School staff's experiences of supporting pupils from military backgrounds in state schools: A grounded theory exploration.

Thesis submitted to the University of Nottingham for the degree of Doctorate of Applied Educational Psychology

Amy Ruth Biggar

Contents

List of Tables 7
List of Figures 8
Abstract 9
Acknowledgements 10
1 Introduction 11
1.1 Background and interests of the author 11
1.2 Context and positioning of the current study 12
1.3 The role of literature within Grounded Theory research 12
1.4 Thesis structure 14
2 Literature review 15
2.1 Introduction 15
2.1.1 Mental health 15
2.1.2 Military children and mental health 16
2.1.3 Supporting the military pupil 16
2.2 Context of the military and unique stressors 17
2.2.1 Military life 17
2.2.2 Deployment 17
2.2.3 High mobility 18
2.3 Impact on military children 19
2.3.1 Differential age-related effects 19
2.3.2 Parental-deployment 19
2.3.3 Frequent transitions 20
2.3.4 Socioemotional factors 21
2.3.5 School engagement and performance 22
2.3.6 The pupil-teacher relationship 23
2.3.7 Teacher perceptions 24
2.4 Support for military pupils and their families 25
2.4.1 The national context 25
2.4.2 The state school context 26
2.4.3 The school, community, and wider context 26
2.5 The role of the Educational Psychologist 28
2.5.1 Policy and legislation 28
2.5.2 What can EPs offer? 28
2.6 Research rational 29
2.7 Research aims and question. 30

2.8 Chapter summary 31
3 Methodology 32
3.1 Introduction 32
3.2 Ontology, epistemology, and research paradigms 32
3.2.1 Positivism 33
3.2.2 Post-Positivism 33
3.2.3 Constructivism and the current study 34
3.3 Qualitative methods 34
3.3.1 Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis 35
3.3.2 Thematic Analysis 35
3.3.3 Grounded Theory 36
3.3.4 Constructivist grounded theory and the present study 38
3.4 Design 40
3.4.1 The stakeholders 40
3.4.2 Sampling and initial recruitment 40
3.4.2.1 The impact of COVID-19 42
3.4.2.2 Final recruitment 42
3.4.3 Sample size 43
3.5 The procedure 43
3.5.1 Data collection and analysis 43
3.5.2 Initial data collection – semi structured interviews 46
3.5.3 Transcription of semi-structured interviews 47
3.5.5 Focused coding and categorising 50
3.5.6 Theoretical sampling 51
3.6 Research validity and quality 56
3.6.1 Reflexivity in the current study 56
3.6.2 Validity and quality in the current study 57
3.7 Ethical considerations 58
3.7.1 Informed consent 58
3.7.2 Confidentiality and anonymity 58
3.7.3 Right to withdraw 59
3.7.4 Minimising harm 59
3.7.5 Debriefing 59
3.8 Chapter summary 60
4. Findings 61
4.1 Introduction 61

4.1.1 The interviewees 62
4.2 Category 1: Drawing on wider influences to enhance one's own understanding of military pupils, and to consider their needs and approaches to support. 62
4.2.1 Focused Code 1.1: Making comparisons 63
4.2.2 Focused Code 1.2: Drawing upon the familiar - personal relationships and personal experiences. 67
4.2.3 Focused Code 1.3: "We're missing a trick" -advocating a different type of support. 69
4.3 Category 2: Far reaching elements to the role; teacher-efficacy beyond academia 71
4.3.1 Focused Code 2.1: Valuing 'knowing the individual pupil' - facilitated by class teacher role and pupil-teacher relationship; being attuned; being mindful 72
4.3.2 Focused Code 2.2: Considering one's level of confidence/self-perceived competence to understand military pupils and to support effectively. 73
4.3.3 Focused Code 2.3: Restoring confidence and self-efficacy; the shift from "*I*" to "*we*" – collective efficacy. 74
4.4 Category 3: Easing the weight of responsibility through a shared and collective approach 75
4.4.1 Focused Code 3.1: *Valuing* relational bonding and connectivity within and beyond the school context. 76
4.4.2 Focused Code 3.2: Working within the school system (a helping or hindering factor); a system that empowers versus a system of power; collective efficacy; teacher autonomy and efficacy beliefs 78
4.5 Chapter summary 80
5 Returning to the library 81
5.1 Introduction 81
5.2 Far reaching elements to the role 82
5.2.1 Risk outcomes 83
5.3 School staffs' confidence and self-efficacy 84
5.3.1 Sources of self-efficacy 84
5.3.2 Collective efficacy 86
5.4 The school system(s); helping or hindering 87
5.4.1 The school context; relationships and ethos 87
5.4.2 The classroom context; facilitating teacher attunement 89
5.4.3 Moving away from isolation; the shift from "*I-to-we*" 90
5.4.4 The school system; power versus autonomy 90
5.5 Supervision 93
5.5.1 Supervision; the current picture in schools 93
5.5.2 Supervision in schools; the benefits 95
5.5.3 Supervision in schools: A challenge? 96
5.6 Chapter summary 97

6 The Grounded Theory 97
6.1 Introduction 97
6.2 The grounded theory 100
6.3 Chapter summary 104
7 Discussion 105
7.1 Introduction 105
7.2 Linking the grounded theory with literature 105
7.3 Implications of the current study 107
7.3.1 Unique contribution 107
7.3.2 Implications for schools; staff and pupils from military backgrounds 108
7.3.3 Implications for EP practice and strategic local authority developments. 110
7.4 Evaluation of the research 113
7.4.1 Strengths, limitations, and future research 116
7.5 Reflexivity revisited 118
7.6 Chapter summary 119
8 Further reflections 120
9 Conclusion 124
Appendix 1: EBIU census data request form completed by the researcher. 154
Appendix 2: Email to schools to discern expressions of interest 155
Appendix 3: Information Sheet 156
Appendix 4: Consent form 158
Appendix 5: Semi-structured interview schedule 159
Appendix 5a: Questions asked to participant 1 161
Appendix 5b: Questions asked to participant 2 162
Appendix 5c: Questions asked to participant 3 163
Appendix 5d: Questions asked to participant 4 164
Appendix 6: Researcher script for the start of interviews. 165
Appendix 7: An example of initial coding 167
Appendix 8: An example of focused coding 168
Appendix 9: An example of early diagramming created by the researcher 169
Appendix 10: Examples of 'working' mind-map created by the reseracher demonstarting tentative categories that informed theoretical sampling. 170
Appendix 11: Tabularising of focused codes, final focused codes and conceptual categories 173
Appendix 12: Amended interview scheduled: theoretical sampling 179
Appendix 13: Example memo demonstrating the researcher's reflections after final participant interview – reflecting shift in preconceptions of the researcher. 180

Appendix 14: Ethics committee acceptance letter 181
Appendix 15: Debrief letter 182
Appendix 16: Research journey timeline 183

List of Tables

Table 3.1 - A table showing the number of military pupils attending seven schools across the Local Authority where the present study was undertaken; information retrieved from the Education Business Intelligence Unit's School Census Data (2020).

Table 4.1 - A table presenting the current study's three conceptual categories developed during the analysis.

Table 7.1 - Measures taken by the researcher to enhance the quality of the current grounded theory study in compliance with Charmaz's (2014) evaluation criteria.

List of Figures

Figure 3.1 - A visual representation of the constructivist grounded theory data gathering and analysis that were followed in the current study (Charmaz, 2014).

Figure 3.2 - Strategies ensured by the researcher while coding to avoid imposing a pre-existing framework to data, as cautioned by Charmaz (2014, p. 159).

Figure 3.3 - An example of a memo written by the researcher demonstrating early consideration of action and meaning in data following the first participant interview.

Figure 3.4 - An example of a memo written by the researcher while transcribing the first participant interview demonstrating how memos serve to raise awareness of own prejudices.

Figure 3.5 - An example memo demonstrating theoretical sampling through researcher's reflections following coding of a participant interview.

Figure 4.1 - Category 1: Drawing on wider influences to enhance own understanding of military pupils, and to consider their needs and approaches to support.

Figure 4.2 - Category 2: *Far reaching elements to the role* (in-vivo code); teacher self-efficacy beyond academia.

Figure 4.5 - Category 3: Easing the weight of responsibility through a shared and collective approach.

Figure 6.1 - A visual representation of the study's grounded theory: 'The shift from *I*-to-*we* in restoring school staffs' confidence and self-efficacy in the face of unfamiliarity and the impacts of *system power* versus *a system that empowers'*.

Abstract

Mental health impacts children's educational experiences (Bowman, McKinstry, Howie & McGorry, 2020). Research shows mental ill-health for military-children is 11% higher than non-military children (Johnson & Ling, 2012). With 170,000 service children in the UK, this is arguably an area of priority research. Military lifestyles afford benefits to military children (Pollock & Van Reken, 2001), but also unique stressors; high mobility and separation from parents are evidenced (Allen & Stanley, 2007; Sogomonyan & Cooper, 2010). Research concerning the unique needs and associated stressors of military children primarily adopts medical or psychological perspectives (Pexton, Farrants & Yule, 2018) and despite being identified as vulnerable (Horten, 2005), military children are largely overlooked by educational researchers (Stites, 2016). Employing a constructivist grounded theory methodology (Charmaz, 2014), this research explores the experiences of school-staff supporting military pupils in mainstream state schools. Data gathering comprised semi-structured interviewing with four school-staff. Data analysis followed processes advocated by Charmaz (2014). Findings were theoretically sensitised through a focused literature review exploring staff confidence and self-efficacy, collective efficacy, Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1986), Ecological Systems Theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1989). Reconceptualization of findings provides new theoretical insights around how school staffs' perceived confidence and self-efficacy fluctuate under different circumstances and how staff employ strategies in seeming attempts to restore both. This led to the development of the grounded theory: *'the shift from I-to-we in restoring staff confidence and self-efficacy in a system-of-power versus a system that empowers'*. Implications for EP-practice and strategic local authority developments are discussed, highlighting the benefits and challenges of implementing a culture of supervision into school-practice. Further implications also include the need for direct support for school staff, and indirect support for military pupils. The potential benefits of such for the wider school-context are considered. Further reflections highlight the transformative impact of the research journey for the researcher. The potential sources of biases in the research are noted, including ongoing project work in the researcher's host Local Authority and the researcher's own assumptions. Accordingly, the 'theory' presented can be seen as a localised narrative of wider social processes.

Acknowledgements

In completing this research, I am beholden to so many:

To the participants of this study who volunteered their time and so openly and honestly shared their experiences.

To my host EPS, EP colleagues, and supervisors, who have afforded me so many opportunities through hours of reflective supervision, sharing your skills, and your professionalism, alongside kindness and friendship.

To every member of the tutor team at the University of Nottingham; your insight and expertise will continue to be an asset as I move into professional practice and beyond.

To my research tutors, Nathan Lambert and Anthea Gulliford, whose enduring support, guidance, and containment have expedited my confidence and supported my passions, while maintaining my sanity.

To each one of my friends and family, for your longstanding encouragement, but mostly for your patience and understanding while I have been so absorbed in the entire research process.

To Cohort 13, for riding the waves of TEP life with me. Our shared successes and hardships, celebrations and tears are the foundations of true friendships. Thank you for the memories, the laughter, and continuous support!

To Bob and Linda, my rocks in this crazy world. Your love, compassion, unwavering support, and belief in me is why I ever thought *"I can*". Through a multitude of precarious moments, you never doubted what I am capable of. My gratitude for you, Mum and Dad, is infinite.

And finally, to Jonathan, where do I begin. Your unfaltering optimism, love, and encouragement have been an unconditional pillar of support. Thank you for being my soundboard and 'study buddy' throughout lockdown, sharing every high and every low of this research journey with me, and never ceasing to believe I would get to here.

1 Introduction

1.1 Background and interests of the author

The researcher is a Trainee Educational Psychologist (TEP) at the University of Nottingham, working towards completing her doctoral thesis. Previously working as a Teaching Assistant (TA) in a mainstream primary school for 10 years and then as an Assistant Educational Psychologist (AEP) for 19 months, she has long been a passionate advocate for children and young people (CYP) and their families, especially those considered to be 'vulnerable'.

Significant to the current undertaking, the researcher's long-term partner is a Major in the British Army, working towards promotion to Lieutenant Colonel. Consequently, the researcher is very aware of the unique challenges and stressors brought to military families, and of the potential for those challenges and stressors to be felt by CYP from military backgrounds through their school experiences.

The impact of mental health on children's educational experiences is, of course, well recognised in literature (Bowman, McKinstry, Howie & McGorry, 2020), however, research shows that mental ill-health for military CYP is 11% higher than that of non-military CYP (Johnson & Ling, 2012). With 170,000 service[1] children in the UK, this is arguably an area of priority for research.

Military lifestyles afford some benefits to military children (Pollock & Van Reken, 2001), but can also bring unique stressors, not least high mobility, and separation from parents (Pexton et al., 2018). Research concerning the unique needs and associated stressors of military children has tended to adopt a medical or psychological perspective (Pexton, Farrants & Yule, 2018) meaning that despite being identified as vulnerable (Horten, 2005), military children have been largely overlooked by educational researchers (Stites, 2016).

It was the researcher's intention here, to contribute towards developing a greater understanding of the experiences of young people from military backgrounds in public-civilian[2] schools, and of the experiences of those who work to support or educate them. Specifically, the researcher sought to contribute to the current limited body of UK-based educational research and conceptualise findings to generate new theoretical insights surrounding the needs and support

[1] The terms 'service' and 'military' are used interchangeably here and are intended to have the same meaning.
[2] The terms 'public-school', 'public-civilian school' and 'state-school' are used interchangeably by the researcher and are intended to have the same meaning.

of military children and staff in public-civilian schools, with the intention that findings would inform EP practice and strategic local authority developments.

Employing a constructivist grounded theory (GT) methodology (Charmaz, 2014), the research sets-out to explore the experiences of school staff supporting military CYP in state schools.

1.2 Context and positioning of the current study

Consistent with the exploratory nature of this study and aligning with the researcher's own beliefs about reality and the construction of knowledge, a social constructivist epistemology and relativist ontology underpinned the GT methodology used (see Chapter 3). Compatible with the positions of social constructivists, Vygotsky (1962) and Lincoln (2013) who view knowing and learning as ingrained in social interactions, the researcher acknowledges that subjectivity is inseparable from social existence (Charmaz, 2014). Reality is multiple, embedded in action and manufactured by all involved, thus the role of contexts, interactions and sharing viewpoints contributes to the construction of knowledge. This means that what the researcher and participants offer must be acknowledged (Clarke, 2005; 2006; 2007; 2012), ultimately positioning the researcher as an instrument in the research process.

The researcher's existing knowledge relevant to the aims of the study were considered and her own interests were recognised as an integral aspect of the collection and interpretation of data (Owen Lo, 2016). The researcher therefore maintained an ongoing reflexivity about her actions and decisions to ensure transparency in what she brought to the research reality; her position, privileges, perspective, and interactions inevitably influenced the co-construction of findings (Charmaz, 2014).

The present study took place in partnership with the Educational Psychology Service (EPS) of a Northwest Local Authority (LA) where the researcher was on placement. This LA is home to 115 military dependent children aged between 4-16 years attending public-civilian schools (EBIU, school census, 2020).

1.3 The role of literature within Grounded Theory research

Many American quantitative researchers in the 1960s viewed qualitative research as impressionistic, unsystematic, and biased (Charmaz, 2014). Despite being devoid of solid empirical roots and attracting rife criticism, the dominant status of quantitative ideologies

throughout the realms of social science prevailed (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). In response, Glaser and Strauss (1967) developed grounded theory (GT); a new methodology which they defined as "*the discovery of theory from data*" (p.1). They built on earlier quantitative researchers' implicit analytic procedures and strategies and made them explicit, consequently legitimising qualitative research as credible and rigorous (Charmaz, 2014).

Grounded Theory (GT) provides a way to learn about social phenomena and a method for developing theories that are well-grounded in data. For this reason, its originators explicitly contended the value of addressing existing literature in the early stages of research. Their rationale to delay the literature review served to encourage an emergent theory that could offer new insights rather than supporting what is already known (Thornberg, 2012). Ambiguity around exact actions to be taken by the researcher undertaking a GT study have, however, sparked debate and varying models of the approach have evolved. Subsequently, different positions remain regarding the relevance of extant literature being addressed priori.

By the 1990s, two different versions of GT emerged; Glaserian or 'classic' GT (Glaser 1978; 1992; 1998) and Straussian GT, devised in partnership with Corbin (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Straussian GT brought notions of human agency, thus recognising the value of active engagement with pre-existing literature (Thornberg, 2012). However, a third version has since emerged: constructivist GT (Charmaz, 2003; 2006; 2008; 2014; 2017), and it is this approach that is employed for the current study (detailed in Chapter 3).

Constructivist GT is a contemporary form of the original method. It is defined as a systematic approach to inquiry that favours constructing fresh concepts over applying existing theory. However, for Charmaz, and others (Bryant, 2009; Clarke, 2005; Dey, 1999; Dunne, 2011) it is not possible for a researcher to collect and analyse data free from theoretical influence; prior literature and theoretical preconceptions are therefore purposeful to enable rigorous scrutiny of them (Charmaz, 2008). Other advocates propose the necessity of a prior literature review to (1) ensure the study has not already been done (Chiovitti & Piran, 2003), and (2) to identify gaps in knowledge (Creswell, 1998; Strauss & Corbin, 1990; Hutchinson, 1993), ultimately, justifying a study's rationale. It is with this intention that the researcher presents a broad literature review to provide background and contextualisation for the rationale and aims of the current study.

1.4 Thesis structure

Following on from this introductory chapter, the remainder of the thesis is divided into distinct chapters. Chapter 2 offers a deliberately broad literature review to set the scene for the exploration ahead. The background of the topic of inquiry provides contextualisation for the research rationale and desired outcomes. Chapter 3 presents the current study's methodology. The epistemological and ontological underpinnings of Constructivist GT are addressed, and details of the method and design employed to undertake this research are outlined. Chapter 4 cites the findings of the study using excerpts of empirical data from interview transcripts. A focused literature review is presented in Chapter 5 illuminating theory and literature relevant to the outcomes of analysis and reconceptualization of findings in Chapter 4. Chapter 6 presents the grounded theory of the current study, a development of the integration of findings and focused literature review. Chapter 7 revisits the preliminary literature review in exploration of the connections between findings of the current study, and then moves on to address the study's unique contribution, implications, strengths, limitations, and subsequent ideas for future research. The overall evaluation of the study's quality is completed, and final conclusions are drawn. An overall summary of the research study's findings and implications closes this thesis in Chapter 8.

2 Literature review

2.1 Introduction

Henwood and Pidgeon (2003) forward the concept of '*theoretical agnosticism'* (p.350) meaning one must ensure data sensitizing principles are in place when consulting extant literature, so that a critical stance toward extant theories is maintained (Charmaz, 2006). This supports a researcher's decision making regarding what is useful and what is not (Goldkuhl & Cronholm, 2010). The intention of the purposely broad literature review that follows then, is to 'set the scene' for the current study and offer the rationale for exploring school-staffs' experiences of supporting pupils from military backgrounds. A second, more focused, literature review will be completed *after* the analysis to reconceptualise findings, in accordance with the conventions of GT.

2.1.1 Mental health

Policies such as Future in Mind (Department of Health (DoH), 2015) articulate the importance of children and young people (CYP) accessing quality mental health care when they need it and reflects wider government policies and initiatives around promoting mental *good* health and the prevention of mental illness within the school context (House of Commons, 2017). The World Health Organization (WHO) also recognises in policy; the significance of multiple factors on pupils' mental health and wellbeing, claiming "*a positive psycho-social environment at school can affect the mental health and wellbeing of young people"* (WHO, 2003, p.4).

The survey of the mental health of CYP in England found that 12.5% of 5- to 19-year-olds had at least one mental disorder when assessed (2017), and 5% met the criteria for two or more mental disorders. There also appears to be a slight increase over time in the prevalence of mental disorder in 5- to 15-year-olds, rising from 9.7% (1999) to 10.1% (2004) to 11.2% (2017). Recent statistics show that nearly 380,000 CYP were treated through National Health Service (NHS) commissioned community services in 2018/19, approximately 36.1% of CYP with a diagnosable mental health condition.

2.1.2 Military children and mental health

NHS England is responsible for delivering healthcare for the families of military personnel, thus the 36.1% of CYP with a diagnosable mental-health condition (NHS, 2018/19) includes military CYP.

It has been identified that one third of school-age military children show psychosocial behaviours such as being anxious, worrying often, and/or crying more frequently (Flake, Davis, Johnson & Middleton, 2009) and that multiple stressors impinge on service CYP's mental health before, during and after a parent's deployment (Lester et al., 2010). Without appropriate mental health support systems, children of military personnel may be at a significant disadvantage compared with their peers in non-military families (Sogomonyan & Cooper, 2010), specifically, risking a compromise on academic attainment and overall educational experiences (Danielsson & Talbäck, 2009).

To promote awareness of the challenges faced by service families that inevitably impact on mental health, the Ministry of Defence (MOD) and UK Department of Health (DoH, 2018) work closely with the NHS and service charities, including Army Family Federation (AFF).

2.1.3 Supporting the military pupil

Currently, there are 1.2 million military dependents of active-duty members worldwide with over 130,000 service CYP residing in the UK, 80% of whom attend state schools. In light of the claims concerning the multiple and unique stressors that the military lifestyle can impose on military CYP (Sogomonyan & Cooper, 2010; Danielsson & Talbäck, 2009), how they, and their needs, are understood and supported in school is arguably a priority for research.

It is argued that effective support for these pupils takes a school-wide effort that promotes a positive school environment consisting of caring relationships that facilitate academic performance as well as emotional and behavioural competence (Blum, 2007). Thus, an exploration of the experiences of those who support and educate these pupils at school would provide valuable insight into what is and is not understood by staff, while mirroring the priorities within educational psychology towards an evidence-based practice (Gulliford, 2015).

2.2 Context of the military and unique stressors

2.2.1 Military life

There is a longstanding recognition that military families have unique patterns of living, with everything in their environment working towards the mission of protecting and defending the country (MOD, 2020). The military culture is therefore deemed a foreign concept to many, with lifestyles defined as distinctively different to those of civilians (O'Neil, 2013). With the military lifestyle, however, come an array of unique stressors, claimed to create, *"a military syndrome"* (LaGrone, 1978, p. 1040) and while some argue that the military is altruistic in nature, the array of demands placed on personnel and their families – demands including relocation to foreign countries, living in a masculine-dominated culture, long working hours and shift work, normative constraints extending to risk of injury or death, frequent geographical mobility, and family separations (Ender, 2005) – led Segal (1986) to describe it as a greedy institution.

2.2.2 Deployment

Statistics show that the British Armed Forces is comprised of 193,980 individuals serving in the Army, Royal Air Force and Royal Navy and that more than 22,550 military personnel were deployed to conflict zones, with 40% being deployed more than once (MOD, 2014a). In the period 2001-2014, statistics show that 453 military personnel died and 616 were seriously injured (MOD, 2014b).

Unquestionably, deployment is a significant demand on military families, being associated with long periods of separation, and a sense of loss, fear, and anxiety for all family members left behind (Finkel et al. 2003). With roughly a quarter of military personnel having at least one child, a significant number of CYP have thus experienced a parent's deployment (Dichle & Greenberg, 2015).

The impacts of parental deployment for a child can vary, with research indicating that the mental health of the non-deployed parent can determine how well CYP adjust (Jensen, Martin, Watanabe, 1996). Indeed, Hefling (2009) identified that the poorer the non-deployed parents' mental health was and the higher their stress, the poorer CYPs' functioning and adapting was. Chandra et al. (2010) found parent-reports of their CYP externalising and internalising behaviours that they viewed as concerning increased during their spouse's deployment, while

Lester et al. (2010) noted increased child-reports of depression during their parent's deployment.

With ongoing operations around the world, the MOD's Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR, MOD, 2015), aims *to deploy a force of around 50,000 by the year 2025* (SDSR, MOD, 2015). Deployment will therefore continue to be a key experience within the military lifestyle. The implications for children and families of the deployed has been increasingly acknowledged by government legislation, health professionals and a considerable number of charitable organisations including the Army Benevolent Fund (ABF) Soldier's Charity founded in 1944; The Partnership Agreement Between MOD and NHS England for the Commissioning of Health Services for the Armed Forces (2018), and the Armed Forces Covenant (2015), all of which illuminate the importance of ensuring those left on home ground are well supported.

2.2.3 High mobility

High mobility is another common phenomenon of the military lifestyle, posing issues of engagement**,** disengagement, and reengagement for families, who are required to move from one base to another or between countries, typically once every two years; more than three times as often than their civilian counterparts (Armed-Forces Family Federation (AFF), 2020; American Association of School Administration reported (AASA), 2020).

Relocation is renowned as a stressful period of adjustment and emotional turmoil for most people, due to the need to re-establish social networks, which can lead to a sense of reduced control, increased anxiety, and general stress (Segal, 1986), particularly - it has been argued - for adolescents and girls (Hanewald, 2013). The negative outcomes of frequent relocations reportedly include reduced employment opportunities for non-military spouses, many of whom are women, and who are often required to give up existing jobs, potentially impacting family finances (Burrell et al., 2006). Loss of familiar social contacts has also been shown to result in a sense of isolation, and an increased reliance, and therefore increased pressure upon wider family members (Drummet et al. 2003). A time of emotional de-stabilisation, apprehension, and insecurity is inevitable (Johnson et al. 2007; Drummet et al.; 2003; Ender, 2000; Finkel et al. 2003; Segal, 2006).

High pupil mobility can be highly disturbing for the children involved due to disruptions to home life and can ultimately affect both the child's behaviour and their educational attainment

(The National College for School Leadership, 2011). The management of high pupil-mobility is understandably complex, multifaceted, and interconnected. 'Good practice' around successful management of pupil-mobility involves the quick establishment of relationships with parents; information packs about the new school being offered to pupils; efficient sharing of information between settings; appropriate grouping of teaching groups; pupil-teacher collaboration to identify gaps in knowledge, and effective connectivity and support between school and the local authority (The National College for School Leadership, 2011). In terms of establishing the latter and given that EPs are well positioned to create temporary overlapping systems between home and other settings (Miller, 1994), there is arguably a role for EPs in supporting the management of high pupil-mobility and its complexities. This is explored further in Section 2.4.3 below.

2.3 Impact on military children

2.3.1 Differential age-related effects

Repeated and extended separations from parents, increased hazards of deployment and frequent relocations compound stressors in military children's lives. In 2015, 1.79 million children aged between six months and 21 years were enrolled in the Military Mental Health System**,** 17.3% of whom had noncomplex chronic needs and 5.6% of whom had complex chronic needs (Department of Defence Education Activity, (DODEA), 2011). It is reported that children at different stages of development are affected in different ways by the military lifestyle: those aged three to six years exhibit behaviours of stress including regression, physical complaints, and fears of separation; older children, who understand the reality and potential dangers associated with their parent's absence, exhibit signs of fear, irritability and sometimes aggression, while teenagers were found to be rebellious and at higher risk of substance misuse and early-age sexual behaviour (DODEA, 2011) - all of which have the potential to impinge on academic performance .

2.3.2 Parental-deployment

Knowledge about the psychological impact(s) of deployment on military dependant CYP has been previously scarce (Johnson et al., 2007). In 2012, however, Johnson and Ling reported that 11% more military CYP, than civilian CYP, accessed mental health support; a finding that was identified to correlate with military-parent deployment. The level and nature of such needs were explored; the greatest being identified as resulting from acute stress, adjustment,

behaviour difficulties and depression (Mansfield, Kaufman, Engel, & Gaynes, 2011). The increase of stress experienced by this cohort, presumably relates, at least in part, to anxieties about their parent's safety, however, exploring the impact of parental deployment, Pexton, Farrants & Yule (2018) drew comparisons between CYP whose parents were deployed to warzones and those whose parents were deployed for training. Despite knowing that their parents were objectively safe, the latter group's stress and anxiety levels were as high as their comparatives, suggesting that the sense of loss and separation associated with parental deployment is prevalent regardless of the nature and inherent risk of deployment (Pexton et al., 2018). This is perhaps explained by psychological theory, specifically attachment theory (Bowlby, 1969), which tells us that child-parent relationships are powerful influences on an individual's mental health: parental deployment is, therefore, a potential factor underpinning the difficulties CYP may experience, e.g., behavioural difficulties (Children's Society, 2013). Significantly, elevated stress and anxiety preceded and proceeded the period of parental-deployment, evident at each stage of the deployment cycle: pre- during and post-deployment (Pexton et al., 2018).

2.3.3 Frequent transitions

Challenges specific to military CYP, however, extend beyond parental deployment. Most notably, frequent geographic mobility means frequent and multiple school transitions (Stites, 2016). "Military children change schools on average every 2.9 years, equating to a possible nine schools throughout their schooling years" (Esqueda et al., 2012, p. 65), a risk, as argued by Price (2002) to a child's social confidence and engagement.

A survey by the charity Little Troopers (2011), showed that 95% of military parents choose the local civilian school for their CYP. Whether these schools are equipped to deal with the unique needs of military dependents is questioned by Horten (2005), who identified a gap in such settings' understanding and resources to best support this pupil-cohort. Such a high percentage of military CYP in the UK attending, and therefore likely *transitioning between*, public schools, suggests how their needs are understood and supported is a priority for exploration.

The move from primary to secondary school, defined as a social and academic turning point, means several major changes for all children (Langenkamp, 2009). It is a time that impacts on psychological and educational development (Rice, Frederickson & Seymour, 2010) and unsurprisingly, well-planned transition practices lead to better learning and adjustment

outcomes (Ahtola et al., 2011; Lo Casale-Crouch, Mashburn, Downer, & Pianta, 2008). An array of educational research has prioritised how transition periods can be positive experiences for all involved, most schools therefore engage in preparation to ensure smooth transitions, for example, transition activities to encourage home-school links (Einarsdottir, 2006; Einarsdottir, Perry, & Dockett, 2008) and the effective sharing of pupil information between professionals (Thorsen et al., 2006) are well established in practice.

While literature seems to focus on the potential negative impacts of the military lifestyle on CYP, Pollock and Van Reken (2001) highlight that many skills *are* afforded to the internationally mobile military child, including cross-cultural enrichment, ability to adapt to new situations and a respect for authority. However, when consulted directly, these factors were not identified by military children themselves (Clifton, 2007), rather they identified high mobility as the most significant stressor impinging on academic and socio-emotional outcomes, namely disruptions in their learning, friendships, and pupil-teacher relationships (Clifton, 2007).

2.3.4 Socioemotional factors

Friendships offer a sense of security that contributes to an individual's self-esteem, sense of belonging and overall school enjoyment (Antonopoulou, Chaidemenou & Kouvava, 2019). The transition from primary to secondary school is understandably an important crossroad for all pupils, given the inevitable changing peer groups they encounter (Hanewald, 2016). Such demands of newness have been correlated with increased anxiety around social acceptance, loss of self-esteem and falls in academic performance (Marsten, 2008; Ding, 2008). Pupils who have positive relationships with peers report more positive feelings about school and achieve higher levels of academic and behavioural competence (Gest, Welsh & Domitrovich, 2005). As identified by the CYP in Clifton's (2007) study, the impact of frequent transitions on the maintenance of friendships is recognised, and this is reiterated in qualitative research by Bradshaw, Sudhinaraset, Mmari and Blum (2010). Although findings are not attributed to military children per se, research has also evidenced that peer acceptance and the stability of CYPs' friendships serve as protective factors for socio-emotional outcomes such as self-esteem and belonging (Birkeland, Breivik & Wold, 2014; Leary & Baumeister, 2000; Olsen, Breckler & Wiggins, 2008;). Thus, it is arguably important to consider how military pupils, and their relationships in school, are impacted by multiple transitions.

