6

35. Supervision gives supervisees the space to reflect on their practice

Purpose is to for personal and professional growth and development – thinking about practice?

***48. Supervision empowers supervisees**

³ Statements in red font are distinguishing statements. Comments in navy italicised font are the researcher's comments and reflections made when compiling the crib sheets.

Empowering, positive, recognises strengths

Items ranked at +5

20. Supervision needs to be embedded into whole-school culture to be successful

Systemic, part of the whole school culture

***53. Supervision helps supervisees to feel less alone when facing challenges**

Supportive element to it – feeling united

***4. Supervision of school staff is integral to achieving the best for children and young people**

Indirect impact on others

Items ranked higher in factor 1 array than in factor 2 array

***4. Supervision of school staff is integral to achieving the best for children and young people (F1:+5, F2:+1)**

Indirect impact on others

8. Supervision is already happening in schools under a different name (F1:-1 F2:-2)

Contradicts later statement about it not being prioritised?

12. Supervision helps school staff to learn and develop as professionals (F1:+3 F2:+2)

Purpose is to for personal and professional growth and development – thinking about practice?

22. Supervisees need to be able to trust that their supervisor will keep things confidential (F1:+4 F2:+1)

Need for trust and confidentiality – creation of a positive emotional climate, supervisor personal qualities

25. For supervision to be successful the purpose must be clear (F1:+2 F2:+1)

Shared understanding of the purpose - formal

26. A formal written record of supervision is unnecessary (F1:-3 F2:-5)

Formal aspect having a record - formal

35. Supervision gives supervisees the space to reflect on their practice (F1:+6 F2:+4)

Purpose is to for personal and professional growth and development – thinking about practice?

***36. Supervision is strictly for discussing professional matters (F1:-4 F2:-3)**

Emotional containment which may not be necessarily professional

37. Supervision needs to be collaborative (F1:+2 F2:+1)

Shared process – developing solutions – taking ownerships

40. Supervision helps supervisees to develop solutions to problems (F1:+4 F2:0)

Purpose is to for personal and professional growth and development – thinking about practice?

***43. Supervision ensures the supervisees' strengths and achievements are recognised (F1:+4 F2:-3)**

Empowering, positive, recognises strengths

<p>*44. Supervision makes supervisees more self-aware (F1:+4 F2:-1) <i>Purpose is to for personal and professional growth and development – thinking about practice?</i></p> <p>46. Supervision gives supervisees the chance to offload (F1:-1 F2:-2)</p> <p>*47. Supervision makes supervisees feel valued as professionals (F1:+3 F2:-2) <i>Empowering, positive, recognises strengths</i></p> <p>*48. Supervision empowers supervisees (F1:+6 F2:-2) <i>Empowering, positive, recognises strengths</i></p> <p>*49. Supervision is a reassuring experience (F1:0 F2:-1)</p> <p>*51. Supervision helps supervisees to feel re-energised (F1:0 F2:-2)</p> <p>*52. Supervision enables supervisees to cope with the stress of their role (F1:+2 F2:-1) <i>Emotional containment not just professional development</i></p> <p>*53. Supervision helps supervisees to feel less alone when facing challenges (F1:+5 F2:0) <i>Support from others/feeling united</i></p> <p>*55. Supervision facilitates a better work-life balance (F1:-2 F2:-4) <i>Emotional containment not just professional development</i></p> <p>*56. Supervision is integral to supervisees being able to do their job effectively (F1:0 F2:-3)</p> <p>57. Supervision supports the development of key working relationships (F1:0 F2:-1)</p> <p>*58. Good quality staff supervision supports staff retention (F1:+1 F2:-3)</p> <p>*59. Poor supervision can make things feel worse (F1:+4 F2:-1) <i>Importance of quality supervision/skilled supervisor</i></p>	
<p>Items ranked lower in factor 1 array than in factor 2 array</p> <p>2. My need for supervision changes over time (F1:0 F2:+2)</p> <p>*6. Supervision needs to be voluntary for school staff (F1:-3 F2:+3) <i>Should be compulsory/available for all - universal</i></p> <p>*7. The term supervision is often misunderstood by school staff (F1:+1 F2:+5) <i>Clarity, shared understanding</i></p> <p>9. Supervision enables managers to evaluate staff performance (F1:-3 F2:-2) <i>purpose of supervision is not to evaluate performance of staff</i></p> <p>*13. There is not enough time for supervision (F1:-2 F2:+3) <i>Feels possible and doable within schools – achievable with resources available</i></p> <p>14. I find the idea of supervision daunting (F1:-5 F2:-4) <i>Perceived positively within schools – absence of negative connotations</i></p>	