For Lincoln, Swift, and Shorteno-Frase (2008), primary-aged children are particularly at risk of disrupted socio-emotional outcomes. At this stage of development, children are developing greater behavioural and emotional regulation and increasing their independence through a reduction in time spent with, thus dependence on, their parents. These social developmental milestones are compromised when combined with stressors associated with the military lifestyle, such as war-related trauma and elevated stress and worry (Lincoln et al., 2008).

Other potential risk factors have been explored by Ender (2005). Undertaking a systematic review of cinematic portrayals of the military life and military child, Ender illuminated that a vast majority of films rendered inaccurate, exaggerated, and detrimental portrayals of this cohort, for example, often presenting 'the wayward military child' or 'the military brat'. Ender went on to find that military children themselves adopted these descriptors and ultimately comprised a distinct subgroup of the school culture (Ender, 2002), viewing themselves as 'separate'. Ender further argued that this requires military children to, not only negotiate their sense of identify and self-concept, but to do so alongside the image that is constructed of them, through wider sources, such as films.

2.3.5 School engagement and performance

Some argue that school engagement for military CYP, and in turn academic attainment, can be *promoted* by high mobility (Drummet et al., 2003; Pollock and Van Reken, 2001) with UK statistics offering some support for this, for example, showing performance to equate to, or sometimes exceed that of their stationary peers (DfE, 2010). Others, however, emphasise vulnerabilities, claiming that the realities of daily life in a military family promote *"stress and uncertainty"* (Allen & Stanley, 2007, p.83) as well as parental deployment (Caderbaum et al., 2013) that can impact school performance.

School-age military children are claimed to be especially vulnerable given the demand to simultaneously cope with normal developmental stressors such as establishing peer relationships (Kelley, Finkel, & Ashby, 2003) alongside increasing academic demands (Engel, Gallagher, & Lyle, 2010). In combination with the military lifestyle and its demands, difficulties are perhaps inevitable, and this has been noted by service personnel *themselves* - who have shared the perception that their military career negatively impacts on their child(ren)'s school performance (White, de Burgh, Fear & Iversen, 2011), and behaviour (Lester et al., 2010; Reed, Bell & Edwards, 2011). Both parents and school staff specifically

noted that deployment-related stressors contribute to military CYP's difficulties in academic functioning and school engagement (Chandra et. al., 2010). It is argued that an improved staff understanding of the military culture and lifestyle will lead to better support being provided to military pupils' which will in turn facilitate greater school engagement and improved performance – Horten (2005) argues that appropriate training for school staff would facilitate this.

How quickly pupil-information is shared between settings during transition also impacts academic-performance. As argued by Berg (2008), a lack of verbal and written communication between settings regarding history of schools attended, curricula, achievements, and stresses and traumas has led to poorer academic outcomes (Berg, 2008). Pupil-teacher relationships are also considered by Berg (2008), the quality of which are underpinned by the perceptions that teachers form early in the academic year (Meisels, 1999), and can go on to inform behavioural attributions staff make (Miller, 2003), each of which are shown to influence a pupil's engagement, motivation, and ultimately their academic performance – the pupil-teacher relationship is therefore of interest.

2.3.6 The pupil-teacher relationship

Attachment Theory (Bowlby, 1969) informs us how a child's relationships with their parents and significant others influence the development of current and future relationships with others, including with school-staff. From this perspective, separation due to deployment can impact the relationship a military dependent CYP experiences with their own parent, and ultimately, that they experience with staff (Caderbaum et al., 2013). This offers one explanation of why military pupils, like those in Clifton's (2007) study, may experience disjointed relationships with teachers (Dichle & Greenberg, 2015),

Through the lens of Bronfenbrenner's (1979) Ecological Systems Theory (EST) numerous factors influence the quality of the pupil-teacher relationship, including the child, family, classroom, peers, school environment, school staff, wider community, and society (Sabol & Pianta, 2012). This perspective, in conjunction with how the quality of a school's psycho-social environment impacts on mental health and wellbeing outcomes for CYP (WHO, 2003, P.4), suggests that military pupils are potentially exposed to additional complications. The likelihood of frequent and multiple transitions, essentially disturbing the quality and consistency of the psycho-social environments they reside, socialise, and learn in, arguably increases the risk of

their wellbeing and mental health being compromised, thus impinging on the relationships they experience with staff.

Further, Meisels (1999) noted that teachers form perceptions of their pupils shortly after they enter the classroom at the beginning of the academic year; perceptions that inform a teacher's actions towards a pupil (Hardre et al., 2008), and thus determine the overall manner a teacher adopts towards that pupil going forward (Wenglinski, 2000). For military children, who often start a new school mid-academic year, such initial relational bonds and perceptions are potentially undermined. How teachers therefore perceive this cohort and respond to them is of significance.

2.3.7 Teacher perceptions

School staff, especially class teachers, appear primely positioned to facilitate understanding the needs of military children in a school context, given that they interact with them daily (Stites, 2016). Yet it appears that little research has considered the support offered by teachers or has explored their views relating to the needs of military pupils. Recognising this, Stites (2016) used a self-developed survey, alongside an adapted version of the Teacher Observation of the Classroom checklist to investigate how early childhood teachers perceive the educational needs of military children. Many of the teachers in Stites' research perceived frequent relocations to be a positive aspect, noting that military pupils had an enhanced ability to make friends, were more adaptable, and were ''worldlier'' than their non-military peers (2016, p.116). While these findings compliment the benefits that Pollock and Van Reken (2001) afforded to the internationally mobile military child, they appear to conflict with literature that signifies the multiple and unique stressors placed on these CYP (LaGrone, 1978) and the elevated levels of stress, uncertainty, and anxiety they are susceptible to (Allen & Stanley, 2007; Lincoln et al., 2008). The idea that military lifestyles and associated impacts are misunderstood (O'Neill, 2013) is perhaps reflected in Stites' findings, but is almost certainly suggested in Ender's (2005) systematic film review, in which multiple inconsistencies between how military families are portrayed in films and the realities of military life were identified.

Arguably, educators' ability to understand and therefore implement appropriate support is restricted given the large body of research relating to military CYP that primarily adopts a medical or psychological perspective (Pexton, Farrants & Yule, 2018). This means that despite being identified as vulnerable cohort (Horten, 2005), and despite teachers being well positioned

to offer appropriate support (Stites, 2016) it is not clear whether the needs of military children are understood, and consequently met.

Building on Stites' (2016) research, the current study aims to contribute to the scarce body of educational research to promote a wider understanding of the experiences of CYP from military families, through exploring the experiences of those supporting them within the school context.

2.4 Support for military pupils and their families

2.4.1 The national context

Retention in the military reportedly correlates with the health and happiness of the families of serving personnel (Knox & Price, 1999), meaning soldiers work to the best of their ability, and are more likely to continue their service, when they are safe in the knowledge that their families are supported in their absence (e.g., when deployed). This is reflected in the foreword to the Armed Forces Overarching Personnel Strategy *"people are the single most important aspect of our operational capability"* (MOD, 2000).

The Ministry of Defence (MOD) reference an array of policies and organisations which describe and/or provide the support available to service person's families, for example:

- **The Armed Forces Covenant**: a promise from the nation to those who serve or have served in the armed forces *and their families* that they will be treated fairly and have the same access to government and commercial services and products as any other citizen. (MOD, 2014;2019).
- **The Directorate of Children and Young People (DCYP):** established in 2010 to provide a single Ministry of Defence (MOD) focus for all issues related to service children and young people (MOD, 2010).
- **Service Children in State Schools (SCISS) National Executive Advisory Committee (NEAC):** a collaboration of volunteers including Head teachers; Local Authority Officers/advisors and representatives from the Service Children Progression (SCP) Alliance, the DfE and the MOD's DCYP Global Education Team. The aim of the SCISS NEAC is to support schools regarding the education and welfare of Service children. By working with key partners and using the resources and expertise of the SCISS schools' network they seek to ensure the best possible outcomes for Service children attending state schools (DfE & MOD, 2009; 2020). One of the achievements

of the SCISS NEAC is the introduction of the Service child 'marker' on the annual school census which provides a clear picture of the number and location of military children within and across regions; a seemingly vast improvement from 2006 when the precise number of military children attending public civilian schools within the UK was reportedly unknown (HMSO, 2006).

2.4.2 The state school context

More than 40 years ago, military pupils themselves identified *sense of security and belonging, continuity in the curriculum* and *lasting friendships* as being features of a what they considered to be a *supportive* school experience (Jolly, 1987); views that are mirrored by those pupils questioned thirty years later in Clifton's (2007) study. One might justifiably consider, then, whether these factors are considered and ensured when developing a positive and supportive school environment for military pupils today?

A poll by the Anna Freud National Centre for Children and Families found that 92% of primary school teachers in England felt that primary schools have a crucial role to play in identifying pupils with mental health issues (McGourty, 2017), thus highlighting the importance of school staffs' understanding of mental health and the factors impinging on it. However, research claims that many civilian schools are not prepared to support issues related to military lifestyles - issues, such as parental deployment (Mmari et al., 2009; De Pedro, 2011) or the multiple transitions between schools that are likely (Mmari, Bradshaw, Sudhinaraset & Blum, 2010; De Pedro, 2011) - that as discussed can impact on the mental good-health of these children.

What *is* identified as support for this pupil-cohort in state schools is the Service Pupil Premium (SPP) which was introduced in 2011 by the DfE in recognition of the specific challenges that service children face (DfE, 2020). This means publicly funded schools in England get extra funding from the government to help improve the attainment of their 'disadvantaged' pupils. Seemingly, Horten's (2005) positioning of military pupils as 'vulnerable' is recognised by the DfE (2020).

2.4.3 The school, community, and wider context

The National Military Family Association (NMFA, 2020) offers more resources than ever to schools, with the aim, not only to assist families in the military, but also to provide resources for civilian members of the community who provide support to these families. With 70% of

military families living in civilian communities, it is essential that communities, schools, *and* the local authorities supporting them – this of course including educational psychology services - understand the needs of military families.

As noted previously, (Section 2.2.3), the National College for School Leadership (2011) signifies the importance of linking closely with the local authority (LA) and the services within it to effectively manage high pupil-mobility and school transitions. It therefore appears reasonable to explore the scope for EP involvement in supporting military CYP and their families, and in supporting education staff who work directly with those CYP in the school context. Indeed, the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice (DfE & DoH, 2015), signposts parents in the Armed Forces (DfE, 2015, para: 2.23) to the Children's Education Advisory Service (CEAS) for support, this being an information, advice and support service established specifically for service parents covering any issue relating to their children's education, including SEN. One would therefore expect school staff to be aware of and familiar with such resources to extend the support they offer, for the translation of such policies to be evidenced in practice and for staff to be aware of the wider support systems available.

However, literature implies otherwise, for example, the precise number of military children attending public civilian schools within the UK was reportedly unknown and findings of pupil information being lost during transitions are documented (HMSO, 2006). There are claims that that educators' knowledge of the unique needs of military children remains restricted (Horten, 2005), that many schools do not have sufficient resources to support children dealing with grief after the death of a deployed parent (Atuel, Esueda & Jacobson, 2011) and that "*military students appear to be invisible in many public schools*…" (Esqueda et al., 2012, p. 68).

According to *Best Practices in Enhancing School Environment* (Blum, 2007), a report developed under contract with the Department of Defence (DOD), civilian schools should be better equipped to support military pupils because their school environment is believed to be one of the most important factors in determining their success.

"A positive school environment created an optimal setting for teaching and learning. Research shows that school can be a stabilising force for young people, both emotionally and academically, particularly when they are experiencing transition or crisis." (Blum, 2007).

Given the claims that military children are largely overlooked by educational researchers (Esqueda et al., 2012; Stites, 2016) and that evidence-based practice in schools with military children is rare (Horten, 2005), there appears scope for the development of practices that incorporate wider support systems such as LA EPs in support of promoting the positive school environment for optimal teaching and learning advocated by Blum.

2.5 The role of the Educational Psychologist

2.5.1 Policy and legislation

In the UK, changes in legislation - for example, the Children and Families Act (Department for Education [DfE], 2014) - have seen the role of the Educational Psychologist (EP) expand over recent years to encompass work with children aged from birth to 25. And recent educational research has highlighted the important role for EPs in supporting the transition of vulnerable cohorts (Morris & Atkinson, 2018), including, into post-16 education - which the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Code of Practice (2014) outlines should involve holistic and individualised approaches, and also into adulthood - in order to successfully gain paid employment, independent living, good health and community inclusion (Preparing for Adulthood, 2013). The transition of pupils with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), another population defined as vulnerable to poor transition outcomes (Neal & Frederickson, 2016), is also singled out as an area of focus for EPs (Morris & Atkinson, 2018). The support EPs offer to these vulnerable cohorts, in conjunction with the positioning of military pupils as being potentially 'disadvantaged' (DfE, 2020) and 'vulnerable' (Horten, 2005), positions EPs as potentially important in offering support to military children as they transition between schools, and in offering support to those supporting them within the school context.

2.5.2 What can EPs offer?

The underrepresentation of EPs and EP work in the body of literature presented through this review appears to conflict with the unique skillset that EPs are equipped with to undertake and array of activities including assessment, consultation, and research to facilitate the application of psychology at the individual, group, and/or systemic level to support vulnerable populations in schools (Atkinson, Bragg, Squires, Muscutt & Wasilewski, 2012). EPs are, after all, one of the professional groups that participate directly in the current legislative scene, and as stipulated in literature, undertake the range of activities to promote pupil wellbeing -including supporting education staff to themselves provide such support (Atkinson et al., 2012).

The literature illuminates the contribution EPs *could* make, though, not just around the transition of military pupils, but in their social, emotional, and mental health needs alike. EPs can successfully develop pupils' emotional and behavioural self-management and regulation using Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) approaches (Squires, 2001), support the development of behaviour management skills in teachers using group consultation (Hayes and Stringer, 2016; Nugent et al, 2014), utilise Solution-focused approaches in multi-agency meetings (Alexander and Sked, 2010) and facilitate organisational change across the whole school (Morgan, 2016). Additionally, as identified in the National Review (DfES, 2006), the training and skills of EPs mean that they are uniquely qualified to deliver critical incident (CI) support to educational settings (Farrell, Woods, Lewis, Rooney, Squires and O'Connor, 2006), framing EPs as being potentially valuable in supporting schools with CYP who have lost a parent through death during deployment. Finally, Horten addresses the need for effective consultation in schools for military children, which Johnson (2002) details to include consultant characteristics that mirror the expertise of EPs and the consultative skills they employ (Egan, 2002).

2.6 Research rational

From the broad literature review presented, the rationale for the current study is presented.

A plethora of research concerning military children derive from America (for example Martin et al., 2000; Ender, 2002; Keller and Decoteau, 2000), implying a void within UK-based research. Although this perhaps reflects in part the significantly larger military in the US as compared to the UK, it nonetheless also suggests a limited appreciation and understanding of the unique needs and lifestyles of military children in the UK.

The current study aims to contribute to UK-based research around military children and the experiences of staff supporting them in public-civilian schools. This feels imperative given over 130,000 service children reside in the UK, 80% of whom attend mainstream civilian schools.

The current study is positioned in a Northwest Local Authority where 115 military children attend mainstream civilian schools and considering that mental health issues for military children in America are reportedly 11% higher than the general population, this would appear to be an important area for research.

UK based research that *has* addressed the needs and circumstances relating to military children (for example, Pexton et al., 2018) has adopted a mental health or psychological perspective, with claims that military children have been largely overlooked by educational researchers (Esqueda et al., 2012; Stites, 2016). It is also argued that evidence-based practices in public schools who enrol military children is rare, consequently professionals' knowledge of how to support this cohort of pupils appears limited (Horten, 2005).

Educational researchers can conceptualise and monitor outcome changes at both classroom and policy levels. The current study therefore endeavours to explore the experiences of school staff supporting military children in pursuit of devising new theoretical insights and evidence-based practices that can inform practice at multiple levels; that of the classroom, whole school, and policy.

Of interest to the current study, it seems EPs traditionally have little involvement in the support of military children transitioning between educational settings, despite this cohort of children being identified as 'vulnerable' (Horten, 2005) and 'disadvantaged' (DfE, 2011; 2020). While transition between primary and secondary school is recognised as a potentially turbulent time in a child's life, occurring for non-military children typically once in their life, the multiple transitions military children may experience appear underappreciated and possibly under supported. Given the role of EPs in supporting vulnerable cohorts and those around them in periods of transition (DfE, 2015), one might speculate that the scope of the EP role could be extended in support of military pupils and those supporting them as they transition between civilian schools.

To conclude, the rationale for this research is three-fold; to build on the seemingly limited UK-based research regarding the school-based experiences of CYP from military backgrounds; to contribute to research about military children from an educational research perspective, and to explore the scope for EP involvement considering their unique skillsets and expertise in supporting vulnerable cohorts, particularly at times of transition.

2.7 Research aims and question.

The research sought to make a distinct contribution to the current limited body of UK-based educational research concerning children from military families. By focusing on children from military families who attend civilian schools and the school-staff who support them, the researcher sought to generate new theoretical insights around the support needs of this cohort;

and derive insights into how school-staff can most effectively meet the needs of these pupils. From this, the researcher sought to illuminate the scope for developments in EP practice to further support the staff who support military pupils in the school context.

Aligning with grounded theory (GT) methodology and to ensure that the data gathered is not forced into preconceived ideas or perceptions (Charmaz, 2006), the research question is explorative in nature:

What are the experiences of school staff supporting pupils from military families within the context of mainstream state schools?

2.8 Chapter summary

Adhering to grounded theory methodology, Chapter 2 presented a purposely broad literature review to present the context for the current study. Although benefits of the military lifestyle are afforded in the literature presented, it is also suggested that military children are a potentially vulnerable cohort given the unique military lifestyle and multiple associated stressors. Limited UK-based educational research suggests the need for a theoretical framework to support a wider understanding of the needs of military pupils attending civilian schools and to the staff working to support them within the UK. Chapter 3 will detail the methodology for the current study.

3 Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the methodological issues considered for the current study and details the decisions made by the researcher to determine the most appropriate methodological procedures. To begin, key ontological and epistemological paradigms in real world research will be considered, and the positioning of the current study in relation to these will be detailed. The chapter moves onto explore several qualitative methods, and the researcher's selection of grounded theory is explained. Details of stakeholder engagement, sampling and the process of data collection and analysis follow. Measures adopted to promote the credibility of the study are outlined, as well as those taken in pursuit of ethical soundness.

3.2 Ontology, epistemology, and research paradigms

Ontology refers to the nature of reality, serving to explore 'what is there to know?' (Hussein et al., 2014). *Epistemology* refers to the theory of knowledge and the relationship between the researcher and 'the known' (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005); this is the *how* of what we can know (Willig, 2001).

Designing studies for a purpose involves ensuring the method is compatible with the research question and goals. Ontological assumptions impact on the choice and interpretation of epistemological presumptions, which then influence methodological decisions, methods of data collection, and analysis (Mertens, 2015).

A paradigm can be understood as shared beliefs within groups of researchers (Morgan, 2007) and thus is underpinned by the philosophical and theoretical beliefs a researcher holds about the nature of reality, their ontological assumptions. Gaining clarity about one's philosophical stance sets the foundations for the research process and outcomes (Hardy & Majors, 2017), and ensuring the chosen paradigm reflects it, enhances a study's rigour (Mills, Bonner & Francis, 2006).

The following section provides an overview of several paradigms explored to position the researcher's ontological assumptions appropriately and to justify the methodological rationale for the study (Mertens, 2015).

3.2.1 Positivism

Positivism holds a realist ontology; declaring that there is a single, external reality that can be discovered and measured via examination. The positivist researcher verifies their research questions and hypotheses through empirical tests that carefully control confounding conditions (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Positivism therefore accommodates a purist scientific methodology concerned with deductive reasoning to explicate relationships between variables (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011). From this, confirmation of an objective linear causality is achieved; a reality that is unchallengeable (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). This epistemological position asserts that uncompromised relationships exist between the world and a person's perception of it. It demands that findings are objective, universal, and predictable (Ward, Hoare & Gott, 2015), essentially, negating the influence of a researcher's perspective or beliefs. Critics of the positivist paradigm argue that it is too deterministic and reductionist (Guba & Lincoln, 1994), failing to acknowledge human subjectivity and the influence of history, culture, and social factors (Willig, 2001). Applied researchers are curious about the subjectivity of meaning that is open to interpretation (Miller & Frederickson, 2006), and given the exploratory nature of the current study, positivism was deemed incompatible.

3.2.2 Post-Positivism

The post-positivist paradigm maintains a commitment to objectivity, claiming that 'truth' and universal laws exist (Robson & McCartan, 2016). Underpinned by a realist ontology, an external reality separate from description is asserted with researchers striving to explain situations or describe causal relationships based on research evidence (Phillips & Burbules, 2000). In contrast to positivism, the influence of a researcher's background knowledge and values on what is observed is accepted (Reichardt & Rallis, 1994), yet such biases are controlled for through rigorous scientific procedures (Robson, 2011), the outcome being revelation of a stable and independent view of reality (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011). The post-positivist researcher typically aligns with quantitative methods and the natural sciences thus typically employ a theory driven methodology that facilitates hypothesis testing through attempts to refine or abandon claims based on evidence (Phillips & Burbules, 2000). The principles of post-positivist research and the degree of control it requires renders this paradigm incompatible for real world researcher (Robson & McCartan, 2016) and was therefore deemed inappropriate for the current study.

3.2.3 Constructivism and the current study

The constructivist paradigm embraces the ontological stance of relativism, illuminating the existence of multiple realities within local and specific contexts (Lincoln & Guba, 2000). Reality is not an objective truth, nor is it separate from the interactions between people. Instead, it is constructed as individuals interact and engage with one another. A subjective epistemology positions the researcher as an active participant in the research process, invited to construct their findings by interacting with participants, whilst taking account of their contribution to the outcomes rooted in the social context (Robson & McCartan, 2016).

The exploratory nature of the current study aligns with a constructivist epistemology granting the researcher access to the individual experiences of participants' localised context of their school. The ontological and epistemological foundations of constructivism align with the philosophical beliefs of the researcher, which, congruent with advice proffered by Mills et al., (2006), served to enhance the rigour of the present study.

3.3 Qualitative methods

The research method selected in any study should be driven by the research question and is differentiated by its approach to data collection and analysis (Egan, 2002). Qualitative methodologies set out to explore how people create meaning and make sense of their personal and social experiences while affording diversity in the underpinning epistemologies and approaches (Hardy & Majors, 2017). Qualitative methods were therefore deemed fitting for the purpose of the current research, which sought to understand the subjective views and experiences of school staff who support children from military families within the civilian school context. Importantly, an informed awareness of the philosophical perspectives underpinning a qualitative approach is warranted to establish coherence and transparency about the method at hand and to meet the aims of the study most effectively (McCleod, 2001; Hardy & Majors, 2017). Given the diverse, nuanced, and complex nature of qualitative approaches (Holloway and Todres, 2003), researchers are warned to exercise caution when appropriating the best approach to adopt to maximise meeting the aims of their study (Ashworth, 2015). The researcher therefore considered alternative qualitative approaches before finalising her decision.

3.3.1 Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis

Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) captures the quality and texture of individual experiences (Willig, 2013). IPA is attached to a phenomenological epistemology (Smith et al., 1999; Smith and Osborn, 2003), which prioritises experience (Holloway and Todres, 2003), and is about understanding an individual's everyday experience of reality in great detail, in order to gain an understanding of the phenomenon in question (McLeod, 2001). The systematic nature of IPA was initially appealing to the researcher; since it would facilitate prescriptive frameworks for data analysis and ultimately a clear account of how participants make sense of their experiences. A cost of gaining such richly detailed descriptions, however, is the omission of meaning; IPA typically generates detailed descriptions about participants' experiences, rather than attempting to explain the '*why's*' of a phenomenon (Willig, 2013). The researcher concluded that the scope to fully explore and understand school staff's experiences of supporting military pupils would be restricted to the individual level and therefore rejected IPA.

3.3.2 Thematic Analysis

Thematic analysis was also considered, as it can be a constructionist method for identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns within data in a straight-forward and organised manner to produce copious rich detail (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The researcher deemed its theoretical freedom, flexibility, and wide range of analytic options appealing. However, further reading highlighted multiple criticisms, for example, many qualitative researchers have criticised thematic analysis for a lack of clarity regarding the process that should be followed (Braun & Wilkinson, 2003). Being bound to a particular theoretical framework (Clarke, Braun & Hayfield, 2015) would not only hamper an in-depth investigation to understand the experiences of school staff supporting military pupils, but also limit the interpretative power beyond mere description of frequently occurring themes (Biggerstaff, 2012). Thematic analysis "lacks the substance" of alternative theoretically driven qualitative approaches, such as Grounded Theory, as it offers limited interpretation of the data, thus data analysis is predominantly descriptive in nature (Braun & Clarke, 2014; p180). Based on the researcher's aspiration to explore and conceptualise abstract and multi-faceted social experiences of school staff supporting military pupils, thematic analysis was rejected.

3.3.3 Grounded Theory

In contrast to other qualitative approaches, which frequently depend on the use of broad principles leading to application and interpretation challenges (Meyer, 2009), grounded theory utilises a systematic approach to data analysis. The systematic nature of grounded theory illuminates enough evidence to justify a researcher's claim (Meyer, 2009, p.11), while affording the researcher benefits in judging, generalising, and comparing findings (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Grounded theory provides rigor that is not accounted for in alternative qualitative methods (Charmaz, 2006) and enables the generation of theory from ill-structured and messy real-life situations (Sutcliffe, 2016), allowing researchers to move from data to theory for the development of new, contextualised theories (Willig, 2001).

The grounded theory method of inquiry is felt to be most fitting for the purpose of this research as it strives to understand and explain human behaviour through inductive reasoning processes (Elliott & Lazenbatt, 2005). This provides a sound intellectual basis for using qualitative approaches in pursuits of theory development (Goulding, 1998).

Through capturing participants' experiences, grounded theory methodology aims to provide a valuable and unique perspective of the social situation under study (Charmaz, 2006). It facilitates practical and flexible approaches to explore such complex social phenomena (Charmaz, 2003), while affording the novice researcher with structured guidelines to support the process of inquiry (MacDonald, 2001).

A methodological spiral (Mills et al., 2006, p.13) is apparent as adaptations to the traditional method of grounded theory have aligned with different epistemological beliefs underpinned by different ontologies. Charmaz (2014) emphasises the value of addressing the history of grounded theory in the 20th century to understand how subsequent versions were shaped, and to ensure that a researcher is clear in their own epistemological and ontological positioning and that they are theoretically comfortable in their approach – hence, able to exercise their beliefs throughout the research journey (Mills et al., 2006).

3.3.3.1 The origins of grounded theory

Research methods in the 60s were dominated by quantitative methods, and the quality standards for such quantitative methods were imposed across all research; standards that were incompatible with qualitative methods. However, Glaser and Strauss (1967) disputed several dominant positivist assumptions, including the elite control of theory construction and instead

demonstrated applying the canons of quantitative research to qualitative analyses. They argued against the descriptive level of qualitative studies - seeking to move qualitative methods into the realm of explanatory theoretical frameworks - thus provided an avenue for abstract, conceptual understandings of social phenomena. Ultimately, Glaser and Strauss legitimised qualitative research as credible and rigorous as they devised the first version of grounded theory (also known as the 'Glaserian' or 'classic' grounded theory).

Classic grounded theorists believe that there is a 'real' reality but that it can only be imperfectly perceived. It is therefore ontologically positioned in the post-positivist paradigm underpinned by a critical realist epistemology (Mills et al., 2006). Viewing data as being discovered or emerged, it is presumed that the same theory will be derived regardless of who is conducting the analysis (Glaser and Holton, 2004). The researcher is therefore positioned as an unbiased observer who is separate from research participants and their realities (Charmaz, 2006).

The revelation of Glaser and Strauss's contrasting ontological and epistemological assumptions saw a division between the authors of the original method. While Glaser remained influenced by the quantitative positivist paradigm, Strauss embraced the qualitative interpretive paradigm (Annells, 1997) and went on to develop a second version of the methodology; Straussian grounded theory (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Building on the original foundational procedures, Straus and Corbin introduced a specific coding paradigm that offers a step-by-step approach, emphasising deduction, verification, and validation within its protocols (Evans, 2013). While Annells (1997) notes that this approach reflects the constructivist paradigm, Strauss and Corbin's assertion that the process of "verification" follows very prescriptive guidelines for data analysis, aligns their approach with the objectivist paradigm (Hussein et al., 2014). This approach has, however, received criticism from some parties for being too prescriptive and therefore distanced from the original inductive principle of grounded theory, potentially transforming it into an inflexible, rigid, and deductive procedure (Willig, 2013), and for ultimately limiting the potential of data analysis by forcing data into pre-conceived categories (Charmaz, 2008; Charmaz, 2016).

3.3.3.2 Constructivist grounded theory

Constructivist grounded theory, developed by Charmaz (2000), is a contemporary form of the original and subsequent methods (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1990), and preserves many of the characteristics and strategies of the former models, such as coding,

memo writing and theoretical sampling. However, it adopts a new epistemological foundation and integrates methodological developments (Charmaz, 2014).

At the heart of this version is the acceptance of subjectivity in the realities perceived by participants along with the mutual construction of meaning and knowledge by both the participant and the researcher. It is accepted that "reality cannot actually be known, but is always interpreted" (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p. 22); this relativist ontological stance highlights how 'truth' is the product of an iterative process of data collection and analysis within which lies the interpretations of the researcher. In other words, the researcher is an instrument embedded in the research process thus an intrinsic part of the constructed reality, rather than an independent or objective observer (Clarke, 2012).

A relationship between a researcher's ontological, epistemological, and methodological positioning informs the version of grounded theory to be used (Jeon, 2004). The following section addresses this and other factors that influenced the researcher's decision to employ a constructivist grounded theory methodology.

3.3.4 Constructivist grounded theory and the present study

Several factors influenced the researcher's decision to employ constructivist grounded theory. Firstly, the epistemological and ontological positioning of this approach aligns with that of the researcher; an important consideration for any researcher ahead of embarking on their research design (Mills et al., 2006) if the study's rigour is to be ensured and validated. Secondly, the less prescriptive and more flexible nature of constructivist grounded theory was considered a strength in the inductive exploration of the topic under research. Thirdly, Charmaz (2014) adopted the term constructivist to facilitate the role of the researcher in the interpretation of data and construction of theoretical insights to account for these interpretations. With school staff working in different public-school settings, inevitably diverse and heterogeneous perspectives that influence different constructions of realities of supporting pupils from a military background are to be expected. Therefore, the use of constructivist grounded theory, rather than traditional approaches as deciphered by Glaser and Strauss (1967), and later Strauss and Corbin (1990); allowed for the exploration and nuanced interpretation of complex social processes and interactions within local contexts (Charmaz, 2008).

The inductive nature of the constructivist version of GT ensured that the experiences of school staff were embedded at the core of theory development to highlight the *meaning* of their

experiences. It was recognised by the researcher that this approach could capture the subjective, multiple realities as well as accounting for the fact that the researcher is somewhat familiar with issues addressed in extant literature regarding the military lifestyle and implications and is therefore not free from claims (Hussein et al., 2002014). Epistemologically, constructivists believe that it is impossible to separate the inquirer from the inquired. The chosen approach therefore enabled the researcher to address her own existing knowledge and account for the contribution she offered to the data analysis, that is the researcher's interpretation.

Beyond the realms of descriptive interpretation, however, the approach is useful within applied fields (Robson & McCartan, 2016), ultimately facilitating a dialectic positioning of deep immersion into raw data alongside the iterative and recursive process to analyse it. Maxwell (2005) asserts that the method employed must not only be relevant to the area under investigation, but also compliment the skills of the research. Grounded theory is viewed as an approach that is applicable to the role of EPs (Sutcliffe, 2016). The idea that many of the core skills utilised in typical EP practice, such as maintaining an analytical view, being transparent and rigorous, and maintaining reflexivity, compliment many of the processes within grounded theory research (Miller, 1995).