15. For supervision to be successful in schools there would need to be an appropriate space (F1:-1 F2:+1)
Feels possible and doable within schools – achievable with resources available
- *16. There is not enough funding for schools to provide supervision for their staff (F1:-2 F2:+4)
Feels possible and doable within schools – achievable with resources available
17. The support of senior leaders is vital if supervision is to be successful (F1:+3 F2:+5)
Systemic - Whole school culture
- *19. Schools need training on supervision if they are going to implement it properly (F1:+2 F2:+5)
Systemic - Whole school culture
20. Supervision needs to be embedded into whole-school culture to be successful (F1:+5 F2:+6)
Systemic - Whole school culture
- *21. Supervision is not prioritised in schools (F1:-2 F2:0)
Slight disagreement – it is prioritised? Suggesting people do want it though somewhere says it isn't already happening in schools under another name
- *24. Supervision is more valuable when it is one-to-one (F1:-2 F2:+2)
Flexible?
- *27. Supervision only works when it is at a planned time (F1:-3 F2:0)
Can be flexible
28. Supervision sessions need to be regular (F1:-1 F2:+1)
Can be flexible
- *29. The skill-set of the supervisor determines the success of supervision (F1:+1 F2:+4)
- *30. Supervisors should ideally be from outside of the school setting (F1:-4 F2:0)
Feels possible and doable within schools achievable with resources available
31. Supervision must be provided by someone who has been suitably trained (F1:+3 F2:+4)
Need to be trained – quality supervision
32. The supervisor must understand my role (F1:+1 F2:+3)
- *39. Supervision must be non-judgemental (F1:+2 F2:+6)
Safe, trusting
- *42. Supervision is not a place to feel challenged (F1:-1 F2:+2)
50. Supervision allows supervisees to explore their worries (F1:+1 F2:+3)
54. Supervision enables supervisees to stay physically well (F1:-2 F1:-1)
Doesn't impact health
61. The more experience you have of being supervised, the more you are able to gain from the process (F1:-1 F2:+2)

Items ranked at -5

18. Supervision is only needed in schools in difficult contexts

Supervision needed in all schools - universal

10. Accessing supervision will make my peers think that I cannot cope

Perceived positively within schools – absence of negative connotations

14. I find the idea of supervision daunting

Perceived positively within schools – absence of negative connotations

Items ranked at -6

60. Supervision is a waste of time

Positive and valuable - valuable use of time,

1. Supervision is of no benefit to me

Positive and valuable – valuable use of time

Additional items to be included in factor 1 crib sheet

Some agreement:

5. Supervision safeguards the wellbeing of school staff (+2)

Emotional containment not just professional development

45. Supervision encourages supervisees to think differently (+3)

Purpose is to for personal and professional growth and development – thinking about practice?

High disagreement:

23. Supervision sessions need to have a fixed structure (-3)

Can be flexible

11. Supervision is often a tick box exercise being imposed upon school staff (-4)

Imposed would suggest it isn't wanted therefore they do want it?

38. Supervision is only helpful when supervisees are given direct answers (-4)

Collaborative, developing practice

3. All school staff need supervision (0)

Contradicts number 6 and 18 which suggests compulsory and

34. Supervision enables supervisee's concerns to be heard (+1)

Contradicts earlier??