Constructivist grounded theory requires the establishment of relationships with participants to reduce power imbalances, another attractive component for the current research. Finally, it was considered most appropriate because constructivist grounded theory signifies the researcher's awareness of their involvement via reflexivity enabling the researcher's position to be clearly identified within the research process and outcomes. Reflexivity is a central component of Charmaz's (2006) contemporary grounded theory and keeps researchers engaged and interacting with data and the emerging theory rather than taking a step back from their project (Charmaz, 2006), like in classic GT (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). A reflexive position may surface when a researcher explores an experience that the researcher can share with the participants, potentially aiding the tone of authenticity. Further to this, constructivist grounded theorists can make use of explicit '*how*' and '*what*' questions as they collect data and incorporate these questions into the foundations of their theory building (Gubrium & Holstein, 2001), ultimately ensuring new theoretical insights are securely grounded in the data while facilitating the creativity of the researcher and theoretical playfulness (Charmaz, 2014, p.137).

3.4 Design

3.4.1 The stakeholders

The stakeholders involved in this research are:

- The researcher
- The participants
- The Local Authority and Educational Psychology Service
- The University of Nottingham

The current research study contributes to requirements set by the University of Nottingham towards successful completion of the researcher's Doctorate in Applied Educational Psychology training. Criteria and guidelines set by the University therefore underpin this project. The study was also devised in partnership with the Local Authority Educational Psychology Service where the researcher completed her second- and third-year placement. It was anticipated that findings could be purposeful to the context and priorities of the LA EPS in raising the profile of military pupils attending public civilian schools and in supporting the experiences of school staff who support them; a potential avenue of future support that can be offered by EPs. The school staff who participated in the research were key stakeholders, as they facilitated data collection via semi-structured interviews.

3.4.2 Sampling and initial recruitment

While quantitative methodologies aim to provide a representative sample of the general population, the goal of qualitative methodologies is to gather rich data within specific areas of interest (Etikan, Musa & Alkassim, 2016). Within constructivist grounded theory, sampling is *purposive* to ensure the sample meets the purpose of the research (Robson & McCartan, 2016). Once data collection and analysis commenced, the researcher remained open to other potential sources of information i.e., the scope to recruit additional participants, or to return to a participant to build on tentative preliminary ideas guided by the developing theory. Gathering additional information in this way is referred to as *theoretical sampling* (Robson & McCartan, 2016, p. 281) and afforded the affirmation, modification, clarification and/or the elaboration of working ideas and ultimately the generation of conceptual categories.

Charmaz (2014) asserts that constructivist grounded theorists should seek data from places where they will find it. Therefore, the researcher first identified schools within the LA with military pupil attendees, through email liaison with the Education Business Intelligence Unit (EBIU). In compliance with General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR, 2020), tailored by the Data Protection Act (2018), the researcher completed an EBIU data request form (Appendix 1) to explain the nature of interest and provided details of how data would be used, shared, and stored, as well as the data fields required; school name and location; number of military pupils on roll, age or year group of those pupils, and for how long they have attended the setting. This information was granted but is not included here in accordance with GDPR. Given the relatively small number of military pupils across the LA where the research was conducted (115 pupils in total - EBIU school census, 2020) the researcher was able to locate seven schools within the LA with the highest number of military pupil attendees, shown in Table 3.1.

School	Type of setting	Number of military pupils
1	Primary	6
2	Primary	6
3	Secondary	7
4	Secondary	10
5	Secondary	7
6	Secondary	6
7	Primary	9

Table 3.1 - A table showing the number of military pupils attending seven schools across the Local Authority where the present study was undertaken; information retrieved from the Education Business Intelligence Unit's School Census Data (2020)

The inclusion criteria for the purposive sample of this study were that participants:

- Worked in a school with military pupils on roll at the time of the study.
- Had current experience of supporting military pupils in the school context.
- Were willing to participate in at least one interview for the purposes of the study to talk about their experience(s).
- Were willing to allow the interview to be audio-recorded and then transcribed for the purposes of the data analysis.

3.4.2.1 The impact of COVID-19

The initial email to head teachers and SENCOs was intended to be sent in the summer term of 2019-2020, however, with the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent National School closures, it was deemed inappropriate to seek involvement from schools at this time.

Through discussions with the PEP, senior EP, and supervisory EP, it was agreed that making initial contact with schools would be more appropriate at the start of Autumn term 2020-2021. Unfortunately, with September 2020 seeing a third national lockdown which further increased the already high and competing demands on school staff, the researcher was advised to again delay contacting head teachers and SENCOs.

An email to determine expressions of interest (Appendix 2) was finally sent to head teachers and SENCOs of the schools identified having the highest military pupil population in January 2021. In total the seven schools in Table 3.1 were emailed, of these, no replies were received.

3.4.2.2 Final recruitment

Returning to the school census, four alternative schools with whom the researcher had an established relationship through her role as a Trainee EP were identified. The researcher contacted the head teachers and SENCOs of these schools via email to explain the purpose and nature of the research in pursuit of expressions of interest. Four replies were received, signposting the researcher to staff members willing to partake. An information sheet (Appendix 3) outlining the nature and rationale of the research along with an opt in consent form (Appendix 4) were then forwarded.

Despite having a lower population of military pupil than initially intended/hoped, it was deemed applicable because volunteering school staff met the amended inclusion criteria (amendments are underlined in italics):

- Worked in a school *with at least one military pupil* on roll at the time of the study.
- Had *previous or* current experience of support military pupils in the school context.
- Were willing to participate in at least one interview for the purposes of the study to talk about their experience(s).
- Were willing to allow the interview to be audio-recorded and then transcribed for the purposes of the data analysis.

With the essence of grounded theory seeking to explore individual experiences and perceptions, four participants from schools with a small military pupil population could suffice rich data collection. It was crucial, however, that the researcher ensured distinctions between her role as researcher and professional role within schools were explicit and clarified to stakeholders that their decision to participate in this study had no impact upon service delivery or the Local Authority's relationship with the school.

3.4.3 Sample size

While there appears to be little agreement in the literature about the optimum sample size for grounded theory studies, Guest et al. (2006) identified guidelines varying from six participants (Moorse, 1994, p. 225) to 20 – 30 participants (Kuzel, 1992, p. 41). It is suggested, however, that samples must be large enough to derive meaningful data, but not so large that data becomes redundant (Bowen, 2008; Charmaz, 2014; Mason, 2010). While more than four participants were initially desirable for the current study, circumstances beyond the researcher's control (i.e., the Covid-19 pandemic) prevented recruitment beyond this.

Various researchers have argued an array of factors that impact a researcher's decision making around sample size, including data saturation (Bowen, 2008; Mason, 2010; Strauss & Corbin, 1998); theoretical sampling (Bowen, 2008; Glaser, 1978; Glaser & Holton, 2007), and appropriately selected participants (Bryant, 2003; Glaser, 1978; Rudestam & Newton, 2015). Saturation occurs when no new "*properties, dimensions, or relationships emerge during analysis*" (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 143) and involves the iterative data 'collection, analysis, theorise' cycle; a cycle being representative of theoretical sampling (Glaser & Strauss, 1965). Charmaz (2014) argues that a very small sample can generate durable outcomes of significance in studies that hold high quality interviews and in-depth analyses. The current researcher therefore prioritised theoretical coherence and saturation as she settled for four participants.

3.5 The procedure

3.5.1 Data collection and analysis

The data collection and analysis process in grounded theory studies is merged (Willig, 2001). The methodology for the current study was built on the constructivist grounded theory approach of Charmaz (2014); a visual representation of which is presented in Figure 3.1.

Charmaz claims that coding is the pivotal link between collecting data and developing an emergent theory to explain the data, and is achieved by taking data apart, exploring what is happening in it and grappling with what it means. While language, textual data, time, and settings are important factors to be considered when analysing data, the focus of analysis in GT is the behaviour that takes place during social interaction and its meanings (Wilson & Hutchinson, 1991).

Charmaz advises at least two main phases of coding; initial coding (see section 3.5.1.3) and focused coding (section 3.5.1.4). Because it is not a linear process, recursivity was built into each stage of the research, so that simultaneous data collection and analysis continuously informed each other and, in turn, the emerging grounded theory. As illustrated in Figure 3.1, the researcher utilised the constant comparative method to achieve this. Argued to be one of the non-negotiables of grounded theory (Glaser & Holton, 2007; Shepherd &Suddaby, 2017), the constant comparison method involves the researcher comparing each new offering of empirical evidence, code, or concept, with extant codes and concepts in attempts to identify similarities, differences, patterns, relationships, refinements, definitions, dimensions, assumptions, and properties (Davoudi et al., 2016). From this, the same code, a different code, or a sub-code is assigned.

Becoming aware of preconceptions, and holding them, as you engage in the iterative process of constructivist grounded theory is managed using ‘memos’ (detailed in section 3.5.3.5.). As further shown in Figure 3.1, memo-writing was undertaken as codes, concepts and constructs were identified and analysed (Charmaz, 2014; Corbin & Straus, 1990) and occurred throughout the entire research process; ultimately serving to enrich the analysis and researcher’s reflexivity (Charmaz, 2014, p.156). The structure of Figure 3.1 will be used to demonstrate how at each stage of the analytic process, codes and categories were formed, and information will be provided in the sections that follow as appropriate. Direct quotes from participant transcripts will later (in Chapter 4) illuminate how the codes and categories are grounded in the data as the theory emerges with theoretical and analytical power (Carmichael & Cunningham, 2017).

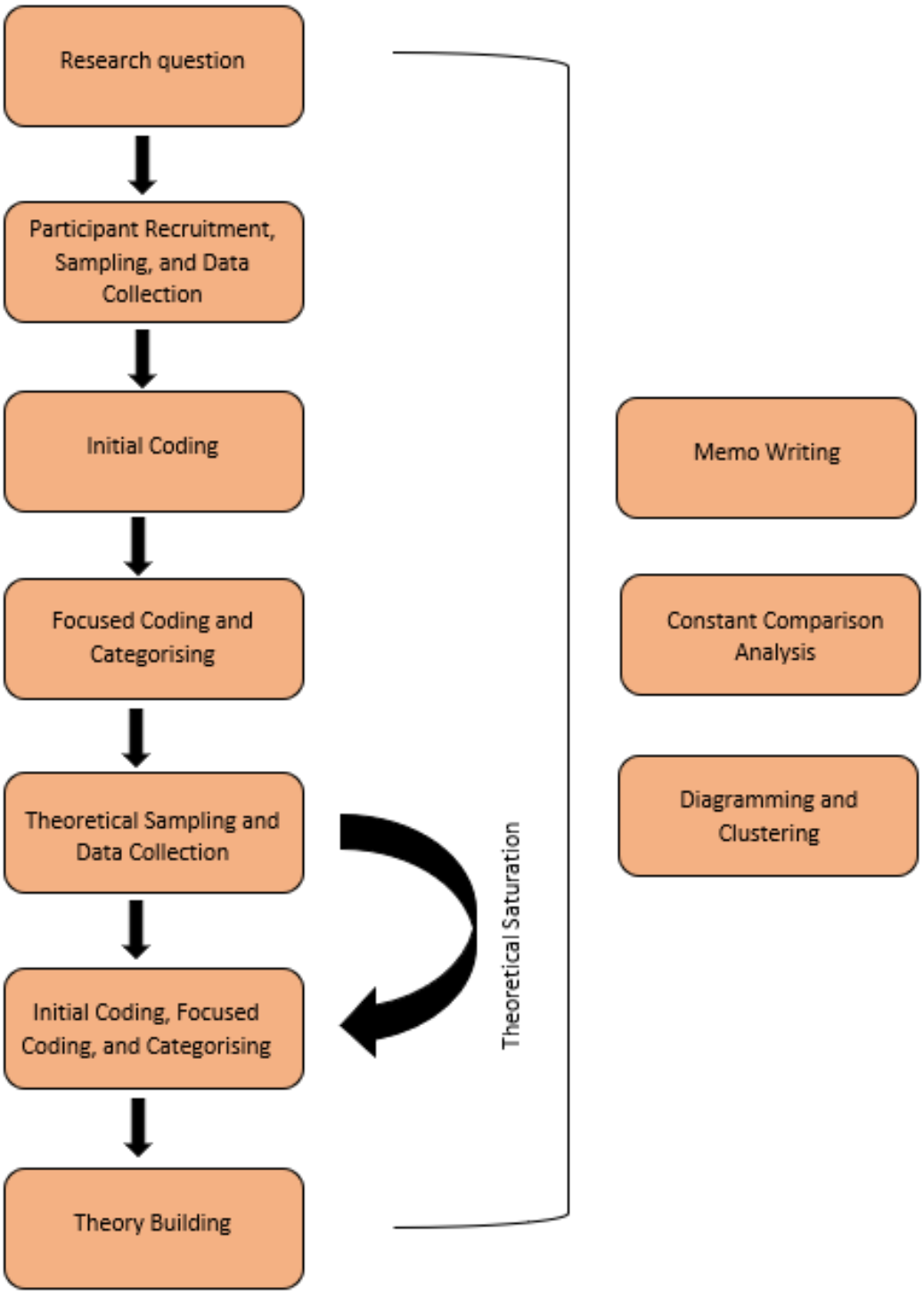


Figure 3.1 - A visual representation of the constructivist grounded theory data gathering and analysis that were followed in the current study (Charmaz, 2014).

3.5.2 Initial data collection – semi structured interviews

Recognised as a flexible and adaptable way of finding things out, interviewing is one of the most common methods of collating qualitative data (Seidman, 2013) and for grounded theory studies, semi-structured interviews are suggested as the most appropriate (Robson & McCartan, 2016), particularly when personal meanings are relevant and when historical accounts are considered important (Robson, 1993). With constructivist grounded theorists seeking rich and detailed data, which, if obtained sufficiently, enhances the conceptual density of a study (Draucker et al., 2007), semi-structured interviews are favoured, given the flexibility and freedom they offer while simultaneously shaping and pacing data collection process (Charmaz, 2014).

The current study collected data via semi-structured interviews designed, for purpose of this research (Appendix 5), using open-ended and some focused questions to encourage elicitation, exploration, and elaboration of participant experience. A script was also developed by the researcher and referred to at the start of interviews to guide introductions, to reiterate participant rights, and to ensure ethical coherence (Appendix 6).

The researcher's focus on enabling participants to speak freely, to tell their stories and to develop their ideas in a reflective manner mirrors Charmaz's (2008) notion of the 'intensive interview' (p. 164) which she claims facilitates the ebb and flow of dialogue in a conversational style, while maintaining direction. Ultimately, the aims of the current study were operationalised by focusing participants on the topic - their experiences of supporting military pupils in their school context - while providing the interactive space and time for their views and insights to emerge (Charmaz, 2014).

The researcher spent some time devising a semi-structured interview schedule, discussing successive drafts with colleagues and research supervisors, and making subtle amendments to avoid leading questions and repetition. Within the constraints of the doctoral thesis, this discussion and amendment process stood instead of a more traditional piloting phase.

As data gathering progressed, interview schedules were further amended - in line with the conventions of grounded theory which grants refinements of an interview schedule as a given consequence of theoretical sampling (section 3.5.3.5). For example, during the first interview the researcher felt that sticking closely to the schedule disrupted the desired 'ebb and flow of a conversation style' and so used the schedule more as a guide, thus attaining the flexibility

encouraged in grounded theory data gathering, which "permits interviewers to discover discourses and to pursue ideas and issues immediately that emerge during the interview" (Charmaz, 2014, pp. 85). Although Appendix 5 shows the initial schedule of interview questions, the exact questions asked of each participant can be viewed in Appendix 5a – participant 1; 5b – participant 2; 5c – participant 3, and 5d – participant 4. This demonstrates how questions evolved from interview to interview in keeping with theoretical sampling procedures.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted remotely, on an individual basis, via Microsoft Teams at a time that was convenient for each participant. Prior to meeting, at the point of gaining informed consent, participants were made aware that interviews would be audio-recorded, and this was reiterated at the beginning of each interview when it was also confirmed that recording would be on a password protected Dictaphone. All recordings were anonymised, and confidentiality was maintained.

It is considered that interviews of less than half an hour unlikely yield sufficient valuable data, whereas an interview longer than an hour, risks overwhelming interviewees and/or putting pressure on them (Robson & McCartan, 2016). Participants were therefore informed that each interview would last for no longer than one hour; with most of them being approximately 45 minutes in practice.

3.5.3 Transcription of semi-structured interviews

Audio recordings from participant interviews were transcribed into text format by the researcher following each interview and checked for accuracy. For grounded theory studies, a logical approach to this is 'denaturalised' transcription, because what is said, not the way it is said, is the focus (Oliver, Serovich & Mason, 2005); intricacies and nuances of conversation were therefore negated.

The researcher listened to audio recording while manually transcribing, frequently pausing to allow verbatim depiction of every spoken word to be captured and documented. This was completed in one-sitting for each interview. Although time-consuming, first-handed transcription aided the researcher's familiarity with the content of data. One reason for this practice is that in grounded theory methodology the incoming information from participants influences the nature of information sought in subsequent interviews. This is referred to as theoretical sampling (Strauss & Corbin 1990) which is detailed in section 3.5.3.5.

3.5.4 Initial coding

Coding sets up a relationship between the researcher and participant (Leigh Star, 2007), during which the researcher interacts closely with data, simultaneously categorising, summarising, and accounting for every section, while demonstrating how codes were selected, separated, and sorted with an open mind. Initial coding was the first stage of analysis and involved the researcher examining transcribed data line-by-line in pursuit of labelling each to define what was happening in the data fragments (Appendix 7 gives an example of initial coding). Line-by-line coding helped guard against the researcher becoming too immersed in a participants' experience at the risk of accepting it as a given. Instead, it was ensured that the researcher explored each line of data anew, separated data into categories and identified processes. This decision was pertinent following the researcher's first two memos (Figure 3.2 and Figure 3.3. in section 3.5.1.6), written prior to coding. Reflecting on these memos highlighted the risk of researcher prejudices being imposed on whole sections of data while coding. The openness of initial coding should spark thinking to allow new ideas to emerge (Charmaz, 2014, p. 117). Studying the data in this way, enabled the generation of a wealth of codes based on what was suggested or implied by the data, with little influence from entire participant narratives.

3.5.4.1 Coding with gerunds

Inspired by a conversation between Charmaz and Keller (2016) in which Charmaz describes her favoured mode of coding, the researcher employed the same technique: coding with gerunds. These '-ing' words ensured that initial codes remained action orientated and stuck closely to the data, which Charmaz asserts facilitates moving beyond concrete statements toward analytic progression by identifying actions and processes in the data, rather than coding for types of people (Charmaz, 2014, p. 111). Gerunds serve as a heuristic tool to critically interrogate data and conceptualise what is happening in the data; the detection of process was facilitated, fluidity in each participants' experience preserved, and new ways of looking at data while remaining close to it was granted. This process of making sense of data shaped the ensuing analysis without making conceptual leaps while prompting the researcher to identify gaps in data that went on to refocus subsequent interviews.

Charmaz notes that initial codes may include individual words or phrases (Charmaz, 2006, p. 27) and that speed and spontaneity help in their formation. The researcher conducted initial coding by hand to facilitate her efficiency and allow for fresh ideas to be applied on impulse (see Appendix 7). Working in this way supported the researcher to remain open to what the

data were suggesting, to stay close to it and to keep codes short, simple, active, and analytic (Charmaz, 2014).

In pursuit of an authentic interpretation of each data set and to avoid imposing pre-existing theories on them while coding, the researcher followed Charmaz's (2014) guidance bulleted in Figure 3.2.

- Not coding at too general a level.
- Identifying actions and processes as opposed to topics.
- Paying attention to how people construct actions and processes.
- Attending to participants' concerns and not to disciplinary or personal concerns.
- Coding in context.
- Using codes to analyse as well as to summarise.

Figure 3.2 - Strategies ensured by the researcher while coding to avoid imposing a pre-existing framework to data, as cautioned by Charmaz (2014, p. 159).

3.5.4.2 Constant comparison method

Through the method of constant comparison (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), analytic distinctions were established through making sequential comparisons between data with data, within and across all participant interview transcripts. This served to understand the logic of *their* experiences while challenging taken-for-granted understandings already held by the researcher and ultimately facilitated an inductive process, with data being compared multiple times to reveal the properties of abstract concepts and theories (Charmaz, 2014). Two standard questions guided the process of comparison within transcribed data: '*What is happening in the data?'* and *'What action does each particular happening, incident, event or idea represent?*' (Strauss & Corbin 1990). Asking these questions while constantly comparing new information with previously identified information enabled the identification of categories, relationships between categories and a central category around which all other categories revolve (Carpenter Rinaldi 1995). Initial codes devised at this stage were therefore provisional (Charmaz, 2014) because constantly comparing data with data, as here described, resulted in removing, amending, combining, and elaborating some initial codes.

3.5.4.3 In-vivo coding

In-vivo codes were also used when appropriate and underwent the same analytical and comparative scrutiny as other types of codes. Seen as symbolic markers, in-vivo codes make use of key statements or direct quotes offered by participants that hold meanings, capture experience, and crystalise participants' actions or concerns (Charmaz, 2014, p. 134). Described as characteristic of social worlds and organisational settings (Charmaz, 2014. P.135), in-vivo codes allow a researcher to develop a deeper understanding of what is happening and what it means. For example, '*far reaching elements to the role'* (Alice, p.1 line 43) illuminated a relative congruence between the researcher's interpretation of participants' meanings and actions and their explicit statement and actions, ultimately providing an element of confirmation that the researcher had grasped how the participant experienced their role as class teacher in supporting military pupils. Although highlighted as a provisional initial code, through the constant comparison method and analytic consideration in memo-writing, '*far reaching elements to the role'* was raised as a focused code, and then as a category because it informed the researcher about how school staff viewed and experienced their role, as class teachers, supporting military pupils, but also managing competing demands (see section 4.3).

The researcher moved onto studying, sorting, and selecting initial codes. The following section outlines this process.

3.5.5 Focused coding and categorising

This next stage of analysis involved 'focused coding', through which the researcher studied and assessed the abundance of initial codes in exploration of what they implied, as well as what they revealed. This was achieved by drawing further on Strauss and Corbin's (1990) constant comparative method. For each interview transcript, the researcher filtered initial codes to draw out those that held the most analytic value, that is, those that were related conceptually, and those that were the most numerically frequent or dominant in some way (Carmichael & Cunningham, 2017), as well as those that the researcher considered to be most important to the emerging analysis (Charmaz, 2014). The researcher used the most useful initial code or established a new code that could account for large batches of data, ultimately making a phenomenon that participants had not conceptualised explicit. The aim here was to make focused codes active and brief, which then allowed for them to be treated as potential categories. Appendix 8 shows example of focused coding against the same excerpt of data shown in Appendix 7 for initial coding.

A category is defined as "*a unit of information made up of events, happenings and instances*" (Robson & McCartan, 2016, p. 162). Once focused codes were established, using memos, and sifting through transcripts again, the researcher treated focused codes as tentative categories and reviewed transcripts again with the focused codes in mind, ultimately assessing which ones *best* represented what was happening in the data and what meaning was being conveyed. The researcher worked systematically testing new or overarching codes against batches of data in pursuit of a focused code that could group (or categorise) existing initial codes. The process of memo-writing highlighted focused codes that held most analytic weight, and those that made the cut were raised to conceptual categories. Through this process, relationships between earlier codes were identified, so that categories emerged (Draucker, Martolf, Ross & Rusk, 2007).

Charmaz (2014) asserts that diagramming provides researchers with a further way to interpret and frame their data. Diagramming aided the process of defining which codes could serve best as focused codes, and in conceptualising categories, while heightening the researcher's sense of direction for the emerging analysis. The process of analysis was flexible and ongoing, with visual strategies prompting the removal, introduction, collapsing, expanding, and rearranging of codes. Appendix 9 and Appendix 10 present examples of early and developing mind maps created by the researcher. Graphically representing the complex relationships between a range of different topics facilitated sense-making and clarified the theoretical centrality of emerging analytic ideas by illustrating patterns, comparisons, and gaps (detailed further in the following section: Theoretical Sampling). To further aid sense making of codes and conceptualisation of categories within the present study, the researcher tabularised focused codes, final focused codes, and categories (Appendix 11).

In chapter 4, references to categories and focused codes are clearly cross-referenced with transcripts of interview data, which ensured validity in the findings and supported the researcher to avoid importing preconceptions and existing theory into the analysis (Willig, 2001, p. 34).

3.5.6 Theoretical sampling

While purposeful sampling (section 3.4.2) was employed to gather initial interview data, from which initial and focused coding analyses drew out tentative categories and emerging ideas, questions remained. The aim of grounded theory analysis is to reach *saturation* to establish a comprehensive set of theoretical themes (Tobias, 2019, p. 22) and a wider scope and variation of concepts (Morse & Clark, 2019), in other words, to answer these remaining questions. As

the point of "saturation" of categories is approached, further data collection gives way to defining and conceptual refinement. (Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Glaser 1978; Strauss, 1987; Strauss and Corbin, 1990; Charmaz, 2006). This is assisted through theoretical sampling: the process of 'going back into the field' to gather more data specifically related to the properties of these preliminary ideas. Glaser (1978) describes this as a process whereby "data collection is controlled by the emerging theory" (p.36), the purpose being to gain clarity over ideas, fill out and develop properties of tentative categories and to clarify and plan relationships between them (Charmaz, 1996). Failure to do so will result in a lack of conceptual depth (Benoliel, 1996).

Theoretical sampling is an integral part, and distinguishing component of grounded theory studies that other qualitative approaches do not employ (Flick 2019; Bryant, 2019). The grounded theorist seeks further interviewees to add to the fullness of the understanding of their working theoretical ideas. The researcher therefore remained open to bringing new participants into the study for the purpose of increasing the scope, adequacy, and appropriateness of the data until the data set was complete, and to the idea of returning to key participants for a second or third time to orient toward eliciting data to expand the depth or address gaps in the emerging analysis.

3.5.6.1 Data collection: theoretical sampling

Further participants were not recruited given the researcher's immediate initial and focused coding after each participant interview, outcomes of which informed subsequent interviews (Appendix 12 presents an amended interview schedule based on analytic ideas developed through early diagramming; Appendix 9 and Appendix 10). Examples of how tentative ideas and thoughts relating to the direction of subsequent interviews were captured through memo-writing (discussed in section 3.5.6.3). Figures 3.4 and 3.5 offer an example of this process.

The researcher therefore amended the interview schedule to enable the collection of pertinent data, where such was necessary to elaborate and refine preliminary categories under consideration for the emerging theory (Charmaz, 2014). The relevance of questions was determined by the requirements for generating and delimiting the emerging theoretical ideas (Hutchinson 1993).

As with initial participant interviews, the interview schedule was used as a guide and some questions were ultimately not asked, either because the final participant addressed the topic or

because it was not deemed appropriate to maintain the desired 'ebb and flow of a conversational style' (Charmaz, 2014, p.85).

3.5.6.2 Initial and focused coding; theoretical sampling

The procedures that were followed for line-by-line initial coding and focused coding with the data gathered through theoretical sampling were the same as during the analysis of early interviews, described in sections 3.5.1.3 and 3.5.1.4. The generated codes were introduced to the existing analysis and the categories that were examined during theoretical sampling were developed and refined to achieve conceptual refinement. With no new categories being generated following theoretical sampling, it was concluded that saturation was achieved. This was checked through the constant comparison method which illustrated theoretical density, meaning generated codes accounted for the variation in data, and each category could "overcome changing situations" (da Silva, da Silva, Valadared, Silva & Leite, 2015, cited in Davoudi, 2016). Ultimately analysis of the final interview, through initial and focused coding, enabled categories to be well fleshed out, and for relationships between categories to be clarified and adjusted accordingly.

Details regarding the results of the analysis can be found in Chapter 4.

3.5.6.3 Memo-writing

As briefly touched upon above (section 3.5.1), memo-writing was undertaken throughout the entire research project, alongside the processes of data collection and analysis (as shown in Figure 3.1). Memos are informal analytic notes, central in developing analytic categories. They comprise a pivotal intermediate step between data collection and writing draft papers (Charmaz, 2014, p. 162).

Memos were recorded in variety of forms including diagrams (Appendix 9; Appendix 10), and written text, some in note form and some as a narrative, as presented in Figures 3.3, 3.4, and 3.5 below. Memos can be written in informal, unofficial language for personal use (Charmaz, 2014), and are usually written in the first-person. They function as an interactive space for a researcher to nurture ideas about data, codes, emerging categories, and implications, in a systematic way, ultimately making data manageable and keeping the researcher actively involved. Figure 3.3 presents an example memo written following the first interview. It contains the researcher's initial reflections and interest in the comparisons made between military pupils and other cohorts by school staff (an idea that was eventually conceptualised as

final focused code, see section 4.2.1). It demonstrates how action and meaning within empirical data were considered by the researcher.

Memo. **20.01.21.**

I can't help but reflect on the seeming sense of injustice shared during this participant interview – injustice for military pupils – at the fore of it, a desire to fight (advocate for) a different approach to supporting this cohort in school. An argument presented through multiple comparisons with other cohorts such as young carers and children who are looked after. It seems that the function of making such comparisons highlights discrepancies in the support in place for military pupils and other vulnerable collectives.

Aware of my inference here, but observations imply a sense of shame, ultimately of the whole school approach to meeting the needs, or potential needs of military pupils. Although attributed to whole school practice, the shame seemed to be internalised by the participant. I noted a sense of helplessness in having no authority to voice concerns or views around changes that could/should be made, and it feels like this interview provided a platform to advocate a different support approach for military pupils across the school – whole school approach.

I recognise correlations with the personal experiences shared during this interview; is it perhaps a reflection of feeling unheard/helpless/ unsupported – as the child of a military man – do personal early experiences impact on the experiences of school staff?

I am also considering how this illuminates the vulnerabilities of military pupils – is this going to be the core of my analysis – 'fighting for the right support'?

Figure 3.3 – Memo 1: post-interview reflections - An example of a memo written by the researcher demonstrating early consideration of action and meaning in data following the first participant interview.

Memos also develop a researcher's awareness of personal prejudices, in turn allowing an open stance to data that may oppose such biases (McGee, Marland &Atkinson, 2007). Figure 3.4 presents memo 2 (researcher's reflections while transcribing), which is a progression of memo 1 (post-interview reflections in Figure 3.3). It explicitly highlights the researcher's awareness of her own prejudices and adds to the transparency of the analytic process. While researcher biases were undoubtedly present, through documenting them in memos and revisiting them later, the risk of imposing preconceived ideas on future data was reduced. Appendix 13 clearly demonstrates how revisiting early memos aids the researcher awareness of her own actions, processes and thoughts impacting on the research process and shows a clear shift in the researcher's own thinking, ultimately facilitating containment of personal biases.

Memo. **22.01.21.**

The participant's personal experiences were shared very openly and honestly, describing the experience of being a military child as a "*horrible, horrible experience emotionally*" (line 36).

As I note in memo 1 relating to whole school acknowledgement of military pupils as a collective, there seems an element of confession of what is perceived by the participant as negligible practice in school. Further alluding to a sense of powerless regarding the dissemination of support for pupils *"does the SENCO have the power to … because I'm not a member of SLT"* (lines 14-15). I can't help but consider that this sense of powerlessness mirrors feelings as a military child. It will be interesting to explore the freedom of school staffs' roles more explicitly in later interviews.

The participant explicitly notes personal prejudices about the military lifestyle, regarding the lacking support experienced personally, "*maybe it's borne out of my own prejudice towards feeling that I never got support, but I don't feel like we do anything*" (lines 49-51).