<p>41. Supervision increases supervisees' confidence (-1) <i>Contradicts earlier items on empowerment, strengths, recognising positives</i></p>

Factor 2

Demographic information

Gender

1 male (16.7%), 5 females (83.3%)

Age

1 31-40 (16.7%), 3 41-50 (50%), 2 51-60 (33.3%)

Setting

1 infants (7.7%), 4 mainstream primary (66.7%), 1 mainstream secondary (7.7%) – higher percentage of primary staff and lower percentage of secondary than total sample. No specialist.

Experience in education

3 11-15 (50%), 3 (16-20) – none in the lowest bracket and two highest brackets

Primary role

1 teacher (25%), 3 safeguarding (75%), 1 SEND (33%), 1 senior leader (16.7%) – more safeguarding, less senior leaders

Experience of supervision

3 yes (50%) – lower than overall percentage in total sample (61.9%)

2 one-to-one, 1 mixed

1 internal, 1 external

1 weekly, 1 every 3 weeks, 1 monthly

Items ranked at +6

***39. Supervision must be non-judgemental**

Suggests the need for empathy, openness, free from judgement – safety?

20. Supervision needs to be embedded into whole-school culture to be successful

Systemic – whole school culture

Items ranked at +5

***19. Schools need training on supervision if they are going to implement it properly**

Systemic – whole school culture

17. The support of senior leaders is vital if supervision is to be successful

Systemic – whole school culture

***7. The term supervision is often misunderstood by school staff**

Suggests lack of a shared definition/understanding within schools

Items ranked higher in factor 2 array than in factor 1 array

2. My need for supervision changes over time (F1:0 F2:+2)

Dynamic – may not always want or need it, doesn't need to be ongoing

***6. Supervision needs to be voluntary for school staff (F1:-3 F2:+3)**

Optional, choice to access

***7. The term supervision is often misunderstood by school staff (F1:+1 F2:+5)**

Suggests lack of a shared definition/understanding within schools

9. Supervision enables managers to evaluate staff performance (F1:-3 F2:-2)

Supervision is NOT performance management

***13. There is not enough time for supervision (F1:-2 F2:+3)**

Practical barriers – doesn't feel doable or achievable in schools

14. I find the idea of supervision daunting (F1:-5 F2:-4)

Absence of negative connotations – suggests generally viewed positively or neutrally despite lack of definition