I am suddenly aware that such prejudices align with my own. I have often considered the potential implications or difficulties a military child may experience as a direct consequence of an absent father. Underpinned by my background in psychology (thus awareness of child development/attachment theory etc.), I have long assumed they would be disadvantaged/a vulnerable cohort.

I feel throughout this interview, we were (are) on the same page regarding fighting for the support that military pupils need. I am currently thinking that ensuring school staff truly understand the needs, implications and vulnerabilities of this cohort will steer my analysis towards defining what support is missing and what support should be in place. I am already holding in mind 'fighting for the right support' as an 'initial code' for when analysis commences.

Figure 3.4 - An example of a memo written by the researcher while transcribing the first participant interview demonstrating how memos serve to raise awareness of own prejudices.

Another advantage of memo'ing is that it enables fleeting thoughts and feelings to be documented and 'held' (McGrath, 2012). Figure 3.4 demonstrates the researcher's assumption that 'fighting for the right support' would suffice an initial code. Through memo'ing the researcher captured tentative ideas while being able to move on to initial coding being mindful, but not committed.

As previously noted, the researcher wrote memos at multiple points throughout the research process. Figure 3.5 presents a memo following initial coding, and how the researcher's thoughts and 'fleeting ideas' (McGrath, 2012) were captured. These ideas went on to inform subsequent interviews, illustrating early theoretical sampling; a process that was continued for each participant-interview to give way to defining and conceptual refinement of tentative ideas, and to ultimately reach *'saturation'* (Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Glaser 1978; Strauss, 1987; Strauss and Corbin, 1990; Charmaz, 2006).

Memo. **24.01.21.**

As I think about my next participant interview, I am anticipating learning more about the disadvantages military pupils are susceptible to as a direct consequence of having a military father (granted, it is possible that a child's mother could be the military parent, but I recognise, based on my personal circumstances that 'an absent father', seems to be prominent in my current thinking). I also anticipate hearing about the challenges of supporting these pupils in a public civilian school if staff do not have the 'true' understanding due to not living the experience themselves.

I am thinking at the moment that to effectively support a military pupil in the context of a public civilian school, a sound understanding of the potential ramifications this cohort are at risk of is required. This reflection is based on the excerpt on page 2 of P1 interview transcript (lines 53-83) during which P1 describes an interaction with one pupil whose father is in the Special Forces. While the detail of the 'to and fro' of the interaction is not described (potentially something for me to explore in later interviews – pupil-teacher communications?), it is highlighted how an understanding held by the staff member facilitated staff's understanding (or assumptions?) of what was happening for the military pupil.

At one point, the participant confesses the novelty of sharing personal experiences with the pupil (line 58). While coding this excerpt, I was reminded of principles of attunement and the mentalising approach (AMBIT model), with reflections about:

- The power of being understood (later reinforced - being kept in mind in)
- The understanding of self and others via effective communication.
- The interplay of minds - naming what the pupil was thinking and feeling, naming what he was thinking and feeling (lines 51-57).
- The establishment of epistemic trust between P1 and this pupil (line 95) facilitated through relational bonding - enabled subsequent successful engagement with other adults (lines 88-89) and with education (lines 85-86).
- Keeping the child in mind.

Figure 3.5 - An example memo demonstrating theoretical sampling through researcher's reflections following coding of a participant interview.

3.6 Research validity and quality

3.6.1 Reflexivity in the current study

Reflexivity is defined as a commitment to setting out the researcher's impact on the process (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995). Given that the researcher here held prior knowledge of the culture of military lifestyles and was therefore not oblivious to claims in existing literature, it was critical that this was acknowledged and accounted for. Using memos enabled explicit recognition and documentation of the researcher's existing views, beliefs, and prejudices (as shown in Figure 3.4, section 3.5.1.6), consequently enabling a reframe to be open to what data was saying that opposed existing biases (McGhee et al., 2007).

The meaningfulness of a grounded theory study is contingent on and mediated by such reflections of the researcher, referred to as '*theoretical sensitivity'* (Glaser, 1978), which facilitated the researcher's ability to interact with the data and conceptualise meaning between and within categories while preventing assumptions and interpretations to the extent of objectivity (Charmaz, 2006). Memos are naturally reflexive which is why Charmaz is so in favour of them (Carmichael & Cunningham, 2017). They functioned as a space where shared experiences between participants and the researcher could be documented while facilitating authenticity to the process and subsequent analysis (Hussein et al., 2014). The on-going detailed and reflexive log, made up of numerous memos detailing researcher involvement, actions, perceptions, and feelings throughout the researcher accounts for how her own views and beliefs influenced the construction of data, the participants, and her own thinking, thus the transparency of the study is made explicit.

3.6.2 Validity and quality in the current study

Since the 1980s, in relation to *qualitative* research, notions of reliability and validity have been subtly replaced by criteria and standards of evaluation relating to *overarching significance, relevance, impact,* and *utility* of completed research. Unlike quantitative research, specific tests and measures cannot be applied to establish reliability and validity in qualitative studies. An accumulation of literature delineates what is meant by rigour in qualitative research, and points to increasing accountability of the researcher to ensure it suffices (Morse et al., 2002). Alongside the evolution of terminology, researchers can take several precautionary measures to enhance the reliability and validity of their research (Kolb, 2012).

It has been argued that the outcome of qualitative analysis -as with statistical analysis- is *generalization* - regardless of the language used to describe it (Ayres, Kavanagh and Knafl, 2003, p.881). However, Polit and Beck (2010) espoused that knowledge is not generated by testing a new theory, but instead arises from confirmation; generalisation is therefore viewed as an act of reasoning that involves drawing broad conclusions from instances, meaning, making inferences about the unobserved based on the observed (p.1451). The issue of generalization is less frequently discussed in qualitative research and is considered complicated and controversial because the main goal of qualitative research is to provide a rich and contextualized understanding of the human experience.

Given the unique and personal experiences being explored within constructivist epistemological research, many qualitative researchers are less concerned with reliability of

findings, nevertheless rigour remains an important feature (Willig, 2002). In keeping with the constructivist epistemology and associated variant of grounded theory employed, the researcher adhered to Charmaz's evaluation criteria (2014, pp.337-338). The completion of this study's evaluation using these criteria can be viewed in Chapter 7.

3.7 Ethical considerations

Ethical aspects relevant to the current study were carefully considered by the researcher before the research journey commenced, and throughout. This initially involved the submission of a proposal to the Ethics Committee at the University of Nottingham, from which ethical clearance was granted in July 2020 (Appendix 14). Adherence to the British Psychological Society (BPS) Code of Ethics and Conduct (2009) and Code of Human Research Ethics (2010) was also ensured; relevant areas of which are detailed below. Additionally, given the researcher's dual role as both a researcher and trainee EP, principles of respect, competence, responsibility, and integrity were always conformed to in compliance with the BPS Code of Ethics and Conduct (2009).

3.7.1 Informed consent

Following the recruitment of participants and before any interview took place, the researcher emailed an information sheet (Appendix 3) and consent form (Appendix 4) to each participant. The information letter outlined the purpose and scope of the study, as well as relevant information regarding the use and storage of their data. Given that interviews took place remotely via Microsoft Teams, it was not possible to obtain a signature from participants on the day of interviewing, instead participants agreed to add their electronic signature to the consent form and email it back to the researcher. To ensure further ethical adherence around gaining informed consent, the researcher repeated details that were outlined in the information sheet, checked participants fully understood their role in the researcher and gained verbal consent once the recording commenced. Such strategies aimed to ensure that participants entered the research study of their own accord and that their rights were protected.

3.7.2 Confidentiality and anonymity

Within the information provided to participants (Appendix 3), how their data would be handled and stored was detailed; procedures that the researcher adhered to. Interview data was recorded and stored on an encrypted device that was password protected. This was also the case for full transcripts and complies with the Data Act (1989). Measures to safeguard all stored data

included complete anonymisation of participants to ensure confidentiality; pseudonyms were used for the write up of the research to ensure no participant can be identified or traced. On a couple of occasions whereby names were used, or school identifiers were disclosed by a participant the researcher used a pseudonym or code when transcribing to maintain anonymity and confidentiality. Audio recordings were destroyed after the completion of the research and all data collected was used for the purpose of this research only. Written data, such as notes taken by the researcher during interviews, were transferred to an electronic format immediately after each interview and written notes were shredded. To further protect the identity of participants, full transcripts were not included in the thesis. It was explained verbally to participants, that confidentiality would be overruled if safeguarding or malpractice concerns were raised, from which information would be shared with the school's safeguarding lead.

3.7.3 Right to withdraw

Within the written information (Appendix 3) emailed to participants prior to consenting, it was explicitly stated that participation is voluntary and that they were under no obligation to volunteer. This was further reiterated at the beginning of the interview process along with a reminder of their right to withdraw at any point before, during or even after the interview.

3.7.4 Minimising harm

The researcher made every attempt to ensure no harm was imposed on participants, first, by establishing a rapport at the beginning of interviews to help participants feel relaxed. While the researcher strove to ensure interview questions could elicit a conversational discussion, some questions did unveil scope for participants to recall personal experiences that may have been negative. All participants were verbally informed that they did not have to answer anything they did not wish to. The researcher remained mindful of each participant's conduct throughout their interviews in attempts to monitor stress, distress, or anxiety. If this was evident, the researcher planned to terminate the interview and follow with debriefing strategies that incorporated signposting for additional support if needed.

3.7.5 Debriefing

Before the close of each interview session, the researcher offered participants time to reflect, and the opportunity to ask any questions. This was important due to the nature of the questioning that allowed participants to share experiences that could have provoked positive or

negative emotions. Regardless of whether emotions were explicitly commented on at the time, the researcher followed the interview session with an email to each participant with a debrief form attached (Appendix 15). The email and debrief form reiterated the researcher's gratitude for their time and contribution, gave an overview of the purpose of the study, details about what would happen next and how their data would be used. In further consideration of their wellbeing, details of the researcher were provided along with contact details for the researcher's supervisors at both the University of Nottingham and host EPS. It was clarified that they could make contact at any point in the future to discuss their feelings or to seek further support.

3.8 Chapter summary

This chapter has highlighted the importance of exploring different approaches to real world research in relationship to the researcher's own world view and theoretical beliefs. It began by addressing epistemological paradigms and their ontological underpinnings ultimately justifying the current study's employment of a qualitative methodology situated in the constructivist paradigm. Through the exploration of several qualitative approaches, it was recognised that the aims of the current study aligned with constructivist grounded theory, reasons for which were justified. The chapter moved on to recount details of the research design, including sampling and recruitment, and of the methodological procedures followed in data gathering and analysis. Steps to ensure transparency throughout the research process have been documented, including the researcher's reflexivity, memo-writing, and diagramming. The researcher also illuminated how the quality and validity of the study was maintained and how measures akin to a sound ethical design, were implemented.

4. Findings

4.1 Introduction

The aim of the current study was to provide a conceptualised understanding of school staffs' experiences of supporting pupils from military backgrounds within the context of a mainstream state school. The final analysis of data that was obtained via semi-structured interviews is presented in this chapter. Here, the outcome of the steps taken throughout initial and focused coding, categorising, memo-writing and constant comparative analysis (as discussed in section 3.5) are detailed to demonstrate how the three conceptual categories were devised. References to appendices are made to guide the reader through the steps adopted at each stage of analysis, with the goal of providing transparency in the research process (Birks and Mills, 2015)

Table 4.1 offers a presentation of the three categories that were developed based on the most prominent focused codes within and across participants' experiences. Selected categories are those that the researcher viewed as having the greatest analytic significance and that subsumed several focused codes: ultimately those that could facilitate the development of a more abstract, analytic, and conceptualised theory. Each category will be presented and discussed in relation to the focused codes it subsumes. To further increase transparency, and to bring clarity to the account of the analytic process, excerpts from participant transcripts are included. In adherence with confidentiality and anonymity, pseudonyms have been used for all participants and full transcripts are not included. Participant details are presented in the following section (4.1.1).

Category	**Conceptualisation**
Category 1	Drawing on wider influences to enhance one's own understanding of military pupils, and to consider their needs and approaches to support.
Category 2	"Far reaching elements to the role" (in-vivo code); Teacher self-efficacy beyond academia.
Category 3	Easing the weight of responsibility through a shared and collective approach.

Table 4.1 - A table presenting the three conceptual categories developed during the analysis.

The following sections (4.2; 4.3; 4.4) present an account of each category, each of which is split into subsections detailing the focused codes that the category was founded upon. Although, presented in a seemingly linear fashion, in line with the conventions of constructivist grounded

theory categories -and the focused codes that they are built upon- should not be viewed in isolation of one another, but instead, understood as interacting, integrated, and complimentary to other categories and their formation (Birk & Mills, 2015; Charmaz, 2014). Therefore, when categories are discussed, references are made to focused codes that are perceived as fitting with more than one category, so as to reflect the complimentary and interactive nature of theory building in the present study (Charmaz, 2014).

4.1.1 The interviewees

The four interviewees: Andy, Pippa, Felix, and Alice[3], were all working in a mainstream state-school with at least one military pupil on roll at the time of being interviewed. One of the four participants worked in a secondary setting and the other three worked in primary settings. Participants' roles varied: one SENCO, one Year 4 class teacher, one Year 5 class teacher, and one had a dual role of SENCO and Year 1 class teacher. The number of years in role varied between seven and 25 years and two of the participants had personal experiences of being in a military family.

In section 3.4.2.1, the impact of COVID-19 was noted as a factor in limiting the researcher's access to school staff from schools with a relatively higher population of pupils from military backgrounds. As stated, the researcher instead sought participants' interest from schools that she had a pre-existing working relationship with. As such, the experiences of participants working in support of pupils from military backgrounds were anticipated to be considered somewhat limited. Ultimately, all four participants did describe their experience as limited (Andy, p.1, 9-10, 12-13, p.3, 114-115; Pippa, p.1, 10-11; Felix, p.1, 4-6, p.4, 133-135; Alice, p.1, 16-17, p.2, 69-70), however, the researcher did not consider this to hold much analytic value, therefore did not include this as a category. The limitations presented by the restricted sample are discussed further in Chapter 7.

4.2 Category 1: Drawing on wider influences to enhance one's own understanding of military pupils, and to consider their needs and approaches to support.

A visual representation of Category 1 and the focused codes that influenced its construction is presented in Figure 4.1. A list of codes devised during analysis which resulted in the three final focused codes illustrated, have been tabularised and can be viewed in Appendix 11.

[3] Names are assigned pseudonyms to ensure confidentiality and anonymity.

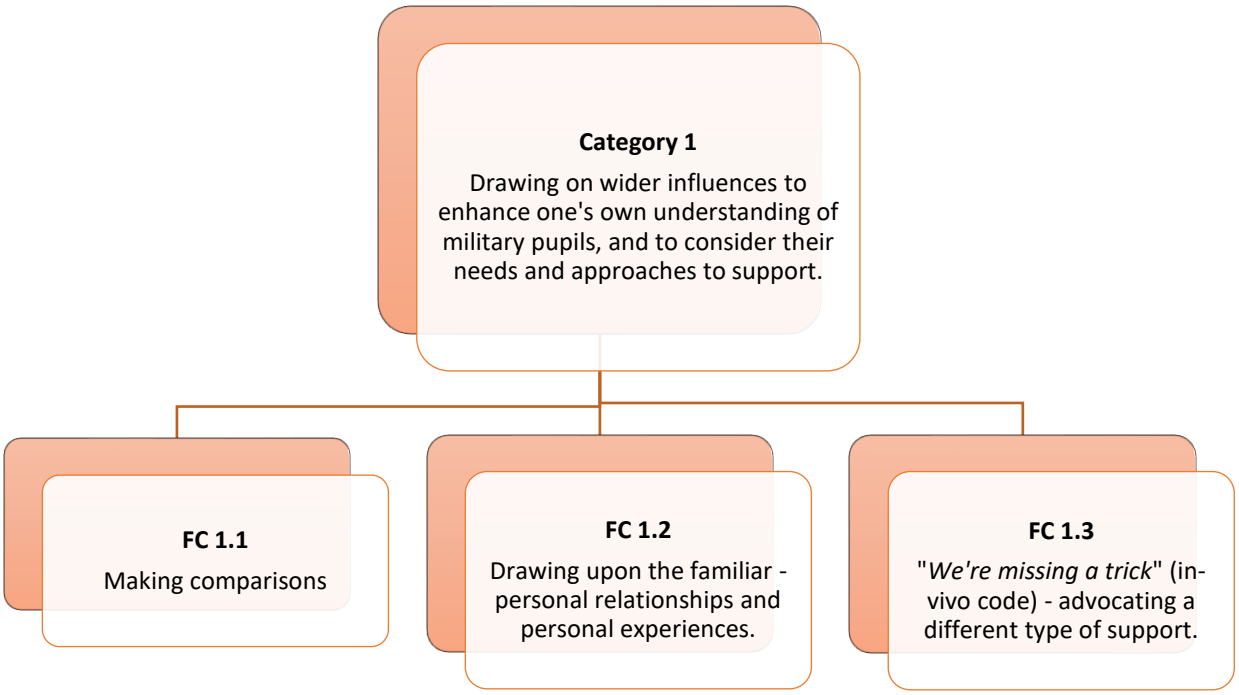


Figure 4.1 - Category 1: Drawing on wider influences to enhance one's own understanding of military pupils, and to consider their needs and approaches to support.

4.2.1 Focused Code 1.1: Making comparisons

Considering participants' self-confessed 'limited experience' - as discussed above (section 4.1.1) - making comparisons between pupils from typical backgrounds and those from military backgrounds, or between different children from military backgrounds seems to enable school staff to understand or articulate their experiences. All four participants made comparisons at multiple points and to varying degrees throughout their interview. Examining interview transcripts suggests that making comparisons served several functions; to anticipate the needs of military pupils, to consider how to meet these needs, or to advocate for their support.

Comparing the age of the pupil(s) from military families that were spoken about by participants seemed to influence how the participants anticipate the needs of such pupils, and how they plan accordingly. Further, with younger children being perceived to be less aware of the impact of being in the military, staff seem to feel a responsibility to 'protect' them, the excerpt from Pippa below provides an example of how such comparisons can inform staffs' awareness and planning:

> *I do feel like the kids are shielded, as in they know that they* [parents] *go away but they* [pupils] *don't know the full ins and outs, because obviously they are still very young (...) when we're bringing up Remembrance Day, we're very mindful to sort of not to scare our military children because we know their families are protecting them and still wanting them to live normally and have that normal sort of childhood that every child would have, so we just keep that in mind." (Pippa, p.8, 326-337)*

For Felix, making age-related comparisons serves to help inform his understanding of how primary-aged military pupils might view their military parents' role. He suggests that the understanding that these younger pupils might hold of their parents' military role is not representative of reality and attributes this to these pupils' exposure to computer games. It seems that Felix is suggesting that younger pupils from military backgrounds might be naïve, shielded from the potential negative implications of their parent(s) being in the military.

> *I suppose when they are in primary school, they have less of an understanding of what goes on, you know it's like, they've probably seen pictures of their dad or mum in an army uniform (...) if you're a kid and you see your dad in the army it's a cool thing. They play games like Fortnite don't they, and all the characters on Fortnite have got army stuff on (...) it's quite a cool isn't it (*Felix, p.3, 111-121).

Making age-related comparisons also seems to help inform staffs' understanding of the emotional regulation of pupils from military backgrounds:

> *When they first came into school which is where I sort of noticed it a little bit more because it was more… they were very emotional and you know, when their parent came back from service you could tell there was that sort of build-up of that emotion with her. Which I didn't really see with the older child that I've had* (Pippa, p.1, 13-19).

As well as considering age differences, explicit comparisons were referenced to a pupil's gender, seemingly serving to inform how school staff understand the needs of an individual. This is illustrated in the excerpt below, which shows Pippa noting how her role as class teacher enabled

her to understand the pupil. She talks about providing opportunities for the pupil in her class to express herself in activities tailored specifically to her. (This also offers an example of focused code 2.1: *Valuing the opportunity to know the individual military pupil to respond appropriately and plan effectively*.)

> *(…) like I say the first child that I had a few years ago, we didn't really see a noticeable difference (…) they didn't really seem to have any issues, whereas this little person that I've currently got, you just notice that it plays on their mind (…) in the early days I'd provide her with time for mark making, writing letters to the parent that was away in service. For weeks before the parent would come home (…) there would be lots of questions, so that time to talk in class was important. There'd be lots of excitement and they'd discuss it a lot more than the child I've taught previously (…) the child that I taught previously was a boy, and this little person is a girl… for me it is just interesting the difference between them, but boys and girls are different aren't they emotionally* (Pippa, p.1, 22-35).

Support strategies were considered by participants when considering the potential needs of military pupils, leading to comparisons when considering the type of support that has been provided for other pupils: this seemed to encourage reflection about the support that could be implemented for military pupils.

Pippa talked about strategies that she understood might be put in place in support of a military pupil "*if the worst happened*" (p.3, 119). Here it was understood that Pippa was referring to if the pupil's parent died: she used the phrase twice in the following excerpt. (This also offers an example of Category 3: *Easing the weight of responsibility through a collective/shared approach*, evident in her use of "we" and reference to external services):

> *We would probably create like a strategy that we could reach out to bereavement services if the worst happened. In the past, we had a child a few years ago who was struggling with coming to terms with the loss of a parent, and we used (…) Winston's Wish we used to give us some ideas of how to support the child. We made sure that it was sort of unique to them as well. Because we knew they child so well, we knew what would work and what we could try. So, I'd*

> *presume that we'd go through that sort of route with either of those children if the worst sort of happened.* (Pippa, p3-4, 116-130).

In the passage above, Pippa also indicates a recognition of the value of knowing, and tailoring support to the individual pupil - which links to Focused Code 2.1: *valuing knowing the individual pupil*, in Category 2.

An alternative use of comparisons is offered by Alice considering potential changes in school:

> *I think being more aware of the wider picture, I suppose, from making it more relevant to groups of children or pockets of children with a … I don't want to say 'need' because that's suggesting … erm because it's not an issue, for us, in the context of who I'm taking about, it's not for her academically, it would be more for a support network, so maybe if there was a group or if perhaps staff were more aware that there was a difference – like having gifted and talented, (…) as a collective group and highlighting that there's a potential need there and for staff to know how to support so it is not just one member of staff's responsibility I suppose* (Alice p.6, 236-250).

In her consideration of what could change, Alice's suggestion to make others aware not only supports the military pupil but also staff, and thus correlates with Category 3: *Easing the weight of responsibility through a shared and collective approach*.

In the extract below Alice makes additional comparisons to "*looked after children*" (p.7, 287) and *"a medical need*" (p.7, 294) to emphasise her view around the importance of preventing a label being a defining feature of a pupil, and in doing so she pinpoints the need to "*just be aware*" (p.7 282). (In highlighting a belief in the value of sharing information this again fits with Category 3: *Easing the weight of responsibility through a shared and collective approach*).

> *(…) the child who I am talking about, I think it is something that would be communicated (…) "just be aware that…" (…) you want the information to get passed on but not necessarily to define who they are because, thinking about looked after children, you don't want it to be that they're singled out in a different way based on the fact that their family life is different. (…) I suppose there's no difference if there was a medical thing, we don't want it to be the*

> *only thing that people focus on, it's got to be that it is understood, it's passed on, there's an awareness (…)* (Alice, p.7, 279-298).

4.2.2 Focused Code 1.2: Drawing upon the familiar - personal relationships and personal experiences.

The focused code '*drawing on personal relationships and personal experiences'* collates together an array of examples offered by all four participants at different points throughout their interviews, conveying further striving to understand the potential needs of military pupils, for example, by imaging how someone they know on a personal level would manage under similar stressors. Felix notes in the excerpt below that, *"I've never had to go above and beyond what I would normally do in my role"* (p.1, 22-23), but refers to his experience with and knowledge of his own son to attempt to understand how pupils from military families might respond to challenges, and to guide his classroom response:

> *I think it would depend on the kid, like the lad in my class at the moment you would never pick out that his dad was in the military, you just wouldn't, but I can imagine that, well my eldest lad for example, he is quite sensitive and quite emotional, and he likes to know where I am and that he can ring me (…) So, I imagine that if it was him, he would be worried constantly if I was away on tour. So that would definitely impact how you'd respond to him. But this lad in class seems to take it in his stride, so does the other girl that I taught* (Felix, p. 2, lines 69-79).

Similarly, Alice drew on her own personal relationships in order to develop an understanding of the impact of the military lifestyle on the whole family:

> *(…) nothing to do with school as such, but a friend of mine, her husband was in the Navy, and he used to go away for six months at a time then. I know in terms of the toll it took on her bringing up a family without him, it was almost like the rejigging of the family dynamic once he returned and the conflict that caused."* (Alice, p.3, 120-128).

Alice relates this memory to the pupil from a military family in her current class, and demonstrates a consequent confidence in being able to recognise any disruption at home:

> *Now, I don't get the sense of that with the girl in my class at all, that there's any sort of unsettlement. Mum accesses parents evening and, as I say, is really supportive, and connected (…) So, in terms of any kind of subtleties in the family dynamic then I wouldn't say it stands out (…) communication between mum and school is open enough that I would be aware of it if there was a problem.* (Alice, p. 4-4, lines 128-137).

The extract above also indicates how Alice values '*knowing the pupil'* (Focused Code 2.1), facilitated by her class teacher role, and implies that her confidence is enhanced through having a positive relationship with both the pupil and the pupil's mother, as well as her own experience to draw upon. Here, further links are indicated to Focused Code 2.3: *Considering one's level of confidence/self-efficacy to understand military pupils and to support effectivel*y.

Explicit reference by two participants who themselves have a military background to their own personal experiences are exampled below. Andy and Pippa's understanding of the emotional needs a child from a military family might be susceptible to appear to be informed by their own personal experiences:

> *So, every September my dad would go (…) and come back at the end of May, so every year for 9 months of the year I'd lose me dad, then he'd come back, he'd completely disrupt the family dynamic, he'd rip it to pieces so by the time September came you'd be desperate for him to leave but then when he left it would be like grieving that he'd died. It was odd and it was just a horrible, horrible experience emotionally for a child to go through* (Andy, p.1, 24-37).

> *(…) my mum talks quite a bit about what it was like, you know we travelled with him (…) I suppose it does just resonate a little bit more with sharing that knowledge of what it involves (…) I think the biggest thing for me (…) it's not just that person that's in the military who is making those sacrifices, the family as a whole is in it and feeling the impact* (Pippa, p.5, 170-183).

It is apparent that Pippa's awareness of the potential stressors that a pupil from a military family may experience informs her approach in school: at multiple points she emphasises the importance

of *being mindful*, which links to the Focused Code 2.1: *Valuing knowing the individual pupil - facilitated by class teacher role and pupil-teacher relationship; being attuned; being mindful*:

> *Because you've got that link it does sort of make you a bit more mindful of that emotional side of it* (Pippa p. 4, lines 159-160).
>
> *You just know it's one of those things in the back of your head* (Pippa p. 4, lines 165-166).

I think it made me a bit more mindful of when we were making Father's Day cards and mindful that they might not get to see that parent (Pippa p. 2, lines 60-62). The last extract from Pippa above shows how her awareness of the potential needs of children from military families is informed by her own personal experiences, and thus how her own experience informs her drive to ensure appropriate planning is in place.

4.2.3 Focused Code 1.3: "We're missing a trick" -advocating a different type of support.

In the excerpts below multiple comparisons are made between pupils from military backgrounds and pupils with different backgrounds, such as looked after children (linking to section 4.2.1 focused code: *Making comparisons*), however, Andy's intention appears to be one of advocacy: to support his view that those from military backgrounds should be supported differently- to the approach currently in place- like that of other pupil cohorts:

> *For me, I just feel that they need to be a targeted group, every other group in school, so SEN, looked after pupils, travelling community, all of them are all looked at and somebody picks them up and deals with them as groups, but nobody collectively looks at military pupils, they are still very much individually supported, like an individual with dyslexia you would have one on one support whereas actually they're a community groups and should be dealt with as such* (Andy, p.8, 302-309).

Here the support of pupils from military backgrounds is likened to the support received by a pupil with dyslexia, whose needs are attended to according to individual need. Whereas other pupil cohorts, such as looked after children, are supported through a network. Andy appears to suggest that pupils from military families would benefit from the support of other pupils from similar backgrounds instead of being supported individually. He adds:

> *I know that when we do our data analysis every year, I know the military students are on there, (...) it is owned by five individuals rather than a singular person, it'd be better if everyone knew them (...) they are oversighted on a yearly basis."* (Andy, p.8, 328-332).

In the passage above, Andy's views link to Category 3: *Easing the weight of responsibility through a shared and collective approach*. He implies that the weight of responsibility could be eased "*if everyone knew them* [i.e., children from military backgrounds]" (p.8, 231).

Andy's experience of the support being offered to military pupils in his school suggests there could be more effective support in place in terms of the meeting emotional need, stating that "*we're missing a trick*" (p.5, 208).

The excerpt below from Andy demonstrates a comparison being made by likening the emotional experiences of a child from a military family to experiences of grief:

> (…) *it's very easy to understand how people feel or experience grief (...) most people have experienced grief by the time they're an adult but it's difficult to empathise with somebody who, if you look at it rationally, they're* [military children] *not missing out on anything, and it is an extension of grief (...) you can learn to deal with it as time goes by, but you don't get the opportunity to do that in this situation because your grief hits you at first then you deal with it then it comes back again and it rumbles, and it does that every cycle of your parents cycle of going away. That is tough.* (Andy, p.6, 213-226).

Andy goes on to draw a distinction between feeling sympathy for children with military backgrounds and having empathy, advocating that:

> *While somebody might be sympathetic towards them* [military pupils], *I don't think they'll have the empathy because they won't truly understand where it* [emotional issues] *comes from* (Andy, p.3-4, 210-212).

He elaborates on the distinction between sympathy and empathy by comparing the difficulties experienced by a child whose parent is in prison to those experienced by a child from a military family whose parent goes on repeated tours.

Again, back to the prison children, it's the same thing (...) (Andy, p.6. 212-213).

Here, Andy appears to be implying that people can sympathise, but not truly empathise because they have not experienced "*the cycle of your parent's cycle of going away*" (p.6, 225). He seems to be arguing that while people feel they *get it*, if they have not experienced the reality of being a child from a military background (as he has -see section 4.2.2 Focused code: *Drawing on personal relationships and personal experiences*) then they cannot *truly* understand nor empathise.

4.3 Category 2: Far reaching elements to the role; teacher-efficacy beyond academia

A visual representation of Category 2 and the focused codes that influenced its construction is presented in Figure 4.2. A list of codes devised during analysis which resulted in the three final focused codes illustrated, have been tabularised and can be viewed in Appendix 11.

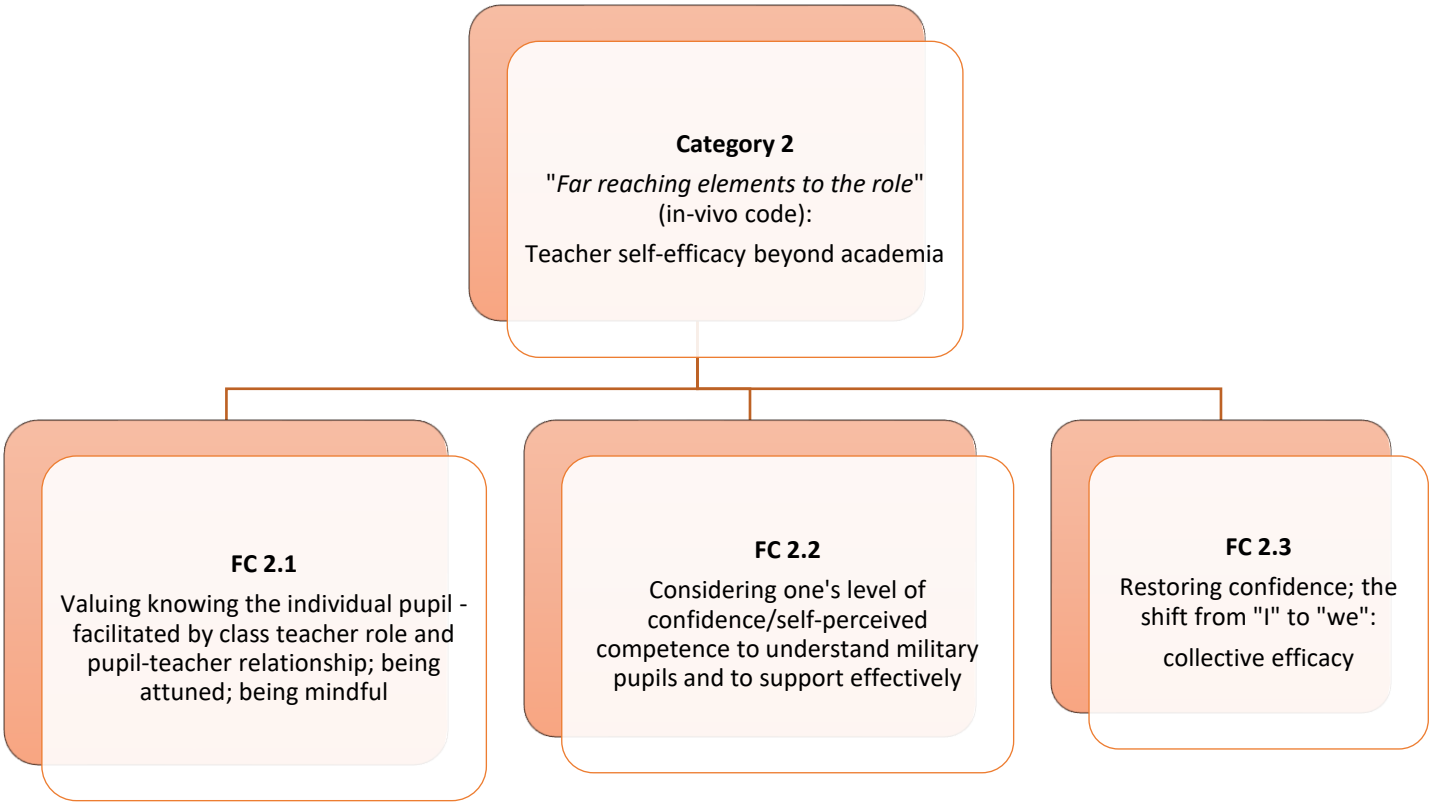


Figure 4.2 - Category 2: *Far reaching elements to the role* (in-vivo code); teacher self-efficacy beyond academia.

4.3.1 Focused Code 2.1: Valuing 'knowing the individual pupil' - facilitated by class teacher role and pupil-teacher relationship; being attuned; being mindful

This code refers to the perceived need to know and understand the individual child from military backgrounds to meet their needs effectively, and to make plans based on their specific needs. It is apparent in the excerpts below -taken from several participants- that the role of class teacher is particularly important in facilitating '*knowing the pupil'*:

> *(…) if you know a child has a parent in the army, which you will know when they're in your class, for example, in another school I taught in, one child had their dad in Afghanistan, and you're always a bit sort of wary (…) you just bare it in mind when planning things. (Felix, p.1, 13-21).*

> *The lad in my class just takes it in his stride, so did the other girl I taught, you notice because you see them every day* (Felix, p.2, 77-79).

For Alice, knowing the pupil in her class well means being able to tell if something is different, and if support is needed:

> *It's not like she's a withdrawn and you need to coax her in her peer friendships (…) more a case of communicating with her, tapping into how she's feeling (…) she may volunteer some information so it's just having the time and being there for her is probably the ultimate line of support I offer* (Alice p.2, lines 53-60).

> ***I am hearing that your role influences your ability to do that.***

> *Yeah, as her class teacher, I think if she was presenting in a way where she was more withdrawn if she wasn't socialising in the way that I've seen her socialising, I would know* (Alice, p.2, lines 63-66).

Alice later elaborates on this and makes links with Category 3: *Easing the weight of responsibility through a shared approach*:

> *Just knowing the children that are in the class and knowing how they tick and being aware of how they are, individually, and what they're*

> *presenting with. So, something alternative to what I know, would be a warning sign. I suppose, being alert to it as the teacher. Other than that, I could reach elsewhere for more intensive support if needed* (Alice, p.5, 199-206).

Alice also highlights how, supported by the positive pupil-teacher relationship, the pupil in her class *"makes it very easy for me"* (p.1, lines 20-21), which appears to faciliate her confidence to intervene appropriately and effectively.

4.3.2 Focused Code 2.2: Considering one's level of confidence/self-perceived competence to understand military pupils and to support effectively.

Alice's confidence is implied in the extract below, but as can be seen, as she questions a sceanrio beyond the norms of her role she alludes to reaching out for a collective approach to support:

> *In terms of the experiences that I've had, then I feel very comfortable, but I think it would be very different if it was a scenario where, I don't know, well if something awful had happened (...)* (Alice, p.5, lines 183-186)

The excerpt above highlights how when something feels beyond her skillset, Alice knows she is able to reach out to wider sources of support, which links with Focused Code 2.3 *Restoring confidence and self-efficacy; the shift from "I-to-we": collective efficacy*.

Felix implies similar experiences in assessing his confidence within the remit of his role but recognises in the face of a scenario beyond his skillset, his confidence is challenged, along with his self-efficacy. The extract below demonstrates this, while tightly linking with Focused Code 2.3: *Restoring confidence and self-efficacy; the shift from "I" to "we" – collective efficacy*.

> *(...) you can always be a listening ear can't you, but I'm not trained, I'm not a counsellor, am I? (...) if I had to speak to a child who had lost a parent or who had a parent who was badly injured it would be quite a difficult thing to do and I would seek advice from elsewhere. We do have a school counselling service so (...) I would be there and support them as much as I could, but for things like bereavement or separation anxiety things like that, I would probably*

> *refer that to people who are a bit more skilled than I am* (Felix, p.4, lines 164-174).

4.3.3 Focused Code 2.3: Restoring confidence and self-efficacy; the shift from "*I*" to "*we*" – collective efficacy.

Within and across participant interviews, the researcher noted how when individuals came to consider a potential scenario perceived to be beyond their skillset, and where their confidence appeared to be challenged, they shifted from describing their experiences in the first person to a collective viewpoint, demonstrating a shift from '*I-to-we'*, which links to both Focused Codes 2.2 and 2.3, as well as Category 3: *Easing the weight a responsibility through a shared and collective approach*. For example, in the excerpt below, Felix talks about how he ("*I*") had never had to go "*above and beyond*", implying he feels competent and confident in how he has previously met the needs of pupils from military background that he remembers:

> *I have had some experience but not a lot – the two children I remember were generally academically pretty sound (…) I've never had to do anything special for those children. I think what I would probably say from my own point of view is (…) you're always a bit sort of wary, (…) I've never had to take serious actions, never had to go above and beyond what I would normally do* (Felix, p. 1, lines 9-23)

However, as mentioned in the previous section, when asked explicitly about how confident he feels in supporting children from a military background, Felix's response alludes to a fluctuating sense of confidence and self-efficacy, from which he shifts to consider a collective approach to support that might be offered:

> *We do have a school counselling service (…) I would probably refer that to people who are a bit more skilled than I am* (Felix, p. 4, lines 162-172).

Alice demonstrates a similar shift in the passage below, but in doing so also shows clear links to Focused Code 2.1: *valuing knowing the individual pupils* – facilitated by her position as class teacher and the relatedness she perceives with this pupil from a military background:

> *Yeah, as her class teacher, I think if she was presenting in a way where she was more withdrawn if she wasn't socialising in the way that I've seen her socialising, I would know* (Alice, p.2, lines 63-66).

And like Felix, Alice later shifts to consider the collective support available when she is asked to consider a scenario that is seemingly unfamiliar to her and that might pose a threat to her sense of confidence and self-efficacy:

> *(…) it is very subjective, (…) if it was felt though, that something else was needed (…) we can outsource; we have a pastoral team, there's different avenues; (…). Say for instance, this girl's father was going to be going away on a longer stretch and she was going to be beside herself, then it might be that we could have a regular check-in time before school, so that we've sorted things out and dealt with her emotional things before we go on to the learning – but that would all be very much personalised. But we do have those plans in place to turn to* (Alice, p.4, lines 144-164).

The excerpt above also demonstrates clear links with Focused Code 3.1: *Valuing relational bonding and connectivity within and beyond the school*.

4.4 Category 3: Easing the weight of responsibility through a shared and collective approach

A visual representation of Category 3 and the focused codes that went into its construction is presented in Figure 4.3. A list of codes devised during analysis which resulted in the two final focused codes illustrated, have been tabularised and can be viewed in Appendix 11.

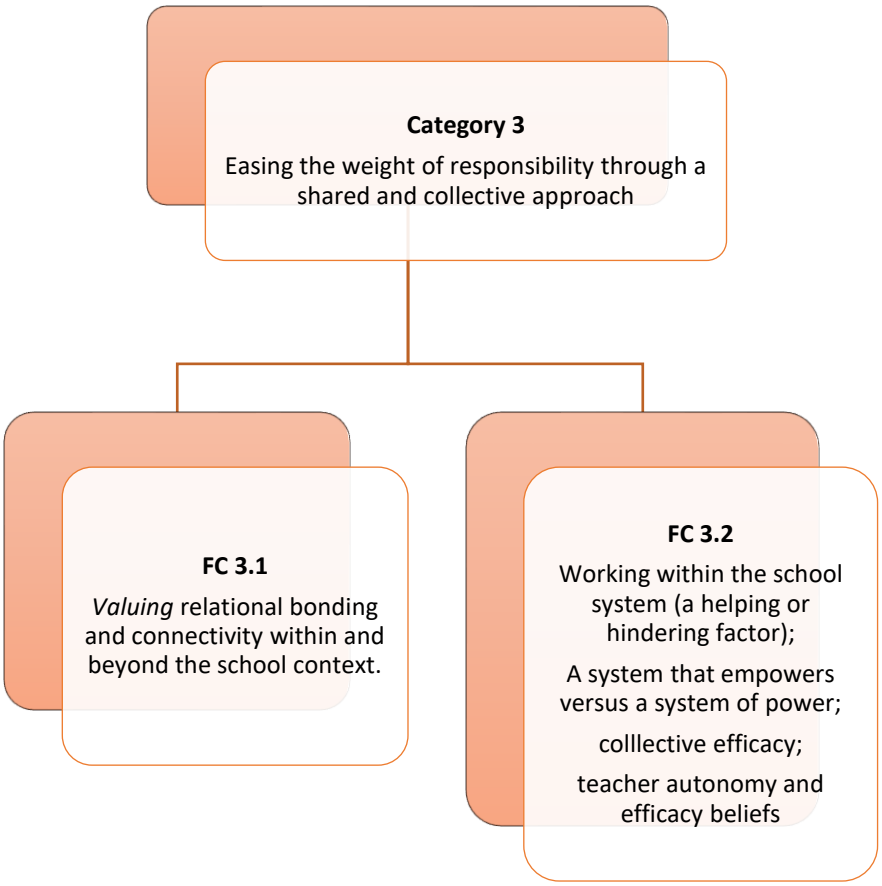


Figure 4.5 - Category 3: Easing the weight of responsibility through a shared and collective approach.

4.4.1 Focused Code 3.1: *Valuing* relational bonding and connectivity within and beyond the school context.

This focused code highlights the importance of relationships within and beyond the school context for participants. Relationships are exampled in variant forms and appear valued by school staff for different reasons. For example, fostering the pupil-parent relationship when the military parent is away is valued by Pippa, for which she makes use of resources in school to facilitate this:

> *The child that I teach at the minute, we set up their father on the class Dojo system so that he's still able to see what she is up to in school, so that the little girl felt like (...) dad was still seeing (...) what she was getting up to* (Pippa, p.2, lines 65-69).

Alice alluded to valuing the positive connectivity between schools and home, which also links with Focused Code 2.1: *Valuing knowing the pupil*:

> *(…) but obviously parents can communicate, and parents can see what's being posted. In terms of the girl in my class, both her mum and dad have access to that, so in terms of the communication, it is as rounded as it can be even though he might not be present in the family home (…)* (Alice, p.2-3, lines 84-92).

Pupil-pupil relationships are also considered as valuable in the passage below –in which Andy is advocating a different approach to support- while also linking with Focused Code 1.3: *We're missing a trick"* (in-vivo code)-*advocating a different type of support*:

> *(…) probably the best way for them to deal with it would be to speak to each other, to have a little bit of a support network because they'd have shared feelings, shared emotions, shared anger, shared upset, all the emotions that they think you've got no idea how I feel right now, they'll all be able to feel it together.* (Andy, p.4, lines 158-163).

Examples of the value placed on wider support, with other professionals or with the wider community, are also evident in the transcripts. The example below also links with Focused Code 1.1: *Making comparisons*:

> *(…) it's being proactive and identifying those students and whether it's done externally or like at a local community group where military children can go to because like, again, I know it's not the same but you have like young carers and those types of groups need an outlet and are given that through groups, so if there was something like that for military children that might be good for them where they can just go away and speak to people in a different way, they don't have to put up that façade that they put up in front of their friends, especially for males in particular they don't have to have that guard up that they have up in front of their male friends – they can meet other people who can share those experiences but in a casual setting so it's not dead heavy all the time* (Andy, p.7, lines 267-279).

Felix offers an example of the value he perceives in other communal connections:

> *(…) round the school where I'm at, there is quite a big community (…) they're still keeping those things going here in the community. Like Remembrance Day is a massive deal, you get about 2000 people attending just up the road from school. And there's always pictures there when we go, of those people who died and that just brings it home* (Felix, p.1, lines 29-37).

Following on from his discussion of communal links, Felix recalls a personal experience that comes to mind for him, which apparently resonates in his striving to understanding potential impacts of the military culture, risks, and lifestyle. The extract links directly to Focused Code1.2: *drawing on personal experiences*:

> *I used to play rugby with a lad (…) used to play with each other a lot, and one day someone sent me a link and said 'read this' and it was, he had been blown up in Afghan, there'd been an explosion (…) so there's an example there of someone I'm reasonably well linked to who lost their life there – so that's where my understanding sort of comes from* (Felix, p.1-2, lines 37-46).

4.4.2 Focused Code 3.2: Working within the school system (a helping or hindering factor); a system that empowers versus a system of power; collective efficacy; teacher autonomy and efficacy beliefs

Participants alluded to their position in school either helping or hindering their ability to effectively support pupils from military backgrounds. The researcher kept both (helping/hindering) in one category, to preserve the raw experiences described i.e., how this can be viewed as a polar or a dialectic. For some participants, their role acted as both.

The passage below illustrates how a collective approach might facilitate staffs' role-confidence, even in unfamiliar scenarios. Clear links to Focused Code 1.1: *Making comparisons* are apparent as Pippa references a previous pupil whose parent passed away – a scenario that was managed through a collective approach. There is also an apparent link to Focused Code 2.2: *considering one's confidence*, as Pippa draws on her previous experience which seemingly offering a sense of confidence and encouragement as to how she might approach a similar situation, notably, Pippa refers to how this would be managed as a team:

> *We don't see that we treat them any differently, I just think that that's the philosophy of our school really, we are a very individual needs sort of setting so, I've got confidence in our ability to cope with any situation, even if they are new situations. Like I said, we've had parents who have sadly passed away for other children and we managed to help and support them through that process so erm, that would be my only worry but then I do have confidence in the team that we've got to be able to sort of scoop those children up and support them in whatever way was best for them really because we're all in it together (Pippa, p.6, lines 234-244).*

> *(…) the ethos of the school is we all just chip in and help each other anyway so we've got very open and honest relationships, (…) there is that supportive network around us (…) and I think the parents feel that as well, the families we work with feel like they'd be supported. (…) I think we've just got to have that flexible approach.* (Pippa, p.6-7, lines 250-267).

A different experience is perceived for participants who do not feel that the school responses they have seen are representative of a collective approach or shared responsibility, and their ability to support effectively and appropriately in such circumstances is questioned, implying a diminished sense of confidence, and perhaps a lower perception of the schools' collective efficacy:

> *(…) I've not got anything positive to say (…) it is much more of a negative (…) but I don't feel like we do anything – I couldn't tell you right now because it's not part of my role (…) I find a bit distressing and upsetting is that there isn't enough (…) so it is negligible that* (Andy, p.4, lines 148-168).

> *(…) it's a different level of emotional support needed, and I think that's where we're missing a trick really, in all schools, in the guidance of what should be offered* (Andy, p.5, lines 207-209).

> *(…) the other bit that we as school are severely lacking on as well is (…) no support network like there is for single parents (…) bereaved*

> *parents, (…) they just have to deal with it with their own family support network* (Andy, p.6, lines 227-239).

Feeling hindered by the 'school way' is evident in the excerpt below: Andy alludes to the power in the system as a barrier against him offering any insight into changes within school. It also highlights how wider connections, for example EP involvement, are valued - which links with Focused Code 3.*1: Valuing relational bonding and connectivity within and beyond the school*:

> *(…) I think if the EP service offered something, that would be great, but (…) does the SENCO have the power to – err- because I'm not a member of SLT – so, it's does the SENCO have the power to then make that a route that someone should take ownership with. It's more about what would be the avenue to take that would make schools take ownership of that interest group* (Andy, p.8. lines 312-318).

Andy ends the passage above by alluding to changes that would benefit pupils from military families, which links with Focused Code 1.3: *We're missing a trick – advocating a different type of support.*

4.5 Chapter summary

This chapter presented the findings for the present study, emergent through various data analysis processes and activities engaged with by the researcher. Detailed examination of the three conceptualised categories was presented, with focused codes from which they were constructed and supporting excerpts provided. The categories presented were considered by the researcher as most relevant in providing conceptualised explanation of the social actions, processes and relationships involved in the social phenomenon under exploration in the present study. A second literature review will now be presented in Chapter 5, which considers the above findings in relation to existing literature to promote theoretical sensitisation and help inform construction of the study's grounded theory.

5 Returning to the library.

5.1 Introduction

Consistent with the fluid and additive nature of extant literature in grounded theory studies (Owen Lo, 2016), the current project commenced with a purposely broad preliminary literature review (Chapter 2). This served to 'set the scene' and provide the rationale for exploring the experiences of school staff supporting pupils from military backgrounds in the context of their mainstream state school. Upon completion of the data analysis and as the theory began to emerge through the development of conceptual categories, field literature was addressed in a focused manner, and a second literature review orientated by the empirical data is presented here.

The aim of 'returning to the library' was to allow the researcher to further establish theoretical sensitisation and to assist in the construction of the grounded theory. How the study's emerging theory was positioned within existing theoretical frameworks will be detailed in Chapter 6. First, however, literature deemed most relevant to the selected categories and focused codes for the interpretation of the data and the development of the study's grounded theory will be presented.

The selected categories and focused codes pertinent to interpretation are:

- Category1: *Drawing on wider influences to enhance understanding of military pupils, and to consider their needs and approaches to support.*
    - Focused Code 1.1: *Making comparisons.*
- Category 2: *"Far reaching elements to the role" (in-vivo code); Teacher self-efficacy beyond academia.*
    - Focused Code 2.1: *The value of knowing the individual pupil - facilitated by class teacher role and pupil-teacher relationship.*
    - Focused Code 2.3: *Restoring confidence: the shift from "I" to "we".*
- Category 3: *Easing the weight of responsibility through a shared and collective approach.*
    - Focused Code 3.3: *The school way - working within the school system (a helping or hindering factor).*

- Focused Code 1.3: "*We're missing a trick*" (in-vivo code) - *advocating a different type of support.*
- Focused Code 1.2: *Drawing on personal relationships and personal experiences*-

The literature begins by addressing the complexities of school-staffs' roles and the competing demands school staff are required to negotiate within those roles. With reference to Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000) and Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1977; 1986), factors that hinder and promote school-staff confidence and self-efficacy are considered, along with strategies employed by staff in an attempt to restore self-perceived competence, autonomy, role-confidence and ultimately school staff wellbeing.

How the school system -and systems within and around it- impacts on individual and collective efficacy is explored through the lens of Bronfenbrenner's (1989) Ecological Systems Theory (EST). Attention is paid to potential risk factors to school-staffs' autonomy, sense of being valued and role-confidence, with further exploration of how school-staff manage associated challenges. The concept of supervision in education settings is addressed, with consideration given to why supervision might be particularly fitting in supporting staffs' overall wellbeing in meeting the competing demands of their role, including meeting the needs of pupils from military backgrounds. The appropriateness of various supervision formats will be considered, along with consideration of the benefits and challenges associated with its implementation in schools.

5.2 Far reaching elements to the role

One might imagine that individuals generally choose to embark upon a teaching profession to make a difference for the children and young people they work with. From this can come great professional satisfaction, but usually not without significant pressures (Carroll et al., 2020). The introduction of the National Curriculum in 1988, followed by Ofsted in 1992 has seen the scope of the teacher role expand significantly. The in-vivo code "*far reaching element to the role*" captures this expansion as perceived by the participants in this study and appears to be a fitting umbrella term for their experiences. It emphasises the breadth of responsibilities associated with school staffs' experiences, and particularly those directly and indirectly relating to supporting pupils from military backgrounds.

At multiple points, participants in the current study alluded to the extent that their roles surpass *teaching* (section 4.3), a notion that is apparent in the literature. Kinderman (2011) stipulates the challenge for teachers in negotiating pupils' social issues, as well as their cognitive development. Reid and Soan (2019) list pressures deriving from the broadening role of supporting the holistic development of pupils, along with the burden of league tables, Ofsted inspections and a business format to school management. Through the lens of Bronfenbrenner's (1989) Ecological Systems Theory, these multiple competing demands are positioned in the mesosystem, which concerns the impact on and between an individual staff member and their environment, both immediate and beyond.

Carroll et al. (2020) acknowledge how teachers can feel great responsibility and are tasked with making many hundreds of decisions each day. Further, the nature of classroom practice means that many of their decisions are made in relative isolation (Carroll et al., 2020). School staff are also bound by the wider context of the school; the ethos which is governed by senior leaders. How this is managed can directly or indirectly impact individuals within that context. Their work is then further impacted by role elements that are not routine or familiar: striving to understand pupils from a military background alongside dealing with competing demands and increasing pressures inevitably impact staffs' stamina, confidence, and wellbeing (Squire, 2007). While staff employ strategies in the face of unfamiliarity or other professional challenges (section 4.2), the impact of the system should arguably be considered in relation to school staffs' experiences of supporting pupils from military backgrounds.

5.2.1 Risk outcomes

Increasing attention on the demands placed on school staff has highlighted a consequence of poorer staff health, this eventuating lower professional commitment and performance (Hanaken, Bakker & Schaufeli, 2006). Sixty-one percent of teachers declared that their work is "always" or "often" stressful (Devaki et al., 2019). As a result of increased stress, teacher health and wellbeing are on the decline (Liu, Song & Miao, 2018; YouGov, 2018). Research has illustrated that more teachers are being diagnosed with high levels of physical and mental health difficulties (Education Support Partnership, 2019), including 'burnout'; i.e., the breakdown of an individual's professional self-efficacy (Freidman, 2003). Consequently, retention in the profession is low (Dolton & Klaauw, 1999; Hayes, 2004; Ingersoll & Smith, 2003). Importantly then, how can school staffs' wellbeing and role commitment be protected?

An exploration of staff confidence and self-efficacy will allow for an exploration of the literature on this pertinent issue (Schwarzer & Hallum, 2008; Brown, 2012),

5.3 School staffs' confidence and self-efficacy

Given that participants made multiple implicit references to their sense of confidence around supporting pupils from military backgrounds, this section considers teacher self-efficacy - defined by Bandura (1986) as an individual's *"judgements of their capabilities to organise and execute courses of action…"* (p.391). Self-determination theory tells us that a person's self-efficacy is fundamental for their motivation and psychological wellbeing (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Gagne & Deci, 2005). Conceptualising both autonomy and self-perceived competence as universal psychological needs, Gagne & Deci (2005) assert that individuals need to feel skilled and independent to feed their intrinsic motivation (2005). This line of thought tells us that teacher engagement and job satisfaction is thus facilitated through a self-efficacy and sense of freedom, however, lacking such factors risks emotional exhaustion and burnout (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2009). It is thus emphasised that staffs' resilience in the face of professional adversity and challenge cannot be taken for granted (Gibbs & Miller, 2003).

5.3.1 Sources of self-efficacy

Specifically, teacher self-efficacy is defined as their "*beliefs about their own abilities to plan, organise and carry out activities required to attain given educational goals*" (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2014, p.69). One thought is that self-efficacy beliefs derive from previous successes of meeting goals and achieving one's desired effect (Bandura, 1997; Knoblauch & Woolfolk Hoy, 2008; Mulholland & Wallace, 2001). Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1986) illustrates how for both novice and experienced teachers, successful (mastery) experience is the most pertinent contributor to one's efficacy beliefs (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2007). It is therefore argued that in the face of unfamiliarity, during which confidence and competence is compromised, drawing on previous experiences serves to restore self-efficacy towards replicating similar mastery experiences. Parallels can be seen with focused code 1.1: *Making comparisons*; focused code1.2: *Drawing upon the familiar - personal relationships and experiences.*

Efficacy information derives either "vicariously, socially or psychologically" (Bandura, 1997, p.79) and involves individuals selecting and deliberating between sources in the development of their self-efficacy. Building one's efficacy through vicarious experiences tends to be exercised when an individual has less experience in the related domain (Capa-Aydin et al.,

2017). Individuals make observations or comparisons from which, the more similarities drawn, the greater their perceived-competence is to manage given situations similarly (Capa-Aydin et al., 2017). Correlations with focused code: 1.1: *Making Comparisons* are apparent here.

Alternatively, a *social* source of efficacy can be verbal encouragement received form significant others: the concept of *social persuasion* here signifies the positive correlation between receiving reaffirming feedback from people of significance and an enhanced perception of self-competence (Capa-Aydin et al., 2017). Although not as salient as mastery experience, Bandura (1997) suggests that social persuasion can be attained via professional development opportunities, whereby staff are encouraged to exert more effort and supported to overcome any self-doubt, and in turn professional confidence is enhanced (Jordan, Schwartz & McGhie-Richmond, 2009; Tschannen-Moran & McMaster, 2009). It is considered that forms of supervision, both individual and group, could serve to enhance staff confidence and self-efficacy, and even *collective* efficacy – here, parallels are apparent with several categories and focused codes, namely, Category 2: "*Far reaching elements to the role*" (in-vivo code*): teacher self-efficacy beyond academia*, Focused Code 2..2: *School staffs' confidence relating to understanding military pupils and to support effectively*, Focused Code 2.3: *Restoring confidence - the shift from "I-to-we",* and Category 3: *Easing the weight of responsibility through a shared and collective approach.*

The Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1986) framework considers the dual impact of self-efficacy on one's cognitions and emotions (Pajares, 1997), with self-efficacy considered to be the most central component and determinant of human agency. How competent a person feels can influence how both opportunities and challenges in their environment are perceived, and in turn their approach to decision making, the amount of effort they put in, and their ability to brook professional challenges (Bandura, 1997). Consequently, individuals are producers of their social environments, driven by their beliefs about what they can achieve (Lennings & Bussey, 2017).

Addressing literature around factors that can inhibit or facilitate self-efficacy, aided the development of the present grounded theory, with consideration of the following categories and focused codes:

- Category 2: "*Far reaching elements to the role*" (in-vivo); *teacher self-efficacy beyond academia.*

    - Focused code 2.3: *Schools staffs' confidence relating to understanding military pupils and to support effectively.*
    - Focused code 2.4: *Restoring confidence; the shift from "I-to-we".*
    - Focused code 1.1: *Making comparisons.*
- Category 3: *Easing the weight of responsibility through a shared and collective approach.*

5.3.2 Collective efficacy

Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1986) tells us that impacts of efficacy extend to that of groups, whereby the control that collectives experience is often influenced by perceptions of a group's efficacy (Goddard, 2001). Analogous with the outcomes of self-efficacy, collective efficacy is associated with tasks, motivation, persistence, stress levels, and successes. Bandura (1997) states that *"Collective efficacy is concerned with the performance capability of a social system as a whole"* (p.469), signifying the importance to achieve a full understanding of organisational functioning.

With experience being one of the most powerful factors influencing a teacher's perceptions of collective efficacy, feasible links are drawn here with Category 1: *Drawing on wider influences to enhance own understanding of military pupils, and to consider their needs and approaches to support*; Focused Code 1.1: *Making comparisons*; Focused Code 1.2: *Drawing upon the familiar - personal relationships and personal experiences*; Category 3: *Easing the weight of responsibility through a shared and collective approach,* and Focused Code 1.3: "*We're missing a trick*" (in-vivo code) - *advocating a different type of support.*

Demonstrating the reciprocal relationship between efficacy perceptions and performance (Bandura, 1993;1997;2008), participants in the current study made multiple uses of previous experiences – i.e., making comparisons to previous experiences. Consistent with this notion, unsuccessful (or negative) prior experiences resulted in lower efficacy beliefs regarding *the school's* approach to supporting pupils from military backgrounds effectively. Those participants in the current study who drew on *negative* personal experiences seemed to translate this into their professional practice driven by perceptions that pupils from military backgrounds perhaps share the same negative experience - links are evident here specifically with Focused Code 1.3: *"we're missing a trick" - advocating a different type of support.* Such exchanges indicated a negative perception of their schools' *collective* efficacy, implying insufficient or ineffective support for pupils from a military background. Significantly, Social Cognitive

Theory (Bandura, 1986) suggests that individuals and collectives execute agency through choice: key to this, however, are individuals' efficacy beliefs; their perceived ability to make a choice.

If an individual feels unable to make decisions through a diminished sense of autonomy, then potentially this can impact on the school system and the systems within it, further influencing school staffs' interpretations of the control they can execute. Does this then lend weight to the responsibility of senior managers in schools to create an ethos that empowers and enables? This review will now consider the impact of the school system as a helping or hindering factor on staffs' efficacy beliefs, and in turn on their sense of autonomy and professional confidence all, of which are intertwined with their wellbeing (Liu et al, 2018; Collie, Shapka, & Perry, 2012).

5.4 The school system(s); helping or hindering

> '*…the teaching role is likely to involve a considerable degree of emotional labour'* (Kinman, Wray, and Strange (2011, p.844).

Conceptual and theoretical models have provided greater insight into why the inefficacy component of burnout occurs in some contexts and not others and it has become recognised as a social and organizational problem (Leiter & Maslach, 2015). Viewing school staffs' experiences through the lens of Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (EST, 1989) highlights how organizational contexts are shaped by larger social, cultural, and economic forces; multiple and interacting factors at play at any point in time.

Pertinent to the current study, attention will be focused on the microsystem and mesosystem to consider the ethos of and relationships within schools, and how these impact on staff self-efficacy, autonomy, and wellbeing, at both an individual and collective level. This is relevant to all three Categories of the current study: *drawing on wider influences to enhance understanding; Far reaching elements to the role; teacher-efficacy beyond academia; easing the weight of responsibility through a shared and collective approach* as well as to the focused codes behind those categories, as is indicated throughout the discussion below.