15. For supervision to be successful in schools there would need to be an appropriate space (F:-1 F2:+1)

Practical barriers – doesn't feel doable or achievable in schools

***16. There is not enough funding for schools to provide supervision for their staff (F1:-2 F2:+4)**

Practical barriers – doesn't feel doable or achievable in schools

17. The support of senior leaders is vital if supervision is to be successful (F1:+3 F2:+5)

Systemic – whole school culture

***19. Schools need training on supervision if they are going to implement it properly (F1:+2 F2:+5)**

Systemic – whole school culture

20. Supervision needs to be embedded into whole-school culture to be successful (F1:+5 F2:+6)

Systemic – whole school culture

***21. Supervision is not prioritised in schools (F1:-2 F2:0)**

***24. Supervision is more valuable when it is one-to-one (F1:-2 F2:+2)**

One-to-one valued in this viewpoint, dedicated time

***27. Supervision only works when it is at a planned time (F1:-3 F2:0)**

28. Supervision sessions need to be regular (F1:-1 F2:+1)

Regular WHEN decided that needed or wanted

***29. The skill-set of the supervisor determines the success of supervision (F1:+1 F2:+4)**

Want supervisor who is skilled

***30. Supervisors should ideally be from outside of the school setting (F1:-4 F2:0)**

<p><i>Doesn't matter as long as skilled? Trained? Etc... interesting compared to other factor</i></p> <p>31. Supervision must be provided by someone who has been suitably trained (F1:+3 F2:+4) <i>Want a supervisor who is trained</i></p> <p>32. The supervisor must understand my role (F1:+1 F2:+3) <i>Want a supervisor who understands their role – empathy? Support? Trained? Skills?</i></p> <p>39. Supervision must be non-judgemental (F1:+2 F2:+6) <i>Suggests the need for empathy, openness, free from judgement</i></p> <p>*42. Supervision is not a place to feel challenged (F1:-1 F2:+2) <i>Suggests the need for empathy, openness, free from judgement - safety</i></p> <p>50. Supervision allows supervisees to explore their worries (F1:+1 F2:+3) <i>Emotional containment function? Explore but not offload?</i></p> <p>54. Supervision enables supervisees to stay physically well (F1:-2 F1:-1) <i>Question around wider impact? Neutrality?</i></p> <p>61. The more experience you have of being supervised, the more you are able to gain from the process (F1:-1 F2:+2) <i>Experience impacts understanding? Approach?</i></p>	
<p>Items ranked lower in factor 2 array than in factor 1 array</p> <p>*4. Supervision of school staff is integral to achieving the best for children and young people (F1:+5, F2:+1) <i>Some acknowledgement of a wider impact – neutrality? Interesting compared to other factor</i></p> <p>8. Supervision is already happening in schools under a different name (F1:-1 F2:-2) <i>Not something which happens in schools</i></p> <p>12. Supervision helps school staff to learn and develop as professionals (F1:+3 F2:+2) <i>Professional development/growth</i></p> <p>22. Supervisees need to be able to trust that their supervisor will keep things confidential (F1:+4 F2:+1) <i>Slight agreement? Neutrality?</i></p> <p>25. For supervision to be successful the purpose must be clear (F1:+2 F2:+1) <i>Slight agreement? shared understanding? neutrality</i></p> <p>26. A formal written record of supervision is unnecessary (F1:-3 F2:-5) <i>Formal aspect – want a record</i></p> <p>35. Supervision gives supervisees the space to reflect on their practice (F1:+6 F2:+4) <i>Professional development/growth</i></p> <p>*36. Supervision is strictly for discussing professional matters (F1:-4 F2:-3) <i>Not limited to professional matters, can discuss personal</i></p>	

37. Supervision needs to be collaborative (F1:+2 F2:+1) <i>Slight agreement - neutrality</i>
40. Supervision helps supervisees to develop solutions to problems (F1:+4 F2:0) <i>Neutral about whether it does or doesn't lead to solutions – interesting in context of other factors?</i>
*43. Supervision ensures the supervisees' strengths and achievements are recognised (F1:+4 F2:-3) <i>Not about celebrating success? Could this be interpreted as linked to performance management if its identifying strengths and being used with a value judgement</i>
*44. Supervision makes supervisees more self-aware (F1:+4 F2:-1) <i>Slight disagreement? neutrality</i>
46. Supervision gives supervisees the chance to offload (F1:-1 F2:-2) <i>Contradicts the emotional containment function? Offloading – giving worries away?</i>
*47. Supervision makes supervisees feel valued as professionals (F1:+3 F2:-2) <i>Question around wider impact?</i>
*48. Supervision empowers supervisees (F1:+6 F2:-2) <i>Contradicts the emotional containment function?</i>
*49. Supervision is a reassuring experience (F1:0 F2:-1) <i>Contradicts the emotional containment function? Neutrality?</i>
*51. Supervision helps supervisees to feel re-energised (F1:0 F2:-2) <i>Contradicts the emotional containment function? Doesn't filter down this far</i>
*52. Supervision enables supervisees to cope with the stress of their role (F1:+2 F2:-1) <i>Contradicts the emotional containment function? Neutrality?</i>
*53. Supervision helps supervisees to feel less alone when facing challenges (F1:+5 F2:0)
*55. Supervision facilitates a better work-life balance (F1:-2 F2:-4) <i>Question around wider impact? Contradicts emotional containment? Or does this just not translate down into this area</i>
*56. Supervision is integral to supervisees being able to do their job effectively (F1:0 F2:-3) <i>Question around wider impact? Luxury not a necessity?</i>
57. Supervision supports the development of key working relationships (F1:0 F2:-1)
*58. Good quality staff supervision supports staff retention (F1:+1 F2:-3) <i>Question around wider impact? Luxury not a necessity?</i>
*59. Poor supervision can make things feel worse (F1:+4 F2:-1) <i>Contradicts points suggesting supervisor quality is crucial – neutrality?</i>
Items ranked at -6

<p>60. Supervision is a waste of time <i>Suggests general perception that it is a good use of time, beneficial, positive</i></p> <p>1. Supervision is of no benefit to me <i>Suggests general perception that it is a good use of time, beneficial, positive</i></p> <p>Items ranked at -5</p> <p>18. Supervision is only needed in schools in difficult contexts <i>Suggests general view should be accessible in all schools – maybe not for all staff though?</i></p> <p>26. A formal written record of supervision is unnecessary <i>Suggests the need for a formal record</i></p> <p>10. Accessing supervision will make my peers think that I cannot cope <i>General shared consensus of supervision positive and not negative connotations</i></p>
<p>Additional items to be included in factor 2 crib sheet</p> <p><i>Relatively high?</i></p> <p>5. Supervision safeguards the wellbeing of school staff (+2) <i>Suggests emotional containment function</i></p> <p>45. Supervision encourages supervisees to think differently (+3) <i>Something about professional development</i></p> <p><i>Relatively low</i></p> <p>23. Supervision sessions need to have a fixed structure (-3) <i>Room for flexibility</i></p> <p>11. Supervision is often a tickbox exercise being imposed upon school staff (-4) <i>General positive consensus that not being forced – suggests is wanted?</i></p> <p>38. Supervision is only helpful when supervisees are given direct answers (-4) <i>Not about getting answers – finding things out for yourself</i></p> <p><i>Neutral</i></p> <p>34. Supervision enables supervisee's concerns to be heard (+1) <i>Emotional containment function?</i></p>

Appendix U: Staff Supervision Development Protocol

The following tool has been developed to summarise the key practical implications for EPs based on the findings of the current study. The purpose of the tool is to provide a means of reflection for EPs delivering supervision directly to school staff, and EPs supporting schools indirectly to set up and implement supervision.

Ensure that school staff are provided with a clear definition of supervision from the outset to ensure a shared understanding and dispel misconceptions. This may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What supervision is• What supervision is not• The potential benefits of supervision• The purposes of supervision
Ensure that school staff are provided with an opportunity to share what they would like supervision to look like in school.
Explore school staff perceptions around factors that may act as barriers to a supervision offer being implemented.
Ensure that school staff are provided with examples of workable models and testimonials of how supervision can work in schools within the current resources to support in overcoming potential perceived barriers.
Explore with schools and school staff potential ways to measure impact and evaluate success of supervision.
Ensure that those providing supervision are suitably trained and skilled.
Ensure that supervisees are able to provide feedback on the supervision they receive.

Explore whether the EP is best placed to work at a direct level (e.g. taking on the role of the supervisor) or indirect level (e.g. supporting schools to implement and evaluate supervisory systems).
Explore whether school staff would prefer to receive supervision from someone within their school (e.g. a senior leader) or someone external to their school (e.g. an EP).
Explore with school staff what they perceive to be the purpose of supervision and what they hope to get out of supervision.
Ensure that school staff have choice over the supervision model they would prefer. This may include ensuring that supervisees are presented with information regarding different supervision models, along with the potential strengths and limitations of these models in relation to their hoped purposes, and ensuring supervisees are given opportunities to try out different supervision models.
Ensure that school staff have choice over the format of supervision they would prefer. This may include ensuring that supervisees are presented with information regarding different formats which supervision could take (e.g. individual, group consultation), along with the potential strengths and limitations of these in relation to the supervisee's hoped purposes, and ensuring supervisees are given opportunities to try out different formats of supervision.
Explore whether school staff want ongoing and regular sessions and/or more flexible drop-in sessions as and when they perceive a need.
Ensure arrangements for formal records are agreed.
Ensure the limits of confidentiality are discussed and understood.