5.4.1 The school context; relationships and ethos

School Staffs' self-efficacy and wellbeing can be undermined by a range of factors in the school environment, including position or role, quality of relationships experienced (Evans, 2016,

p.22; Sharrocks, 2014; Liu et al, 2017; Day, 2008), school ethos and the approach taken by the senior leadership team (Goddard, Hoy & Woolfolk, 2004). The following categories and codes are pertinent for this section: Category 2: *Far reaching elements to the role" (in-vivo code); Teacher self-efficacy beyond academia; Focused Code 2.3: Restoring confidence: the shift from "I" to "we"; and Category 3: Easing the weight of responsibility through a shared and collective approach.*

A plethora of research has illustrated how positive relationships with colleagues serve as protective factors against burnout, stress, and isolation (Evans, 2016; van Dick & Wagner, 2001; Paterson & Grantham, 2016; Sharrocks, 2014; Liu et al, 2017). That positive relationships promote greater staff self-efficacy was shown by O'Brien and Miller (2005), who demonstrated the positive impact and greater sense of togetherness promoted through staff sharing narratives about their working practices and day to day experiences. Relatedly, Miller (2003) offers the concept of 'staffroom culture', which like O'Brian and Miller (2005), acknowledges the power of shared discourse in this manner between staff. From opportunities to converse with colleagues comes a shared *collective* efficacy of school staff (Goddard, Hoy, & Hoy, 2000, 2004; Goddard & Skrla, 2006; Tschannen-Moran & Barr, 2004). Undoubtedly, the sense of collaboration serves to enhance staff's experiences in school, however, it has also been identified that staffroom talk can be counterproductive, with staffroom culture having a reputation for 'encouraging moaning' (Shaw 2003; Miller, 2003). Is there then room in the school context for safe, productive, systematic reflection time in which shared beliefs could serve to empower staff and their confidence- to increase self-efficacy beliefs- whilst supporting wellbeing? Section 5.5 will consider this, through further discussion of supervision and supervision, focusing on how teachers' efficacy beliefs, and, therefore, their resilience and wellbeing can be enhanced and sustained.

While the importance of positive relationships is noted in promoting staff wellbeing in school, the relationship with, and support of Senior Leadership Teams has the greatest influence on staff wellbeing, given their central role in determining the ethos and culture of the school (Bricheno et al, 2009). When Senior Leadership Team members are deemed supportive and approachable, positive teacher outcomes are enhanced (YouGov, 2018). Regardless of the actual school ethos, however, teachers' *perceptions* of that ethos can have either a positive or negative impact on their wellbeing (Collie, Shapka & Perry, 2012). For example, it was found teachers who viewed the school ethos positively had greater wellbeing than those who viewed it negatively (Collie et al., 2017). Furthermore, a school context that is marked by a controlling

senior leadership team has been linked to teacher outcomes including increased emotional exhaustion, burnout, stress, disengagement from professional commitments and receding wellbeing (Collie, Granziera, & Martin, 2018; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2018; Granziera, Collie, & Martin, 2021; Collie, Perry & Martin, 2017).

Beyond colleague-relations, the participants in the current study alluded to the importance of 'knowing the pupil', and of building a positive pupil-teacher relationship that enables them to know, understand, and attune to individual pupils' needs. This is further considered in the following section.

5.4.2 The classroom context; facilitating teacher attunement

Autonomy was one of the strongest predictors of teacher wellbeing and confidence (Collie, Shapka, Perry and Martin, 2016) and whether actual or perceived, provides teachers with a sense of choice and control over their role -including their workload and how they manage their classroom (Collie, 2014). In their classroom, teachers are not only responsible for their pupils' cognitive development, but their social and emotional development too. Cairns and Cairns (1994) see a teacher as an 'invisible hand', steering interactions through effective classroom management, and thus influencing the social networks and status systems within (Rodkin & Guest, 2011). Teacher attunement is conceptualized as an important dimension of positive pupil-teacher relationships (Hamm, Farmer, Dadisman, Gravelle & Murray, 2011). For Ahn and Rodkin (2014) teacher attunement is a teachers' knowledge and understanding of the social characteristics of their pupils (p.1146), which enables them to influence contexts when something is perceived as being atypical for a pupil's social presentation.

Key for the current study were participants' frequent references to the importance of *knowing* the pupil (section 4.3.1) – so as to be able to recognize if anything is out of the ordinary and requiring of support or attention. For the participants, their use of "I" in their narratives implied their sense of confidence and competence when describing such experiences, insinuating their sense of agency and confidence in meeting the needs of the pupils from military backgrounds - their positive relationship underpinned by effective *attunement* (Ahn and Rodkin, 2014).

Research has illustrated that teachers who have positive relationships with the pupils within their class, are more likely to have positive feelings about their teaching role (Taris et al., 2004; Klassen, Perry & Frenzel, 2012), to feel more able to cope with stressful situations (Evans, 2016; Mintz, 2007; Trendall, 1989) and to experience greater wellbeing (Paterson & Grantham, 2016; Roffey, 2012; Taris et al., 2004; Marzano, 2003; Collie, 2014). Coined as a 'basic

psychological need', relatedness with pupils has been identified to be the greater predictor of teacher wellbeing and self-efficacy – more so than relatedness with colleagues (Collie, 2014; Klassen, Perry & Frenzel, 2012). However, as mentioned previously, the nature of classroom practice risks staff feeling isolated (Carroll et al., 2020). The follow section will explore how school staff might perhaps manage such feelings of isolation.

5.4.3 Moving away from isolation; the shift from "*I-to-we*"

Building one's efficacy through vicarious experiences tends to be exercised when an individual has less experience in the related domain (Capa-Aydin et al., 2017). However, regarding the participants in the current study, it was noted that where previous experiences did not suffice when faced with uncertainty or unfamiliarity, scripts shifted from *I-to-we* (see section 4.3.3) - those individuals appearing to protect or restore their sense of confidence by sharing the weight of responsibility (section 4.4). The positive outcomes of a sense of 'togetherness' amongst colleagues serves as a protective factor against isolation, as well as reducing burnout and stress (Evans, 2016; van Dick & Wagner, 2001; Paterson & Grantham, 2016; Sharrocks, 2014; Liu et al, 2017). What if a supportive network is not available, however, or at least is not perceived by staff?

Returning to Ecological Systems Theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979), factors in the system are considered in the section that follows in relation to staff self-efficacy, autonomy, and wellbeing and as will be shown, links with Focused Code 1.3: *"we're missing a trick" (in-vivo code); advocating a different type of support*.

5.4.4 The school system; power versus autonomy

A school's culture has been found to be related to teacher commitment and their positive wellbeing - with a *positive* school culture being driven by the maintenance of a shared vision, and a sense of organisational belonging (Furner & McCulla, 2018; Zhu et al., 2011). Research and literature also emphasise the need for schools to maintain a supportive culture that promotes collaboration and joint problem-solving between all staff members, concluding that a positive culture empowers staff at all levels, promotes school improvement and improves outcomes for pupils, including those with special educational needs (Carpenter, 2015; Waldron & McLeskey, 2010).

Bronfenbrenner's (1979) Ecological Systems Theory highlights the complex interactional nature of school culture on the actions and interactions that occur between school staff, parents,

and pupils, and how this ultimately impacts upon the learning and development of pupils. Comprised of the microsystem, the mesosystem, the exosystem and the macrosystem, Bronfenbrenner's (1976) theory provides an explanation of how interactions between these different levels impact upon the individuals within. The organisational culture of a school can be understood as the mesosystem and therefore, critically, interconnected with pupil outcomes that occur at the microsystem (Godfrey, 2016). This framework also provides a conceptual explanation of the interactional influences of political and societal ideologies at the macrosystem and government policy and media influences at the exosystem on school culture (Godfrey, 2016).

Control, both actual and perceived, has been deemed an *"innate emotional need"* (Evans, 2016, p.67). An array of factors at the microsystemic level are recognised as contributing to staff wellness; primely affording teachers with a sense of agency in their practice aiding the prevention of the negative effects of stress (Mintz, 2007; Evans, 2016), increases self-efficacy (Bricheno et al, 2009), and promotes professional engagement and organisational commitment (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2018; Granziera, Collie & Martin, 2021). Further, referring to Bandura's (1986) definition of self-efficacy, the importance of one's perceived capability to "execute courses of action…" (p.391) draws attention to Focused Code 3.3 *(working within the school system; a helping or hindering factor)*.

It could be considered that feeling unable to make changes in the school system impacts a staff member's cognition and emotion, through undermining their self-efficacy and sense of autonomy. Given the importance of one's sense of autonomy, as previously noted by Evans (2016), on an individual's emotional wellbeing, exploring how then this might be supported in a school context -or perhaps hindered – feels just as important and is explored in the following section.

5.4.4.1 The impact of power in the system

From a self-determination perspective, lacking a sense of autonomy negatively correlates with self-efficacy (Bandura 1986). Black and Deci (2000) note that autonomous actions have an internal perceived locus of causality and are performed out of personal importance: this can be seen as linking with Focused Code 1.3 "*we're missing a trick"* (in-vivo code)*; advocating a different type of support* – a focused code that was constructed based on participants' explicit statements in which a different approach to the support for pupils from military backgrounds is suggested. Such statements, as shown in Section 4.2.3 are directly related to participants'

personal experiences and are therefore, understood to be of personal importance. One might also consider how a lacking sense of autonomy might impact on staffs' self-esteem (Weiner, 1979) and might potentially lead to frustration if their contributions are not considered when decisions are executed across the setting.

Among other outcomes, such as enhancements in inclusive practices and reductions in pupil-exclusions, understanding what facilitates professional self-efficacy can improve staff wellbeing (Gibbs, 2007; Labone, 2004), as well as pupil outcomes and professional commitments (Gibbs & Miller, 2014). Bartlett (2004), for instance, promotes the importance of careful management of the burden on school staff, and one might therefore consider the notion of *power* in the school context.

The impact of perceived power in a system draws attention to links between wider social factors - such as the ethos created by a school's Senior Leadership Team (Bricheno et al, 2009) - and how an individual makes sense of their position and self-worth in the school context. Understanding this can shed light on how individuals make sense of their experiences, what underpins their actions, as well as other social processes that might support an individual. Here, the notion of supervision in school is considered, and will be discussed further in section 5.5.

5.4.4.2 Supporting autonomy

Relationships in the school environment are viewed as a source of emotional support (Acton & Glasgow, 2015) not only providing teachers with the opportunity to 'offload' their anxiety and frustration (Evans, 2016), but also allowing teachers to discuss their problems and work collaboratively to identify solutions (Acton & Glasgow, 2015). The concept of the staffroom culture signifies a potential substitute for staff who perhaps do not feel heard, and perhaps the 'encouraged moaning' - as noted by Shaw (2003) and Miller (2003) correlates with a lacking sense of autonomy along with other emotional ladens of the teacher role (Category 2: *Far reaching elements to the role*). In relation to the differing impacts of the school system and those within it, Bronfenbrenner's (1979) Ecological Systems Theory framework is helpful in stipulating where and when intervention to overcome such difficulties should be implemented, and whether this be within school - offered by senior leaders, or from external agencies such as EPs. One-way EPs can support is through supervision. While the review turns to supervision in the next section, what this means in terms of EP practice is considered in Chapter 7.

5.5 Supervision

As discussed, staff self-efficacy, intertwined with confidence, autonomy and overall wellbeing can be threatened by a range of factors at multiple levels in school staffs' environment, including the school ethos, the approach taken by the senior leadership team (Goddard, Hoy & Woolfolk, 2004), their position in school, and the relationships they experience (Evans, 2016, p.22; Sharrocks, 2014; Liu et al, 2017; Day, 2008). Research has highlighted, however, the fluid nature of self-efficacy, showing how through variant approaches using positive psychology, it can be improved (Critchley & Gibbs, 2012).

Encouraged by this, and building on the literature addressed above, the review here will now focus on supervision. Definitions and purposes of supervision are offered, along with considerations about why supervision is valid for the school setting. Different formats of supervision are also presented. The researcher endeavours to consider supervision in the school setting with particular attention to the following categories and focused codes:

- Category 2: *"Far reaching elements to the role" (in-vivo); teacher self-efficacy beyond academia.*
    - Focused Code 2.3: *Schools staffs' confidence relating to understanding military pupils and to support effectively.*
    - Focused Code 2.4: *Restoring confidence; the shift from "I-to-we".*
- Category 3: *Easing the weight of responsibility through a shared and collective approach.*
    - Focused Code 3.1: *Valuing and promoting connectivity within and beyond school.*
    - Focused Code 3.3: *The school way – working within the school system (a helping or hindering factor)*
    - Focused Code 1.3: "*We're missing a trick"* (in-vivo code) - *Advocating a different type of support.*

5.5.1 Supervision; the current picture in schools

Although there is no one definition of supervision, with variations offered by Carroll (2010); Hawkins & McMahon (2020), Scaife's (2001) definition feels most pertinent when considering school staff:

> *Supervision is when people who work in the helping professions make a formal arrangement to think with one another... about their work with a view to providing the best possible service to clients, enhancing their own personal and professional development, and gaining support in relation to the emotional demands of work.* (Scaife, 2001, p.4).

Supervision has been recognised by psychologists as an essential tool for professional development (Pierce & Schauble, 1970; Page & Wosket, 2001; Cutcliff & Lowe, 2005). The purpose of supervision extends beyond developing professional skills, however. The Division of Educational and Child Psychology (DECP) Professional Supervision Guidelines for Educational Psychologists (Dunsmuir & Leadbetter, 2010, p.3) state that:

> *Good supervision has an important role in assuring quality standards of service delivery and supporting service development. It should address <u>both the well-being and professional development</u> of the supervisee but also attend to outcomes for children, young people, and their families [emphasis added].*

Arguably, the position of school staff and their close links with children, young people, and families, renders this DECP (2015) statement relevant to school staff. Results from a survey conducted by Dunsmuir, Lang and Leadbetter (2015) illustrate that a significant number of EPs actively engage in some form of giving and receiving supervision. For other caring professions, it is recognised that supervision is becoming part of common practice (Carroll et al., 2020). Yet, there remains a lack of a "culture of supervision" in schools, and thus opportunities for school staff to reflect upon their own work and the associated emotional ladens is not seen in practice (Hulusi & Maggs, 2015; Kennedy & Laverick, 2019). While a need for supervision in schools is clearly acknowledged in government policy, such policy has seemingly framed supervision as a monitoring performance practice in relation to reaching targets and standards (Austin, 2010).

The reflective nature of effective supervision has been positively correlated with a reduction in staff stress and burnout (Hawkins & McMahon, 2020). Unsurprisingly then, the Association of Child Psychotherapists (2018) ridicule the lack of supervision culture in school settings – understandably, given the benefits effective supervision can afford benefits to school staff and their wellbeing (Dunsmuir & Leadbetter, 2010). Further, although it is suggested in The Elton

Report (Department for Education and Science, 1986) that school staff should be facilitated with a space to reflect on their work, it is argued that this is still not seen in practice (Hulusi & Maggs, 2015). Downing (2019) similarly argues that many professionals who are susceptible to emotion invoking experiences should be facilitated with a safe space to offload, yet such opportunities are typically a foreign concept in the school setting. She advocates that investing in the wellbeing of the adults in school enables them to be emotionally lighter and have greater capacity to support and teach the children in their care (Downing, 2019).

How, then, can school staff benefit from supervision?

5.5.2 Supervision in schools; the benefits

The primary purpose of supervision is to benefit the client group (Hawkind & Shohet, 2012). Concerning supervision in schools, the 'client group' refers to pupils and staff alike, and the wellbeing of both is argued to be a priority for any leadership team (Earley and Porritt, 2014).

Supervision in schools can focus on a particular aspect of practice and provide multifaceted support for the development of knowledge, skills, and emotional resources to do the job (Scaife, 2001). Ultimately, such supervision can reinforce and build on the ethos of *we're in it together* and serve to restore staff confidence. Links are evident here with Focused Code 2.3: *Restoring staff confidence; the shift from "I-to-we"* and Category 3: *Sharing the weight of responsibility through a shared and collaborative approach.*

With the aim of supervision being to provide a safe and supportive space to support the supervisee to reflect on aspects of their role and their responses to it (DECP, 2015), it is considered that introducing formal supervision into the teaching profession will serve to address 'real life' matters in the realms of education, including: professional development and inclusive practices; teacher wellbeing: and teacher retention (Carroll et al., 2020).

Allowing management of emotional challenges and balanced discussions around professional development and classroom practice (Alila et al. 2016; Carroll 2010) within a supportive learning culture (Hawkins and Shohet 2012), supervision is seen as contributing towards increased self-efficacy and an increased sense of collaborative support (Wheeler & Richards, 2007).

Emphasizing the value of supervision for school staff -and demonstrating clear links with specifically Category 3 and its subsuming focused codes- Downing (2019) declares that supervision is "*a space to dump my emotional junk (…) a space filled with acknowledgement,*

support, empathy, and kindness, reflected by the people in the group who showed me that I am not alone."

There are variant formats of supervision; individual, shared, group, peer-group, live and virtual (Hawkins & McMahon, 2020). Individual, or one-to-one supervision tends to be the most common (Dunsimuir & Leadbetter, 2010) and may be particularly beneficial where there are personal or sensitive issues which the supervisee does not want to discuss in a group context (Osborne & Burton, 2014). Group supervision, on the other hand, requires a collaborative and reflective group setting, led by a facilitator - benefits being widely discussed in the research literature, these include positive impacts on team communication and coherence (Bartle & Trevis, 2015), and enhancement of reflective practice, professional skills, confidence, job satisfaction and reduced work-related stress (Bozic &Carter, 2002; Jackson, 2008). Group supervision, it has been argued, can also allow for mutual support - with the potential benefit of harnessing a pool of knowledge and experience (Squires, 2007; Osborne & Burton, 2014). Further, it can enable a range of views and experiences to be shared, leading potentially to a supportive atmosphere which creates a sense of unity and reduced feelings of isolation, ultimately enhancing skill development and self-efficacy both the individuals and the collective group (Stringer, 1993; Osborne & Burton, 2014; Willis & Baines, 2018). Group supervision is, according to Soni (1015), is increasing in popularity in school settings. Beyond the benefits and possibilities outlined above, it is noted that supervision can bring benefits to supervisees, supervisors, and the organization (Morton-Cooper & Palmer, 2000). However, introducing supervision into a setting, can bring significant challenges associated with organizational change.

5.5.3 Supervision in schools: A challenge?

Whilst supervision is often a requirement for other professions, and despite views that staff supervision and peer supervision groups can be facilitated by EPs as a way of supporting staff wellbeing (Bozic & Carter, 2002; Gibbs & Miller, 2014; Rae et al., 2017; Soni, 2010; Turner & Gulliford, 2020) supervision is still not commonplace within schools. This has been attributed to several factors, though not least organisational barriers. It seems more important than ever that organisations adopt a holistic support system for staff so as to attempt to reduce the negative impacts of perceived power-imbalance in the school context.

A natural hierarchy appears evident within the culture of school-life, recognised to be a barrier to effective supervision (Willis & Baines, 2018). In instances like that experienced by the

participants of the current study, whereby top-down decisions are common, in-house support risks conflicts of interest between senior leadership teams and staff. Therein is an ethical conundrum (Coyne, 1996), and maybe drawing on external sources for supervision offers a way forward. Supervision as a key component of professional EP practice, affording opportunities of reflection and support relating to challenges that arise in everyday performance (Willis & Bains, 2018). The unique skillset of EPs positions them as a valuable source of support for school staff - teachers and senior leaders alike. EPs represent a source that can promote a system of support - through the delivery of effective supervision - within the context of schools (Faulconbridge et al., 2017). This is explored further in section 7.3.3.

5.6 Chapter summary

This chapter presented a second literature review, conducted following the development of conceptualised categories. The literature reviewed in this chapter aided the researcher's theoretical sensitisation and construction of the study's grounded theory (to follow). The review of relevant theoretical frameworks and research supported the researcher's conceptualisation, understanding, and knowledge of key ideas emergent from empirical data. Notably, literature focused on developing insight and understanding into the demands of school staff roles, teacher confidence and self-efficacy, the impacts of the school system and systems within it, and ultimately supervision in schools - the benefits, and challenges. The consideration of supervision in schools gave way to specific consideration of the potential role of EPs in this regard. Being well positioned to promote support systems, at both individual and group levels, it is argued that EPs are well placed to facilitate the implementation of supervision in schools. The relevance of the literature to categories emerging through the analysis, as well as the interactions within and between them, has been illustrated. The construction of the grounded theory will now be detailed in Chapter 6, and the literature discussed in Chapter 2 will be considered alongside participants' experiences -helping the researcher to make sense of how the data, and findings, can be applied to 'real world' practice in Chapter 7.

6 The Grounded Theory

6.1 Introduction

This chapter sets out to present the conceptualised grounded theory for the current study. The theory is grounded in data obtained via semi-structured interviews with school staff who shared

their experiences of supporting pupils from a military background in their mainstream state school context.

The theory was constructed by drawing on both the empirical data reviewed in Chapter 4 and the field literature reviewed in Chapter 5. The focused literature review presented in Chapter 5 contextualised the analysis, and facilitated theoretical sensitization, encompassing literature relating to *self-* and *collective efficacy* drawn from Self Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000), Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1986), as well as literature relating to Ecological Systems Theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; 2000) and supervision.

The theory evolved from three conceptualised categories and their subsuming focused codes and depicts how school staff made sense of their experiences supporting this pupil cohort. The interactivity and complexity of the categories and codes offer insight into the actions and processes central to school staffs' professional practice concerning the social phenomenon under investigation. These include *Drawing on wider influences; making comparisons; drawing upon the familiar; advocating a different support approach; valuing knowing the individual pupil; teacher self-efficacy beyond academia; restoring confidence: the shift from I-to-we; easing the weight of responsibility through a shared and collective approach;* and *an empowering system versus system power.* These individual categories and focused codes do not occur in isolation; thus, the developed grounded theory is a formulation of their interactivity.

A visual representation of the final grounded theory that delineates *school staffs' experiences supporting pupils from military background in mainstream state school* is presented in Figure 6.1. The conceptualised framework relates to the constructed grounded theory of '*The shift from I-to-we in restoring school staffs' confidence and self-efficacy in the face of unfamiliarity, and the impacts of system power versus a system that empowers'.*

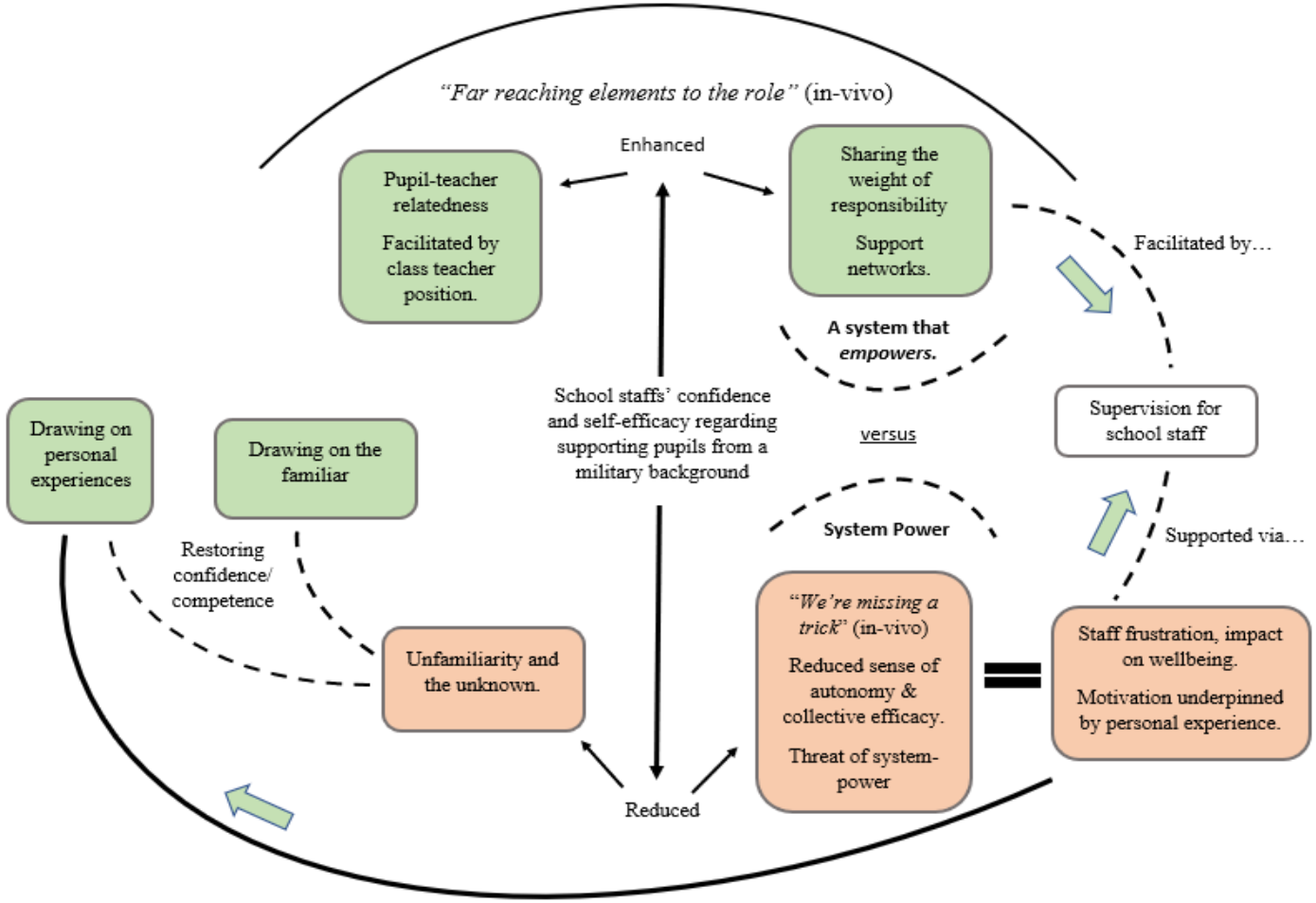


Figure 6.1 - A visual representation of the study's grounded theory: 'The shift from *I*-to-*we* in restoring school staffs' confidence and self-efficacy in the face of unfamiliarity and the impacts of *system power* versus *a system that empowers'*.

6.2 The grounded theory

In an environment -such as a school- where multiple and competing demands are placed on individuals, Bronfenbrenner's (1979) Ecological Systems Theory (EST) can be used to understand the complexities and interactive nature of those multiple influences at multiple levels. As such, Ecological Systems Theory can be used to further one's understanding of the multiple influences on, and experiences of school-staff working to support pupils form military backgrounds.

Conceptualising these experiences here begins with the umbrella term *'far reaching elements to the role'*, which captures the complexities of school staffs' role and responsibilities, and the pressures felt by staff in having to meet the holistic needs of *every* pupil (Reid and Soan, 2019).

School staff need to feel skilled and independent to feed their intrinsic motivation and promote job-commitment (Gagne & Deci, 2005), and such feelings will be enhanced when self-perceived competence and a sense of freedom in decision making is enabled. Conversely, lacking in these areas risks emotional exhaustion and burnout (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2009). Staffs' confidence and self-efficacy cannot, therefore, be taken for granted (Gibbs & Miller, 2003).

It is conceptualised that school staffs' confidence and self-efficacy fluctuate under certain circumstances, and that this in turn can impact on their sense of freedom. Teachers' autonomy, whether actual or perceived, provides a sense of choice and control over their role -for instance, how they manage their classroom (Collie, 2014). This sense of control is an identified predictor of teacher wellbeing and confidence (Collie et al., 2016), thus, it is conceptualised that if school staffs' confidence and self-efficacy is protected, then their sense of autonomy will be facilitated – ultimately serving to protect their overall wellbeing and enhance professional motivation.

Within their classroom context, staff are afforded with frequent contact with pupils, both on an individual level and as part of a wider cohort. This permits teacher-attunement, conceptualized as an important dimension of positive pupil-teacher relationships (Hamm, Farmer, Dadisman, Gravelle & Murray, 2011). It is proposed that familiarity in school-staffs' professional roles – such as that of *knowing* the pupils in their class -supports staffs' self-efficacy which is here underpinned by the relatedness they perceive with pupils from military backgrounds. This relatedness equips school staff with a sense of competence in being able to understand, thus meet the individual needs of military pupils effectively.

The model (Figure 6.1) illustrates how school staff who feel competent describe their experience in the first person – Section 4.3.3 presented several examples, such as, "*I've never had to take serious action, never had to go above and beyond what I would normally do*" (Felix, p.1, lines 19-23). However, in the face of unfamiliarity, or when considering a potential scenario that is beyond their skillset, school staffs' confidence appears compromised, understood here as a reduction in their self-efficacy, which school staff then take action to regain. The grounded theory gestates that individual staff employ strategies in an attempt to restore this confidence and perceived competence- strategies that occur at multiple levels, reflecting Bronfenbrenner's (1979) emphasis on immediate factors and systemic influences acting on staff at any point in time. The strategies that staff employ can be understood using Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1986) which illustrates how for both novice and experienced teachers, successful (mastery) experience is the most pertinent contributor to their efficacy beliefs (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2007). Literature shows that vicarious experiences tend to be exercised when an individual has less experience in the related domain (Capa-Aydin et al., 2017). It is conceptualised that school staff make comparisons to prior successful, or familiar personal experiences beyond the school context, to regain their self-efficacy in facing an unfamiliar scenario -such as, supporting pupils from military backgrounds. Further, illuminating the reciprocal relationship between efficacy and performance (Bandura, 1993; 1997), it is conceived that when internal resources, such as drawing on familiar or previous mastery experiences, do not suffice, school staff draw on wider sources of support, such as colleagues, illuminated in their shift from *'I-to-we'* when describing their experiences of supporting pupils from military backgrounds (show in section 4.3.3).

The classroom context can lead to a sense of isolation for some teaching staff (Carroll et al., 2020), however, research has highlighted the value of positive relationships with colleagues in protecting against this (Evans, 2016; van Dick & Wagner, 2001; Paterson & Grantham, 2016; Sharrocks, 2014; Liu et al, 2017). Positive relationships feature in a supportive network in which a sense of togetherness is enriched when experiences are shared (O'Brien and Miller, 2005). It is conceptualised in the grounded theory that when school staff experience this *sense of togetherness*, it is a reflection of their perceptions of the systems within the school, such as the ethos that is created by senior management (Bricheno et al, 2009) – a perceived ethos which also impacts staffs' perceptions of collective efficacy – that is the whole school approach and perceived ability to meet the needs of pupils from military backgrounds effectively.

Those staff who portrayed a higher sense of confidence through feeling *enabled and supported* within the school system, conveyed a greater collective efficacy in meeting the needs of these pupils, whereas those staff who implied a sense of feeling 'bound by the system' – unable to contribute to decision making regarding the support for military pupils- implied lower levels of collective efficacy within their school context. This notion reflects the communal connections that are valued and central to Ecological Systems Theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) i.e., staff who feel supported by the people and systems around them – in both the school and wider community- are rewarded with a sense of togetherness. Here, this applies to school staffs' perceptions of *we're in it togethe*r – where individuals in the school system perceive a shared vision and therefore work towards a collective approach to the support of pupils from military backgrounds, both within the school context and in terms of the wider sources of support through communal connections, for example, Educational Psychology Service.

The systemic characteristics of a school setting are conceptualised in the current study to promote a greater understanding how school staff experience supporting pupils from military backgrounds when working either in a school in which senior leaders promote an ethos of togetherness or in a school system that operates through a top-down 'hierarchical' management approach. Although these two notions relating to the ethos of a school are not necessarily mutually exclusive, the framework proposes that variants of power within the school system and ethos impact on the actions, processes and meaning for school staff relating to their experiences of supporting pupils from military backgrounds.

A collective ethos governed by an approachable senior leadership team promotes staff-wellbeing, confidence, and self-efficacy (Bricheno et al, 2009; YouGov, 2018). The grounded theory proposes that such a supportive and collective ethos across the school underpins confidence and perceived competence when it comes to supporting pupils from military backgrounds beyond the scope of in-class support. In terms of individual staff meeting the needs of these pupils, easing the weight of responsibility through a shared approach to support offers a protective factor against school staff experiencing a breakdown of their self-efficacy, and ultimately burnout (Freidman, 2003).

Referring to Bandura's (1986) definition of self-efficacy, the importance of one's perceived capability to "execute courses of action…" (p.391) in a system that facilitates a collective shared approach, and encourages views and contributions of all staff members, is proposed to ease the weight of responsibility for school staff, particularly relating to situations in which

they are less experienced –pertinent given the participants each described their experiences of working with military pupils as limited (section 4.1.1) - as well as affording a sense of autonomy to individuals.

Interestingly, drawing on personal experiences serves another function in the current framework: it is conceptualised those personal experiences underpin school staffs' motivation and performance when considering such experiences that hold significance. As noted, autonomous actions have an internal perceived locus of causality, performed when a phenomenon is of personal importance (Black & Deci, 2000). Seemingly, previous personal experiences underpin one's motivation to evoke change for military pupils attending mainstream state schools.

The grounded theory conceptualises school staffs' experiences as potentially being negatively impacted by hierarchical school systems in which they perceive power imbalances. From this, individuals attach meaning to the threat they experience. The model illuminates that when staff do not have the opportunity to contribute to decision-making, they experience a diminished sense of autonomy that can be internalised as not being valued or validated, potentially leading to staff frustration and a sense of injustice. Perceptions of collective efficacy are thus impinged.

The grounded theory postulates that there is a dual impact of power imbalance in a school system – on both individual efficacy-perceptions -due to a diminished sense of autonomy- as well as a negatively perceived collective efficacy. With control recognised as an *"innate emotional need"* (Evans, 2016, p.67), it is here theorised that those strategies to facilitate staffs' sense of autonomy need to be embedded into the whole school system to support the restoration and sustainability of school staffs' self-and collective-efficacy perceptions.

Viewed through a social constructionist framework, collaboration benefits multiple levels of the school system: individual, collective, practice and policy. Ecological Systems Theory highlights the positive outcomes of the interacting layers of a school community and beyond. The grounded theory conceptualises that school staff will benefit from the implementation of supervision in school to increase their confidence and self-efficacy in meeting the *far-reaching elements* of their roles. Supporting staffs' efficacy perceptions positively correlates with their wellbeing (Gibbs, 2007; Labone, 2004), professional development and pupil outcomes (Gibbs & Miller, 2014). The benefits of supervision in schools therefore relate to staff and pupils alike, the wellbeing of whom is argued to be a priority for any senior leaders (Earley and Porritt, 2014). Of course, this extends beyond the support of pupils from military families, as shown

in the focused literature review -wherein supervision has shown to impact positively on *inclusive* practices and to lead to reductions in pupil-exclusions, (Gibbs, 2007; Labone, 2004). Supervision allows management of emotional challenges and balanced discussions around professional development and classroom practice (Alila et al. 2016; Carroll 2010). A supportive learning culture that embraces supervision as a typical and accepted part of practice will, it seems, benefit *all* within the system (Hawkins and Shohet 2012).

6.3 Chapter summary

This chapter presented the grounded theory that was developed through the reconceptualization of empirical data (Chapter 4) and the literature reviewed (Chapter 5). The theory addresses school staffs' experiences supporting pupils from military backgrounds in their mainstream state-school context, in relation to helping and hindering factors impacting staff confidence and self-efficacy. The theory demonstrates the fluid nature of one's self-efficacy beliefs and considers strategies employed by staff as they attempt to manage and protect it.

In a school system that conveys an empowering ethos for staff members – where staff feel they can contribute to decision making - these staff members perceive a higher collective efficacy. When power is perceived in the system – perceived as restrictive - both self- and collective-efficacy beliefs can be compromised for an individual staff member. The benefits of supervision in schools are conceptualised to support school staffs' confidence and self-efficacy related to supporting pupils from military backgrounds.

7 Discussion

7.1 Introduction

This chapter addresses the grounded theory's links with literature in Chapter 2 in further detail and considers the study's unique contribution and implications for practice and future research. An overall evaluation of the study is also offered, along with further consideration of 'researcher reflexivity'.

7.2 Linking the grounded theory with literature

Building on Stites' (2016) study, the current project contributes to the scarce body of educational research regarding pupils from military backgrounds who attend mainstream state schools, with findings offering insight into how staff experience supporting them. With claims that evidence-based practice in schools with military children is rare (Horten, 2005), the current study goes someway to filling that gap, while mirroring the priorities within educational psychology towards evidence-based practice (Gulliford, 2015): an approach that embraces the skills, the varied knowledge bases, and the creativity of EPs (Gulliford, 2015). As the term implies, it is assumed that there is readily accessible and coherent scientific evidence which can be appropriately applied to support the use of, implementation, delivery and evaluation of programmes, interventions, and practices (Kratochwill & Shernoff, 2003) while complimenting the scientist-practitioner model of applied EPs (Dilillo & Mccharge, 2007).

While Chapter 2 addressed specifically the mental health of *pupils* (Bowman, McKinstry, Howie & McGorry, 2020), the constructed grounded theory illuminates the significance of that of school staff - their self-efficacy, sense of autonomy, and confidence - which of course, together impact their overall wellbeing and job satisfaction. Staff wellbeing and all it encompasses, if supported effectively, has been positively correlated with pupil outcomes – (Squires, 2007). The findings of the current study, reflect government initiatives that delineate the importance of mental good health for *all* in the school context (House of Commons, 2017) and correlates with Blum's (2007) assertion that effective support for pupils from military backgrounds requires a school-wide effort to promote a positive environment that encompasses caring relationships, and an approach that can facilitate academic performance as well as emotional and behavioural competence (Blum, 2007).

The conceptualised model illustrates the *unfamiliarity* school staff experience with regards to understanding and meeting the needs of military pupils. This mirrors the claims that the unique

stressors of pupils from military backgrounds can often be misunderstood (O'Neil, 2013), and that the military lifestyle is often a foreign concept to many (Stites, 2016). It also highlights the impact on staffs' self-efficacy and confidence regarding how best they are able to support this pupil cohort. However, in contrast to Horten's (2005) deliberation around whether schools are equipped to deal with the unique needs of pupils from military families, the current study has demonstrated that even in the face of such unfamiliarity, school staff *do* employ strategies to enable them to act effectively. These strategies include drawing on previous mastery experiences or personal experiences -as understood through Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1977; 1986)- and extend beyond their immediate context, such as that of their classroom. They reflect Bronfenbrenner's (1979) notion that communal connections, might act as a valuable source for school staff in moving forward in meeting these pupils' needs.

Notably, findings from the current study support the notion that the involvement of EPs might be beneficial in supporting children from military backgrounds in schools. The current findings do not directly point to the support from EPs around transition of pupils from military backgrounds as noted in Chapter 2, however, they do suggest that the unique skillset of EPs positions them well for applying their psychological knowledge into the school context. For example, as well as supporting the implementation of supervision, EPs' consultation and problem-solving skills can be utilised through group consultation (Hayes and Stringer, 2016; Nugent et al, 2014) and solution focused approaches (Alexander and Sked, 2010), to support staff who at times feel unskilled to meet military pupils' needs effectively. Additionally, as identified in the National Review (DfES, 2006), the training and skills of EPs mean that they are uniquely qualified to deliver critical incident (CI) support to educational settings (Farrell, Woods, Lewis, Rooney, Squires and O'Connor, 2006), framing EPs as being potentially valuable in supporting schools with military CYP who have lost a parent through death during deployment.

EPs are one of the professional groups that participate in the current legislative scene and as stipulated in literature undertake a range of activities to promote pupil wellbeing and support education staff to do the same (Atkinson et al., 2012). They are also active in facilitating organisational change across schools (Morgan, 2016), at the individual, group, or system level (Atkinson, Bragg, Squires, Muscutt & Wasilewski, 2012) -for example, through the implementation of supervision, or consultation. As addressed in Chapter 2, Horten (2005) asserts the need for effective consultation in schools for military children, which Johnson

(2002) details to include consultant characteristics that mirror the expertise of EPs and the consultative skills they employ (Egan, 2002). The scope for development of practices that incorporate wider support systems is apparent in the current study, such as LA EPs who can offer support to make organisational changes (Morgan, 2016) to create a positive school environment for optimal teaching and learning advocated by Blum (2007), which will be explored further in section 7.3.3.

7.3 Implications of the current study

7.3.1 Unique contribution

This study sought to delineate and conceptualise school staffs' experiences of supporting pupils from military backgrounds within the context of their mainstream state school. Building on Stites' (2016) research, the inductive nature of the exploration undertaken goes beyond prior research and offers insight into the thoughts, actions, and processes underpinning staffs' experiences. Its inductive illumination of how staff manage their confidence and self-efficacy and negotiate the individual needs of pupils when feeling bound by the school system makes a unique contribution to educational research that has previously overlooked pupils from military backgrounds (Esqueda et al., 2012; Stites, 2016).

Although the multiple and competing demands, including striving to meet an inclusive agenda as well as an academic agenda (Squire, 2007), that school staff juggle is well recognised, the constructivist grounded theory methodology employed here adds analytic value through its rigorous inductive processes.

The theory demonstrates how *when* a senior leadership team is perceived to be overly controlling, school staffs' sense of being valued can be compromised and a diminished collective efficacy can prevail. The caution needed by senior leaders is highlighted in the theory presented here, asserting that approaches should be employed to support a shift away from a system that exerts power towards one that empowers and encourages all staff to feel heard and autonomous (Collie, Granziera, & Martin, 2018; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2018; Collie, Perry & Martin, 2017). Using Bronfenbrenner's (1979) Ecological Systems Theory, findings illuminated how wider influences, such as a supportive school ethos, can enhances staffs' self-perceived competence, or how when an individual perceives power in the system staff confidence and self-efficacy can be compromised and potentially diminish their sense of autonomy.

The findings also highlight the fluctuating nature of school staffs' confidence and self-efficacy, and how in the face of unfamiliarity school staff employ strategies, both innate and extrinsic, in pursuit of moving forward most appropriately. The conceptualised grounded theory thus offers a promising picture in terms of meeting the needs of pupils from military backgrounds who attend state schools even where their needs and/or lifestyles are not fully understood (O'Neil, 2013), or where uncertainty about the unique stressors these pupils are susceptible to (Allen & Stanley, 2007; Lincoln et al., 2008) remains. Although the study set out to explore experiences of school-staff specifically relating to military pupils, the theoretical framework presented can in fact be applied to school staffs' experiences of supporting *all* pupils.

The study also lends weight to the argument of many, such as Downing (2019) and Carroll et al. (2020), regarding the potential benefits and importance of a culture of supervision in schools. The study theorises how the unique skillset of EPs could be utilised to work with schools and apply psychology, supportively through supervision, in the school context. With supervision being a multi-layered approach there is clear scope for strategic LA developments in terms of supervision being offered as a model of service delivery. The theory offers further insight into the significant role EPs might play in directly supporting staff and indirectly supporting the pupils they work with, both those from military backgrounds and others retrospectively, ultimately making changes towards promoting the positive school environment for optimal teaching and learning advocated by Blum (2007).

7.3.2 Implications for schools; staff and pupils from military backgrounds

With the competing demands placed on school-staff being well recognised (Squire, 2007), the conceptualised model highlights how school staff -who experience additional pressures such as feeling unskilled in meeting the unique needs of pupils from military backgrounds (Allen & Stanley, 2007)- could benefit from supervision as a common source of support embedded into school practice (DECP,2013). As shown, these additional pressures potentially undermine staffs' professional confidence and self-efficacy, however, relevant to Bandura's (1977) concept of *social persuasion*, effective supervision can function as a source of efficacy beliefs. Supervision could provide staff with a safe environment to share and examine their anxieties, negative emotions, and perceived professional limitations (Jackson, 2008) whilst receiving verbal encouragement and validation from significant others in their professional contexts. It is deemed that such reaffirming feedback could support staff to regain their confidence and self-efficacy in meeting the needs of this pupil cohort (Capa-Aydin et al., 2017).

As shown in Chapter 5, staff who perceive power imbalances within the system of their school can consequently experience feeling unvalued and controlled – which can negatively impact their sense of autonomy and motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2000). The grounded theory shows this to be particularly pertinent for staff who have personal experiences relating to the impacts of the military lifestyle on children –which as shown, drives their advocacy towards a different type of support for military pupils in school. However, it is also shown, that when staff perceive that their views are negated, feelings of frustration can surface, and negatively impact their self-efficacy and autonomy, perceptions of collective efficacy and ultimately their sense of feeling valued. The implementation of supervision, both individual and peer, can afford school-staff a safe space for reflections (Scaife, 2003), where containment to help deal with the emotional impact of feeling unvalued, along with management of other professional emotional demands, is offered (Hulusi & Maggs, 2015). Supervision could also afford staff with a sense of camaraderie through the fostering of relationships that supervision can provide (Willis and Baines, 2018). This is known to facilitate staffs' professional confidence through collaboration (Jordan, Schwartz & McGhie-Richmond, 2009; Dunsmuir & Leadbetter, 2010; Tschannen-Moran & McMaster, 2009), which the grounded theory presented shows to be of significance for those staff facing uncertainty in their understanding of the needs of pupils from military backgrounds, and for those feeling frustrated relating to the support currently in place for this pupil cohort.

Further, as noted, *effective support* for pupils from military backgrounds takes a school-wide effort to ensure a positive school environment (Blum, 2007) - consisting of caring relationships to facilitate academic performance as well as emotional and behavioural competence. Through the lens of Bronfenbrenner's (1979) Ecological Systems Theory model -discussed in Chapter 5- an individual's microsystem comprises of those face-to-face interactions, social roles and patterns of activities experienced in a specific setting (Bronfenbrenner, 1989). For the participants in the current study, this refers to their school climate, the military-pupil and teacher relationship, and interactions across the school between staff who are working to support these pupils (Demerouti et al., 2001). It is here proposed that supervision models applied to the school of context -where pupils from military backgrounds attend- could be valuable so as to promote such positive relationships. One model of supervision for instance is Work Discussion Groups (WDGs) and the application of psychodynamic thinking (Jackson, 2008; Hulusi & Maggs, 2015) that could be used as a means of promoting understanding of the emotional factors of pupils from military backgrounds and the impact on the emotional factors

of those staff supporting them – important given such emotional factors influence teaching and learning (Jackson, 2008; Hulusi & Maggs, 2015). In such supervision groups, staff are encouraged to bring case examples of their work with children as the basis for group discussion, with relationships being the main focus of the discussion with the purpose of promoting communication and emotional containment.

It is proposed that through direct support, via supervision implemented by EPs, school staff will be equipped with heightened self-efficacy beliefs facilitating both their professional commitments as well as greater outcomes for pupils (Gibbs & Miller, 2003), both those from military backgrounds, as well as others. The collaborative working and sharing that is central in various formats of supervision, -as mentioned WDGs, but also Solution Circles (Forest & Pearpoint, 1996; Brown & Henderson 2012; Osborne & Burton, 2014; Rees, 2009): a flexible tool in which staff are encouraged to maintain positive, creative approaches to problem-solving – are renowned for promoting the inclusion of pupils with a wide range of needs (Grahamslaw & Henson, 2012). It is therefore proposed that pupils from military backgrounds -with their known potentially varying and unfamiliar needs (O'Neil, 2013; Allen & Stanley, 2007) - could be indirectly supported via the implementation of such group-sharing models of supervision for staff responsible for supporting them. The outcome of which could facilitate a perceived collaborative ethos in which all staff feel *enabled* -to contribute to decisions regarding the needs of pupils from military backgrounds- which is likely to increase their intrinsic motivation and psychological wellbeing (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Gagne & Deci, 2005). Further, benefits are anticipated that extend to enhancing the job satisfaction of staff, in turn increase retention in the teaching profession and ultimately guard against economic and social waste (Dolton & Klaauw, 1999; Hayes, 2004; Ingersoll & Smith, 2003).

7.3.3 Implications for EP practice and strategic local authority developments.

The conceptualised grounded theory model illuminates the psychological underpinnings of school staffs' experiences and efficacy beliefs regarding their experiences of supporting pupils from military backgrounds. It demonstrates the fluctuating nature of school staffs' confidence and self-efficacy relating to supporting these pupils most effectively. As already mentioned, such factors are intertwined with staffs' overall wellbeing – arguably a priority for support given that teacher health and wellbeing are reportedly on the decline (Liu, Song & Miao, 2018; YouGov, 2018). Evidence shows how staffs' experiences and efficacy-beliefs can impact on both their professional commitments and the learning outcomes for their pupils (Caprara et al.,

2006; Miller, 2003; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). EPs are primely positioned, as stipulated in literature, to undertake a range of activities to promote the wellbeing of pupils, such as those from military backgrounds, and to support education staff to do the same (Atkinson et al., 2012).

The present study therefore lends weight to the argument that school staff require more direct support given the complexities of the school context and competing demands they are subject to. Here, specifically relating to additional demands experienced by staff regarding knowing how to effectively support pupils from military backgrounds, whose needs are often seen as unique, and sometimes misunderstood (O'Neil, 2013). Although the present study shows how staff attempt to restore their confidence and self-efficacy, a system that exerts power is shown to pose threat to individual staff's sense of autonomy, ultimately resulting in frustration. Such feelings can be managed through supervision – for example, EPs are skilled to employ Bion's (1961) notion of containment whereby the supervisor (EP) supports the supervisee (staff member) to return to a sense of safety by the supervisor *holding* such feelings.

The use of containment in supervision reportedly enables a supervisee to reframe their thinking (Douglas, 2007) and ultimately, engage in their professional roles more effectively safe in the know that such feelings are contained (Hulusi & Maggs, 2015). Wosket & Page (2001) argue that the use of supervision can increase this feeling of containment for supervisees, however, it is also noted that the supervisory relationship must be equal and positive (Beinart & Clohessy, 2017), meaning that in-house supervision support may not always be the most appropriate or effective approach. EPs might then be the source to provide school-staff with a safe space in which they can reflect on their role and discuss their concerns.

Further, the unique and varied skillset that EPs are equipped with, positions them to facilitate professional development activities in support of school staffs' self-efficacy and confidence (Higgins & Gulliford, 2014), specifically in relation to supporting pupils from military families. As shown using Bronfenbrenner's (1979) Ecological Systems Theory, EPs are well situated to apply psychology to school contexts at various levels (Atkinson, Bragg, Squires, Muscutt and Wasilewski, 2012), and to support the wellbeing of school-staff more generally (Fallon, Woods & Rooney, 2010, p.14). EPs are also appropriately skilled to make decisions as to when, and at what level, support is needed. For example, group supervision can facilitate and support the unpicking of a problem and will encourage staff to work collaboratively to devise ways forward in a positive and productive manner. One way of achieving this could be through models such

as Work Discussion Groups (Jackson, 2008; Hulusi & Maggs, 2015). EPs are therefore well-equipped and well-positioned to deliver indirect support, and in turn to *support* pupils from military backgrounds whilst also supporting teachers to do the same as shown by Salter-Jones (2012) and Evans (2016).

Through applying their psychological knowledge and process skills via supervision, EPs are viewed here as having a distinct role in supporting the professional learning and development of school staff, and the planning and development of school policies and processes relating to how staff can feel supported in meeting the needs of pupils from military backgrounds (Hawkins & Shohet, 1989). EPs are well-positioned to apply their psychological knowledge and skills within a systems approach, thus, are well placed to promote and facilitate organisational change, development and learning in schools to promote support systems in the school context.

This study's grounded theory provides a model which emphasises the critical and integral nature that a school's ethos plays in influencing the actions and processes within the school environment that ultimately impact upon the experiences of military pupils, and those staff working to support them (Faulconbridge et al., 2017). The organisational culture of a school can be understood as the mesosystem and therefore, critically, is interconnected with pupil outcomes that occur at the microsystem (Godfrey, 2016). One way in which EPs could support schools through group supervision is by providing space in which to discuss and problem-solve around such issues – like that of perceived power in the system. Group problem-solving approaches as discussed have potential to facilitate a school ethos that is conducive to a collaborative whole systems approach relating to the support of pupils from military backgrounds. As a by-product of such support from EPs, organisational issues may be discussed and, if supported effectively, such espoused practice could be translated into school policy. In the instance of policy development, EPs could offer individuals or groups of school staff supervision, supporting the development of policies that embed psychologically theorised characteristics of an ethos that is experienced as empowering and enabling by all in school. Staff might then feel able to offer suggestions about a different type of support that could be implemented to benefit the needs of pupils from military backgrounds.

Prior research of school-staffs' wellbeing -for example, Salter-Jones (2012), Rae et al (2017), Wood (2016), and Andrews (2017)- has highlighted and evaluated the effectiveness of supervision, deeming it a key role for EP service delivery. With varying ways of

conceptualising and applying supervision to ensure it is transparent and systematic, choosing the right model is key, and with different models underpinned by different theories, practitioners should use the models most appropriate for the context (Carroll et al. 2020). The conceptualised theory presented here allows for EPs to use their knowledge and skills to decide which is the best fit for the supervisee's role (Dunsmuir & Leadbetter, 2010), for instance, EP-led consultation groups can constitute a form of peer-supervision (Hawkins & Shohet, 2007) and could be conducive to promoting self-efficacy beliefs of staff through opportunities to feel validated in the difficult emotions they experience when supporting pupils from military families. EPs are able to afford school staff a safe space to collaboratively explore and reflect upon challenges they face when supporting pupils from military families, and to be able to better understand these pupils and what impacts their behaviours and needs (Hanko, 1999; Farouk, 2004). Ultimately EPs could oversee the generation of solutions for staff who feel uncertain when supporting these pupils (Gibbs & Miller, 2014) – as suggested, through the facilitation of Work Discussion Groups (Jackson, 2008; Hulusi & Maggs, 2015).

The current study's findings also present implications for strategic development within the LA. Bronfenbrenner's (1976) Ecological Systems Theory, as discussed in Chapter 5, shows the interconnected nature of different systems. From this stance, LA actions, process, and policies could work with, and positively impact the development of school practice and policy regarding effectively meeting the needs of pupils from military backgrounds. As EPs spend more time within schools, it is proposed that increased trust will result in the likelihood of EPs being viewed as an integral part of the school community, rather than just another 'visitor' (Beltman et al, 2016). Consequently, strategic local authority developments could be facilitated through greater opportunities for traded work through the commissioning of supervision as a model of service delivery - particularly relevant for schools with high populations of pupils from military backgrounds to support staff to better understand the unique needs of this pupil cohort, and in turn facilitate staffs' confidence and self-efficacy in meeting such needs. It is here argued that government initiatives and LAs could reflect this as a priority for future policies to protect and sustain the experiences of school staff who support pupils from military families who attend mainstream state schools.

7.4 Evaluation of the research

A final evaluation of the study is presented here (Table 7.1). The criteria used to appraise the research are taken from Charmaz's (2014).

Evaluation criteria	Measures taken
Credibility	The researcher's TEP role in the local authority afforded familiarity with the context. Familiarity with the topic under exploration was achieved through a broad preliminary literature review. Participants were sampled from four distinct public-civilian school settings. Rich detailed empirical data was obtained through adherence to theoretical sampling until saturation was achieved. Thorough exploration of the topic was achieved using 'intensive interviewing' (Charmaz, 2014) strategies, which further enriched the data obtained. The constant comparison method was utilised, alongside frequent memo-writing and diagramming to fulfil reflexivity and transparency throughout each stage of the research process. The conceptualisation of categories that led to the constructed grounded theory are rooted in the empirical data and can be traced back through the various levels of coding and analysis employed by the researcher (Appendix 7; Appendix 8; Appendix 11). The researcher's active engagement in several modes of reflexivity provides evidence of ongoing interaction with empirical data (Figure 3.3; Figure 3.4; Figure 3.5; Appendix 9; Appendix 10).
Originality	The unique contribution of the presented grounded theory is discussed (section 7.3.1).

	The analysis offers new conceptual understandings of the social phenomenon explored. The theoretical and social relevance and value of this study is addressed (sections 7.2 and 7.3). The constructivist grounded theory methodology ensured a more rigorous approach to draw out findings relevant to the topic explored.
Resonance	The grounded theory conceptualises meaning regarding the social phenomenon of school staffs' experiences of supporting military pupils in the context of public-civilian schools. The constructed categories revealed taken-for-granted meanings underpinning school staffs' sense-making of their experiences relating to the focus of this research. Throughout the various stages of constructing this study, the researcher liaised with university tutors, EP colleagues and fellow trainee EPs. Feedback highlighted that the ideas and constructed theory made sense as well as offered a new perspective relating to the explored topic.
Usefulness	Implications of the constructed grounded theory are considered (sections 7.3.1; 7.3.2; 7.3.3). The outcomes of the study also offer enhancements in practice for stakeholders (section 7.3.2). While limitations of the study are recognised, areas for future research are offered (section

	7.4.1) to further enhance social understanding of the current topic.

Table 7.1 - Measures taken by the researcher to enhance the quality of the current grounded theory study in compliance with Charmaz's (2014) evaluation criteria.

7.4.1 Strengths, limitations, and future research

Adhering to the conventions of constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz, 2014), the study offered a unique conceptualisation of the experiences of school staff supporting pupils from military backgrounds in the context of mainstream state-schools. However, caution is warranted given the localised nature of findings specific to the local authority (LA) in which the research was conducted (Charmaz, 2014). Future research could serve to enhance the transferability of findings by extending the sample beyond one LA to include school staff from a variety of geographical locations across the country.

The researcher's decision to employ a constructivist grounded theory methodology was advantageous in providing an understanding of a social phenomenon rooted firmly in empirical data, as opposed to being founded on extant theories, frameworks, and paradigms. The social constructivist epistemology and relativist ontology employed aligned with both the exploratory nature of the study and the researcher's own beliefs about reality and the construction of knowledge. As well as affording practical and flexible approaches to explore complex social phenomena (Charmaz, 2003), the selection of constructivist grounded theory is considered a strength given its suitability to novice researchers; affording them with structured guidelines to assist the process of inquiry (MacDonald, 2001).

The time and capacity constraints of the doctoral thesis, in conjunction with the Covid-19 pandemic and associated national school closures, posed difficulties for participant recruitment. Ultimately, data was obtained from a small sample and a narrow range of settings, potentially hindering the study's credibility (Charmaz, 2014). In attempts to counter this impact, the researcher worked to achieve credibility and validity in the strength of the conceptual categories and development of the grounded theory. Theoretical saturation was achieved via comprehensive and meticulous analysis utilising line-by-line initial coding with gerunds, diagramming, the constant comparison method, multiple forms of reflexivity and theoretical sampling (Charmaz, 2014). Nevertheless, a larger sample size from a wider range

of settings, along with more time flexibility could provide future research with a more expansive picture of the social phenomenon under study.

One distinction drawn from the empirical data of the present study was that of primary and secondary school staff's experiences. Through reflexive activities the researcher considered two plausible factors underpinning the differences identified; negative personal experiences underpinning motivation to advocate for a change in the support for pupils from military backgrounds, *or* the impact of the systemic contrasts between primary and secondary settings. The time constraints of the doctoral thesis prevented further exploration, however, an investigation relating to the systemic contrasts of secondary and primary school could direct future research to better grasp the experiences of school staff supporting pupils from military backgrounds, thus effect related change to practice to enhance such experiences.

Guided by Charmaz's (2014) notion of 'intensive interviewing' (p.164), the researcher provided an interactive space for participants to speak freely, to tell their stories and to develop their ideas in a reflective manner. Ultimately the ebb and flow of dialogue in a conversational style, facilitated the collection of rich data and the iterative process of analysis. This meant that direction was afforded with subsequent questions and interviews being tailored to the emerging information and analytic ideas (Anderson, 2010). However, future research could further enrich data and add depth to analysis through employing other, elements of data collection, such as collecting and analysing documentation and completing observations (Charmaz, 2014).

A final important consideration is the research rigour and potential biases. Adhering to the conventions of constructivist grounded theory methodology, the researcher is acknowledged as an integral part of the research in its entirety (Charmaz, 2014). The presented grounded theory is therefore a co-construction of what both the researcher and participants bring to the table and thus transparency is sought through the research process so as to safeguard against subjectivity and biases. The researcher's continuous engagement in reflexivity activities guarded against personal preconceptions, existing knowledge, and positioning; particularly important given the researcher's awareness of the military lifestyle.

Any prejudices held by the researcher were illuminated through ongoing memo-writing, a process that enabled the researcher to be open to data that challenged her biases (McGee, Marland & Atkinson, 2007). Rigorous coding, utilisation of the constant comparison method and clear cross-referencing with participant transcripts (Chapter 4) further aided the transparency of the process undertaken and the findings grounded in the empirical data.

As already mentioned, challenges to recruitment resulted in the researcher using connections via pre-established relationships with schools for whom the researcher is the visiting (Trainee) EP (TEP). While this risked potential biases, the researcher ensured participants were aware of the distinction between her dual researcher and TEP role. It was emphasised that participation was voluntary and that there would be no impact on TEP service delivery if they declined.

7.5 Reflexivity revisited

Consistent with the tenets of constructivist grounded theory, the researcher is recognised as an integral part of each stage of the research journey. The grounded theory is thus understood to be a co-construction of how participants' experiences were made sense of - by both the participants themselves and the researcher. However, the reflexive nature of constructivist grounded theory serves to guard against the imposition of researcher biases and subjectivities on the final grounded theory.

The researcher maintained a research diary comprised of her own thoughts, reflections, actions, and impacts through a series of memos, diagrams, mind-maps, and bulleted personal notes. While frequent contribution to the research log supported the researcher's reflexivity, it also captured the essence of the research experience within which points of personal and professional development are evident. The researcher considers these points important to share upon completion of the study.

The entire process was overwhelming, challenging, testing, rewarding, and exhilarating in equal measure. These challenges have simultaneously afforded the researcher with opportunities of personal and professional growth.

As well as the impact of Covid-19, the exhaustive process of grounded theory analysis took longer than expected, and in turn impacted on the researcher's initial anticipated timeline to completion (a timeline of the entire research process can be viewed in Appendix 16). However, engaging thoroughly in each stage afforded the researcher with *eureka* moments and, as links began to emerge, enjoyment. Charmaz's (2014) notion of theoretical playfulness not only provided insight into the realms of qualitative research, but also excitement as the unique conceptualised model unveiled. This granted the researcher with a sense of empowerment and ownership.

A key concern related to the researcher's initial motivation for the studied social phenomenon, which was underpinned by personal assumptions that pupils from military families would not

be effectively supported in state schools as a result of their needs being misunderstood. However, fully immersing herself in the data revealed surprising findings that at times opposed the researcher's biases and prejudices, as shown in Figure 3.4. What is more, the researcher recognises a shift in these pre-conceptions which not only demonstrates the effectiveness of the coding but the researcher's open-mindedness. Opportunities to explore the data from a metacognitive perspective has enhanced the researcher's analytic and theoretical thinking - a previously recognised challenge, and a rewarding outcome.

7.6 Chapter summary

The current research set out to explore the social phenomenon of school staffs' experiences of supporting military pupils within a public-civilian school context. Through adherence to constructivist grounded theory methodology, a conceptual understanding of school staff's experiences was devised and is represented here in a unique theoretical framework.

This chapter has contextualised the constructed grounded theory relating to the initial literature presented in Chapter 2, drawing connections as well as distinctions. Implications for EP practice, school staff, whole school practice and ultimately for pupils themselves were considered and the research as a whole – its strengths and limitations, have been considered.

8 Further reflections

Following the initial completion of this study, the researcher engaged in further reflections, the most notable of which highlighted the transformative impact of the entire process on the researcher, as a member of a military family, as a researcher, and as a practitioner. The shift in personal assumptions and biases stands as a prominent turning point underpinning the personal and professional transformation.

Reflection has highlighted how the theoretical framework was initially strongly influenced by the researcher's own assumptions that military children and young people may be more vulnerable, for example, more susceptible to mental 'ill-health'. These biases and assumptions led to a strong focus on psychosocial difficulties of military pupils in the first literature review (Chapter 2). The project could have benefitted from the researcher stating at the outset how the research was not claiming that this cohort *do have* significant or specific needs, but instead that the current research was informed by literature that suggests they *might* have needs as a population, for example Johnson & Ling (2012). The importance of not overstating the aims and claims of the study is recognised and reference to mental *ill-health* should therefore be read with caution, especially as further reading has indicated high levels of psychosocial difficulties not necessarily being the case for military dependents. For example, a substantial amount of information regarding the resilience of military family members is documented by Gribble et al., (2020), who collate an array of UK based research concerning the experiences of military families during separation and the impact on mental health, psychological wellbeing, and relationships. In doing so, they present lessons that could be adapted from the military community and applied to Covid-19 essential workers. While contextual differences between military communities and Covid-19 essential workers are acknowledged by Gribble et al. (2020), value is placed on the ability of military families to respond to sudden, last-minute changes, and cope under times of increased stress and pressure – an ability that is attributed to their *resilience* (Gribble et al., 2020). The researcher has considered how her own biases perhaps resulted in an opening literature review that overlooked, potentially, the benefits, strengths, and resilience of military pupils.

Relatedly, subsequent reading around the education of military pupils further challenged the researcher's assumptions. McCullouch et al. (2018) note the importance of challenging stereotypes about both service children and their perceived disadvantage. Within their paper multiple benefits that the military lifestyle can afford to children are cited as recognised by the

DfE (2013), including the possibility for children to strengthen their resilience, develop the skills to socialise and make new friends quickly, and the opportunity to gain a wider range of experiences than their non-mobile peers (DfE, 2013). It is also noted that policy discourse in the UK does not regard military children as educationally disadvantaged or underachieving (House of Commons Defence Committee [HoCDC], 2013).

Although McCullouch et al. (2018) *do* reference multiple challenges - according with the researcher's initial positioning and assumptions, for example those related to deployment – subsequent reflections following the investigation here illuminate how the present study perhaps negated a balanced perspective of participant experiences. Ponterotto (2010) stipulates that applied psychologists are drawn to constructivist qualitative methods because they often involve studying the emotive and cognitive aspects of participants' life experiences interpreted within the context of their socially constructed worldviews. This is supported by many e.g., Hill, 2005; McLeod, 2001; Morrow, 2007; Ponterotto, Kuriakose et al., 2008, and Sciarra, 1999; and resonates with the present researcher given reflections around two of the participants who were both from military families – one of whom reported in quite some emotive detail their negative personal experiences. The researcher's personal biases were reinforced given their own positioning in a military family and combined with the particularly emotive narrative shared by this one participant. Unbeknown at the time, the researcher recognised how this emotive interview influenced the interpretation of data and shaped the subsequent stages of the research through the reactivation of her own assumptions, which then impacted how questions from interview to interview evolved.

While attempts were made to suspend such biases using memos (e.g., Figure 3.4) and other reflexivity methods (Section 3.6.1), it seems that perhaps the separation between the researcher's thoughts and data were not fully maintained, potentially compromising the extent to which coding was sensitized. This has raised the question of whether the theory is fully 'grounded' in the data and in fact reached saturation, *or* whether it is somewhat departed in respect to wanting to support one participant's struggle with power. It could be argued that the research became one of wanting to support a political transformation.

Ponterotto (2010) highlights the importance of understanding the depth and variety of philosophical paradigms in qualitative research. As noted in Section 3.2, early in her research journey, the researcher ensured the chosen paradigm reflected her own philosophical positioning, the purpose of which served to enhance the study's rigour (Mills et al., 2006).

However, what has since struck the researcher is the extent of influence that one's philosophical beliefs have, perhaps beyond what McLeod (2001) asserts, "*...good qualitative research requires an informed awareness of philosophical perspectives*" (p. 203).

Firstly, considering one's philosophical positioning in life and view of the world was a novel experience for the researcher. Secondly, reflecting on how philosophical beliefs informed the paradigm choice and equally qualitative methodology – a methodology that enabled the researcher to elicit in-depth narratives shared by participants in which the researcher realised this to be a significant moment – where change was created. The researcher was naive to the impact such exchanges between a researcher and participant, that within the constructivist paradigm are considered to be transformative (Ponterotto, 2010). Hindsight thus offers a new perspective regarding the paradigmatic positioning of the current study: one of constructivist *and* transformative research.

Additional biases were identified, namely the influence of ongoing project work that the researcher was a part of for her professional training within her placement provider. Reference to this can be viewed in the research timeline (Appendix 16), showing how placement project work coincided with writing the initial literature review. Related work involved mental health and *ill-health*, namely the Wellbeing for Education (WER) government initiative in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. The influence that this, potentially, played in the researcher's biases while exploring early literature is recognised. Following on from the WER project, the researcher was heavily involved in discussion groups relating to the benefits of the implementation of supervision in schools as a model of service delivery, it could be viewed that the heavy focus on supervision (Chapter 5 and beyond) is another bias influenced by such ongoing project work outside of this research that ultimately influenced the direction of the analysis.

As noted in section 3.3, constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz, 2014; 2015), adopts earlier grounded theory strategies however differs from its forebearers. A key difference relevant to the current reflections is the role and positioning of the researcher – essentially an instrument in the research process facilitating a link between the specific and the general and the individual and the social context (Charmaz, 2017). Miller (1995) proposed that 'grounded theory' is perhaps an inappropriate or inaccurate term for such research, because in fact what transpires from many grounded theory studies is a localised example of wider social processes (Charmaz, 2017). With this in mind, the researcher recognises how the product of the current study

perhaps reflects more of a localised narrative of school staffs' experiences of supporting military pupils. This reflects criticisms of Turner (1992) who suggested a more fitting phrase for such research might be '*developing a local theory'*. Fitting with the study's constructivist epistemology, the current research presents only one story from the collected data.

9 Conclusion

The current research set out to fill a gap in current educational research through which pupils from military backgrounds have been largely overlooked (Stites, 2016). Commencing with a purposely broad literature review that illuminated not only the benefits that are afforded to pupils from military families (Pollock & Van Reken, 2001), but also an array of unique stressors they are susceptible to, the researcher set the scene for the current study.

The researcher deemed this an area of priority research considering the known impacts of mental health on children's educational experiences (Bowman, McKinstry, Howie & McGorry, 2020) and with research showing mental ill-health for pupils from military backgrounds to be 11% higher than that of non-military children (Johnson & Ling, 2012). The unique stressors that children from military backgrounds experience, many of which are not understood by civilian counterparts (O'Neil, 2013) - including high mobility and frequent transition (Esqueda et al., 2012) and separation from parents due to deployment (Lester et al., 2010)- were set out, along with their known impacts on psychological functioning and wellbeing (Jonson & Ling, 2012; Lester et al., 2010).

Employing a constructivist grounded theory methodology (Charmaz, 2014), and by conducting semi-structured interviews with four school staff members, the research offered an inductive and rigorous exploration of the experiences of school-staff supporting pupils from military backgrounds in mainstream state schools. With initial assumptions that the role of the EP could offer effective support -specifically around transition- the researcher's reflexivity log documents how these assumptions were challenged and shifted through the exhaustive process of data analysis advocated by Charmaz (2014).

Findings were theoretically sensitised through a focused literature review exploring staff confidence and self-efficacy, collective efficacy, Ecological Systems Theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1989), and supervision. Reconceptualization of findings facilitated new theoretical insights and the emergent grounded theory: *'the shift from I-to-we in restoring staff confidence and self-efficacy and the impacts of a system-of-power versus a system that empowers'*.

The constructed grounded theory framework illustrates the fluctuating nature of school-staffs' confidence and self-efficacy and how their sense of autonomy in the school system is impacted in supporting the needs of military children. The model illuminates a role for supervision in the school context to either further facilitate the sense of togetherness within a collective school

ethos, or to offer containment to individuals experiencing a threat to their sense of autonomy in a system where power-imbalances are perceived.

Implications for school-staff highlight the benefits and challenges of introducing a culture of supervision into school practice – benefits include receiving emotional containment relating to difficulties staff might experience when supporting pupils form military backgrounds, and challenges include those relating to change at an organisational level. Implications for the practice of EPs are also identified, such as how their psychological knowledge and unique skill set leaves them well-positioned to be able to offer the support -individually or at a systems level- through the implementation of supervision. Implications for local authorities are also shown through consideration of what supervision being offered as a model of service delivery means for strategic LA developments, for example, enhancing the commissioning of traded services.

It is argued that direct support through supervision might afford staff who are supporting pupils from military backgrounds with a safe space in which to reflect on their professional roles (Scaife, 2003) and to problem-solve together (Dunsmuir & Leadbetter, 2010), and might lead to staff receiving more effective containment for work-related stresses and emotional burdens (Hulusi & Maggs, 2015). It is proposed that supporting staff well, by increasing their sense of self-efficacy and facilitating their management of the emotional impact of the role, will significantly benefit the educational experiences of pupils from military backgrounds and help staff to meet the potentially unique and unfamiliar needs of this population.

Further reflections highlighted the caution that is needed relating to the term mental ill-health. It is recognised that ongoing project-work in the researcher's host LA, along with her own biases and assumptions might have influenced this, the content of the initial literature review, and subsequent stages of the research process. Fitting with constructivist paradigm, further reflections indicated a transformative impact of the research process on the researcher, derived from the exchanges with participants. And while Chapter 6 presents the 'grounded theory' – it is considered that the product of this study presents a localised narrative of school staffs' experiences of supporting military pupils as opposed to a definitive theory.

References

Afandak, K., & Mehrvand, M. (2012). Consequences of parent imprisonment on the academic achievement of children. *Children with a parent in Prison conference: impact, issues, practice, and policy*. Plymouth: Plymouth University.

Ahtola, A., Bjorn, P. M., Turunen, T., & Poikonen, P.-L. (2016). The Concordance between Teachers' and Parents' Perceptions of School Transition Practices: A Solid Base for the Future. *Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research, 60*(2), 168–181.

Alila, S., Uusiautti, S., & Maatta, K. (2016). The principles and practices of supervision that supports the development of inclusive teacherhood. *Journal of Education and Learning, 5*(3), 297-306.

Allen, M., & Staley, L. (2007). Helping children cope when a loved one is in military deployment. *Young Children*, 62(1), pp. 82–87.

American Association of School Administrations (AASA, 2020). Retrieved from https://www.aasa.org/content.aspx?id=9008 [Accessed August 2020].

Andres, M. D. & Moelker, R. (2010). There and back again: how parental experiences affect children's adjustments in the course of military deployments. *Armed Forces Society*, 37, pp. 418–447.

Anna Freud National Centre for Children and Families (n.d.) Supporting Staff Wellbeing in Schools. Retrieved from https://www.annafreud.org/whatwe-do/schools-in-mind/resources-for-schools/supporting-staffwellbeing-in-schools/ [Accessed April 2021].

Annells, M. (1996). Grounded theory method: Philosophical perspectives, paradigm of inquiry, and postmodernism. *Qualitative Health Research*, 6, 379 –393. http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/ 104973239600600306

Antonopoulou, K., Chaidemenou, A. & Kouvava, S. (2019). Peer acceptance and friendships among primary school pupils: associations with loneliness, self-esteem and school

engagement, *Educational Psychology in Practice*, 35(3), 339-351,

Armstrong, P. V., & Freeston, M. H. (2006). *Conceptualising and formulating cognitive therapy supervision.* In N. Tarrier (Ed.), *Case formulation in cognitive behaviour therapy: The treatment of challenging and complex cases* (p. 349–371). Routledge/Taylor & Francis Group.

Ayres, J., Clarke, A. & Large, J. (2015). Identifying principles and practice for supervision in an Educational Psychology Service. *Educational & Child Psychology*, 32, 3, The British Psychological Society.

Baard, P. P., Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2004). Intrinsic need satisfaction: A motivational basis of performance and well-being in two work settings. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 34, 2045-2068.

Bandura, A. (1977). *Social Learning Theory*. Englewood Cliffs, N. J: Prentice Hall.

Bandura, A. (1986). *Social foundations of thought and action: a social cognitive theory*. Englewood Cliffs, N. J., Prentice-Hall.

Bandura, A. (1993). Perceived Self-Efficacy in Cognitive Development and Functioning. *Educational Psychologist*, 28, 117-148.

Bandura, A. (1997) *Self-efficacy: The exercise of control*. New York: Freeman

Bangs, J., and Frost, D. (2012) Teacher Self-efficacy, Voice and Leadership: Towards a Policy Framework for Education International. Brussels: Education International Research Institute and the University of Cambridge, Faculty of Education.

Bartle, D. & Travis, A. (2015). An evaluation of group supervision in a specialist provision supporting young people with mental health needs: A social constructionist perspective. *Educational and Child Psychology*, *32*(3), 78- 89.

Beck C.T. (1993) Qualitative research: the evaluation of its credibility, fittingness, and auditability. *Western Journal of Nursing Research*, 15, pp. 263–266.

Beinart, H., & Clohessy, S. (2017). *Effective supervisory relationships: best evidence and practice*. John Wiley & Sons.

Benoliel, J. Q. (1996). Grounded theory and nursing knowledge. Qualitative Health Research, 6, 406-428. http://dx DOI: 10.1177/104973239600600308 [Accessed August 2020].

Bion, W. R. (1961). *Experiences in Groups and Other Papers.* London: Tavistock.

Birkeland, M. S., Breivik, K., & Wold, B. (2014). Peer acceptance protects global self-esteem from negative effects of low closeness to parents during adolescence and early adulthood. *Journal of Youth Adolescence,* 43, 70–80.

Birks, M., & Mills, J., 2015. Grounded theory: A practical guide. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage.

Blum, R. (2007). *Best Practices: Building Blocks for Enhancing School Environment.* Military Child Initiative at john Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. Retrieved from https://www.aasa.org/content.aspx?id=9554 (August 2020).

Bowen, G., 2008. Grounded theory and sensitizing concepts. International Journal of Qualitative Methods, 5(3), pp. 12-23.

Bowman, S., McKinstry, C., Howie, L. & McGorry, P. (2020), Expanding the search for emerging mental ill health to safeguard student potential and vocational success in high school: A narrative review. *Early Intervention in Psychiatry,* 14, 655–676, DOI: 10.1111/eip.12928.

Bozic, N. & Carter, A. (2002). Consultation Groups: Participants' views. *Educational Psychology in Practice, 18*(3) 189–201

Bradshaw, C. P., Sudhinaraset, M., Mmari, K., & Blum, R. W. (2010). School transitions among military adolescents: A qualitative study of stress and coping. *School Psychology Review,* 39, pp. 84–105.

Braun, V. & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology, *Qualitative Research*

in Psychology, 3:2, 77-101.

Braun, V. & Clarke, V. (2013). *Successful qualitative research: a practical guide for beginners*. London: Sage.

Braun, V. & Clarke, V. (2014). What can "thematic analysis" offer health and wellbeing researchers? *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Health and Well-being*, 9(1).

Breckenridge, J., Jones, D., Elliott, I. & Nicol, M. (2012). Choosing a methodological path: Reflections of the constructivist turn. *Grounded Theory Review*, 11(1), pp. 64–71.

British Psychological Society. (2018). Code of Ethics and Conduct. Leicester: Author. Retrieved from https://www.bps.org.uk/sites/bps.org.uk/files/Policy%20-%20Files/Code%20of%20Ethics%20and%20Conduct%20(2018).pdf [Accessed January 2020).

British Psychological Society (2015). Supervision. *Educational & Child Psychology*, 32 (3).

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979). *The ecology of human development*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1988). Interacting systems in human development. Research paradigms: Present and future. In N. Bolger, A. Caspi, G. Downey, & M. Moorehouse (Eds.), *Persons in contexts: Developmental processes* (pp. 25–49). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (2000). *Ecological systems theory.* In A. Kazdin (Ed.), Encyclopaedia of Psychology, (Vol. 3, pp. 129–133). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Bronfenbrenner, U., & Morris, P. A. (1998). The ecology of developmental processes. In W. Damon & R. M. Lerner (Eds.), *Handbook of child psychology, Vol. 1: Theoretical models of human development* (5th ed., pp. 993 – 1023). New York: Wiley.

Bronfenbrenner, U., & Morris, P. A. (2006). The bioecological model of human development. In W. Damon (Series Ed.) & R.M. Lerner (Vol. Ed.), *Handbook of child psychology: Theoretical models of human development* (pp. 793–828). New York, NY: Wiley.

Brown, E. & Henderson, L. (2012). Promoting Staff Support in Schools: Solution Circles. *Educational Psychology in Practice, 28* (2), 177-186. DOI: 10.1080/02667363.2012.665358

Brummet Lennings, H. I. & Bussey, K. (2017). Personal agency in children: assessing children's coping self-efficacy in the context of parental conflict. *International Journal of Behavioral Development,* 41(3), 432-443 DOI: 10.1177/0165025416635282

Bryant, A. (2009) Continual Permutations of Misunderstanding: The Curious Incidents of the Grounded Theory Method. Qualitative Inquiry, 1-5.

Bryant, A., & Charmaz, K. (Eds.). (2007). Grounded theory in historical perspective: An epistemological account. *The Sage handbook of grounded theory* (pp. 31–57). Los Angeles, CA:

Callicott, K. & Leadbetter, J. (2013). An investigation of factors involved when educational psychologists supervise other professionals. *Educational Psychology in Practice,* 29(4), 383–403

Caprara, G. V., Barbaranelli, C., Steca, P., & Malone, P. S. (2006). Teachers' self-efficacy beliefs as determinants of job satisfaction and students' academic achievement: A study at the school level. *Journal of School Psychology,* 44, 473–490. doi:10.1016/ j.jsp.2006.09.001

Capa-Aydin, Y., Uzuntiryaki-Kondakci, E. & Ceylandag, R. (2017). The relationship between vicarious experience, social persuasion, psychological state, and chemistry

self-efficacy: The role of mastery experience as a mediator. *Psychol Schs,* 55, pp. 1224–1238. DOI: 10.1002/pits.22201

Carmichael, T. & Cunningham, N. (2017). Theoretical Data Collection and Data Analysis with Gerunds in a Constructivist Grounded Theory Study. *The Electronic Journal of Business Research Methods,* 15, 2, 59-73.

Carpenter Rinaldi D. (1995), *Grounded theory research approach*. In Qualitative Research and in Nursing: Advancing the Humanistic Imperative (Streubert H.J. and Carpenter Rinaldi D., eds), J.B. Lippincott Company, Philadelphia, pp. 145–161.

Carroll, C., Brackenbury, G., Lee, F., Esposito, R. & O'Brien, T. (2020). *Professional Supervision: Guidance for SENCOs and school leaders*. Retrieved from https://discovery.ucl.ac.uk/id/eprint/10090818/1/Carroll_SENCO%20Supervision%20Guidance%20February%202020.pdf [Accessed 17.04.21].

Carroll, Brackenbury, Lee, Esposito & O'Brien (2020). Adapted from Helen and Douglas House (2014). *Clinical Supervision Toolkit*. Retrieved from https://www.helenanddouglas.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/hdh-clinical-supervision- toolkit.pdf [Accessed 17.04.21].

Charmaz, K. (1990). 'Discovering' chronic illness: Using grounded theory. Social Science & Medicine, 30(11), 1161–1172

Charmaz, K. (1996). The search for meanings – Grounded theory. In. J. A. Smith, R. Harre & L. Van Lagenhove (Eds.). Rethinking Methods in Psychology (pp. 27–-49). London: Sage Publications.

Charmaz, K. (2003). Grounded theory: Objectivist and constructivist methods. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.). Strategies of qualitative inquiry (pp. 249-291). London: Sage Publications.

Charmaz, K. (2006). *Constructing Grounded Theory: A practical guide through qualitative analysis.* Los Angeles: Sage Publications.

Charmaz, K. (2008). Constructionism and the grounded theory. In J. A. Holstein & J. F. Gubrium (Eds.). *Handbook of constructionist research* (pp. 397– 412). New York: Guildford Press.

Charmaz, K. (2014). *Constructing grounded theory*. London: Sage Publications.

Charmaz, K. (2015). Grounded theory. In J. Smith (Ed.). *Qualitative psychology: A practical guide to research methods* (pp. 53–-84). London: Sage Publications.

Charmaz, K. (2017). Constructivist grounded theory, *The Journal of Positive Psychology,* 12:3, 299-300, DOI: 10.1080/17439760.2016.1262612

Charmaz, K., (2017). The power of constructivist grounded theory for critical inquiry. *Qualitative Inquiry,* 23(1), pp. 34-45.

Charmaz, K. & Bryant, A. (2011). *Grounded theory and credibility.* In. D. Silverman (Ed.). Qualitative research: Theory, method and practice (pp. 291– 309). London: Sage Publications.

Charmaz, K., & Keller, R. (2016). A Personal Journey with Grounded Theory Methodology. Kathy Charmaz in Conversation with Reiner Keller. *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung/Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 17(1), pp. 1-17.

Chiovitti R.F. & Piran N. (2003). Rigour and grounded theory research. *Journal of Advanced Nursing* 44(4), pp. 427–435.

Cho, Y. & Egan, T,M. (2009). Action Learning Research: A Systematic Review and Conceptual Framework. *Human Resource Development Review* 8 (4), 431-462.

Clarke, A. E. (2005). *Situational analysis: Grounded theory after the postmodern turn.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Clarke, A. E. (2006). Feminisms, grounded theory and situational analysis. In S. Hess-Biber and D. Leckenby (Eds): *Handbook of feminist research methods* (pp. 345-370) Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Clarke, A. E. (2007). Grounded theory: Conflicts, debates and situational analysis. In W. Outhwaite and S. P. Turner (Eds): *Handbook of social science methodology* (pp. 838-885) Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Clarke, A. E. (2012). Feminisms, grounded theory and situational analysis revisited. In S. Hess-Biber and D. Leckenby (Eds): *Handbook of feminist research methods* (2nd edn, pp. 388-412). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Clarke, V., Braun, V. & Hayfield, N. (2015). Thematic Analysis. In J. Smith (Ed.). Qualitative psychology: A practical guide to research methods (pp. 222– 248). London: Sage Publications.

Clever, M. & Segal, D. R. (2013). The Demographics of Military Children and Families. *The drummFuture of Children*, 23, 2, 13-39.

Clifton, G (2007). *The Experience of Education of the Army Child:* A thesis submitted in partial requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at Oxford Brookes University.

Cohen, G. (1990) 'Memory' in Roth, I. (ed) *Introduction to Psychology: Volume 2*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates and The Open University.

Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2011). Research Methods in Education (7 edition). London: Routledge.

Collie, R. J. (2014). *Understanding teacher well-being and motivation: Measurement, theory, and change over time* (Doctoral dissertation, University of British Columbia).

Collie, R. J., Malmberg, L. E., Martin, A. J., Sammons, P., & Morin, A. J. (2020). A multilevel person-centered examination of teachers' workplace demands and resources: Links with work-related wellbeing. *Frontiers in psychology*, 11, 626

Collie, R.J. (2019). The development of social and emotional competence at school: An integrated model. *International Journal of Behavioural Development.*

Collie, R.J., & Martin, A.J. (2017). Adaptive and maladaptive work-related motivation among teachers: A person-centred examination and links with well-being. *Teaching and Teacher Education.*

Collie, R.J., Granziera, H., & Martin, A.J. (2018). Teachers' perceived autonomy support and adaptability: An investigation employing the job demands-resources model as relevant to workplace exhaustion, disengagement, and commitment. *Teaching and Teacher Education.*

Collie, R.J., Perry, N.E., & Martin, A.J. (2017). School context and educational system factors impacting educator stress. In McIntyre, T. M., McIntyre, S. E., & Francis, D. J. (Eds.), *Educator stress: An occupational health perspective*. New York, NY: Springer.

Collie, R.J., Shapka, J.D., Perry, N.E., & Martin, A.J. (2015). Teachers' beliefs about social-emotional learning: Identifying teacher profiles and their relations with job stress and satisfaction. *Learning and Instruction*, 39, 148-157.

Cooperrider, D. L. & Srivastva, S. (1987). Appreciative inquiry in organizational life. *Research in Organizational Change and Development*, 1(1), 129–169.

Creswell, J. (1998). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five traditions*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Critchley, H., & Gibbs, S. (2012). The effects of positive psychology on the efficacy beliefs of school staff. *Educational and Child Psychology*, 29, 64–76.

Data Protection Act. (2018). Retrieved from http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2018/12/contents/enacted.

Davis, J. M. & Finke, E. H. (2015). The Experience of Military Families with Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders During Relocation and Separation. *J Autism Dev Disord,* 45, 2019–2034. DOI 10.1007/s10803-015-2364-2.

Davoudi, N., Nayeri, N. D., Raiesifar, A., Poortaghi, S., & Ahmadian, S., 2016. Theoretical Sampling: A Narrative Review. *Nursing and Midwifery Studies* (Inpress).

Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2012). Motivation, personality, and development within embedded social contexts: An overview of self-determination theory. In R. M. Ryan (Ed.), *The oxford handbook of human motivation* (pp. 85-110). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Deci, E.L., and Ryan, R.M. (2000) 'The ''what'' and ''why'' of goal pursuits: Human needs and the self-determination of behaviour', *Psychological Inquiry*, 11, pp. 227-268.

Demerouti, E., Bakker, A.B., Nachreiner, F., & Schaufeli, W.B. (2001). The job demands–resources model of burnout. *Journal of Applied Psychology,* 86, 499-512.

Denzin, N. and Lincoln, Y. 1994, Entering the Field of Qualitative Research, in Denzin, N. and Lincoln, Y. *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, London: Sage Publications.

Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2005). *Handbook of Qualitative Research.* Thousand oaks California: Sage.

Department of Defence Education Activity, (DODEA, 2011). *Military K–12 partners: A DoDEA partnership program*. Retrieved from http://www.militaryk12partners.dodea.edu/index.cfm [Accessed July 2020].

Department for Education (2013) Service children in state school handbook. London: GOV.UK.

Department for Education. (DfE; 2014). *Children and Families Act.* London: DfE.

Department for Education (DfE; 2020). *Policy paper: Pupil Premium*. retrieved from https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pupil-premium/pupil-premium [Accessed July 2020].

Department for Education (DfE) & Department of Health (DoH) (2014). *Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice: 0-25 years.* London: DfE & DoH.

De Pedro, K. M. T., Astor, R. A., Benbenishty, R., Estrada, J. N., Smith, G. D. J., & Esqueda, M. C. (2011). The children of military service members: Challenges, supports, and future educational research. *Review of Educational Research,* 81(4), pp. 566–618.

Devaki, N, Syed Rejina Parveen, M, Priyanka, M., and A. Athilakshmi (2019). "A Vibrant Ray of Hope: Staff Well Being is Key to Students Well Being." *Shanlax International Journal of Education,* 7(3), pp. 34-40.

Dey, I. (1999). *Grounding grounded theory: Guidelines for qualitative inquiry*. London, UK: Academic Press. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/B978-012214640-4/50011-5

Ding, C. S. (2008). Variations in academic performance trajectories during high school transition: Exploring change profiles via multidimensional scaling growth profile analysis. *Educatioanl Research and Evaluation, 14*(4), pp. 305-319.

Division of Educational and Child Psychology (DECP, 2013). *Ethical Trading: Guidelines for practice for educational psychologists*. Leicester: British Psychological Society.

Downing, N. (2019). *Wellbeing: why don't schools offer staff supervision?* Retrieved from: https://www.tes.com/news/mental-health-schools-supervision-teachers [Accessed April 2021].

Draucker, C. B., Martsolf, D. S., Ross, R., & Rusk, T. B., 2007. Theoretical sampling and category development in grounded theory. *Qualitative Health Research,* 17(8), pp. 1137-1148.

Drummet, A. R., Coleman, M. & Cable, S. (2003). Military Families Under Stress: Implications for Family Life Education. *Family Relations,* Vol.52 pp.279-287.

Dunham, J. (1995) Effective School Management, London: Routledge. Dunlop, C. A., & Macdonald, E. B. (2004). *The teachers' health and well-being study Scotland.* Glasgow: NHS Scotland.

Dunne, C., 2011. The place of the literature review in grounded theory research. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology,* 14(2), pp. 111-124

Dunsmuir, S. & Leadbetter, J. (2010). *Professional supervision: Guidelines for practice for*

educational psychologists. Leicester: British Psychological Society Division of Educational and Child PsychologyEgan, T. (2002). Grounded theory research and theory building. *Advances in Developing Human Resources*, 4(3), 277-95.

Ekers, K. (2020). *An exploration of teachers' and mental health first aiders' constructs of mental health in secondary schools* (Doctoral dissertation, University of East London).

Elliott, M., & Lazenbatt, A. (2005). How to recognize a 'quality' grounded theory research study. *Australian Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 22(3), 48-52.

Ender, M. (2002). *Military Brats and Other Global Nomads*. Westport, USA, Praeger Publishing.

Ender, M. G. (2005). Military Brats: Film Representations of Children from Military Families. *Armed Forces & Society*, *32*(1), pp. 24–43.

Esqueda, M. C., Astor, R. A. & Tunac De Pedro, K. M. (2012). A Call to Duty: Eduactional Policy and School Reform Addressinmg the Needs of Children from Military Families. *Educational Research, 41*(2), pp. 65-70.

Etikan, I., Abubakar, S., Rukayya, M. & Alkassim, S. (2016). Comparison of Convenience Sampling and Purposive Sampling. American Journal of Theoretical and Applied Statistics, 5, (1), 1-4.

Evans, K. (2016). *Primary School Teachers' Experiences of Well-Being. How Can Well – Being Be Supported by Schools and Educational Psychologists?* (Doctoral Thesis, The University of Birmingham, Birmingham, England). Retrieved from https://etheses.bham.ac.uk/id/eprint/7087/.

Evers, A. T., van der Heijden, B. I., Kreijns, K., & Vermeulen, M. (2016). Job demands, job resources, and flexible competence: The mediating role of teachers' professional development at work. *Journal of Career Development*, 43(3), 227-243.

Evers, W.J.G., Tomic, W., & Brouwers, A. (2004). Burnout among teachers. *School Psychology International,* 25, 131-148.

Fallon. K., Woods, K. & Rooney, S. (2010). A discussion of the developing role of educational psychologists within Children's Services, *Educational Psychology in Practice,* 26(1), 1-23, DOI: 10.1080/02667360903522744.

Farrell, P. (2009). The developing role of school and educational psychologists in supporting children, schools, and families. *Papeles del Psicólogico,* 30(1), 74-85.

Fernet, C., Guay, F., Senécal, C., & Austin, S. (2012). Predicting intraindividual changes in teacher burnout: The role of perceived school environment and motivational factors. *Teaching and teacher education,* 28(4), 514-525

Flick, U. (2019). From intuition to reflexive construction: Research design and triangulation in grounded theory research. In A. Bryant & K. Charmaz (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of current developments in grounded theory*. SAGE.

Flake, E. M., Davis, B. E., Johnson, P. L. & Middleton, L. S. (August 2009). The Psychosocial Effects of Deployment on Military Children. *Journal of Developmental & Behavioural Paediatrics*. 30(4), pp. 271-278.

Forest, M., & Pearpoint, J. (1996). *Solution circles: getting unstuck, a creative problem-solving tool*. http://www.inclusion.com/ttsolutioncircle.html [Accessed April 2021].

Fredrickson, B. L. (2001). The role of positive emotions in positive psychology: the broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions. *American psychologist,* 56(3), 218.

Garland, L., Linehan, T., Merrett, N., Smith, J. & Payne, C. (2019). *Ten steps towards school staff wellbeing Anna Freud National Centre for Children and Families*. Retrieved from https://www.annafreud.org/media/8459/school-staff-wellbeing-reportfinal.pdf [Accessed April 2021].

Gibbs, S. (2007). Teachers' perceptions of efficacy: Beliefs that may support inclusion or

segregation. *Educational and Child Psychology*, 24, 47–53.

Gibbs, S., & Miller, A. (2014). Teachers' resilience and wellbeing: a role for educational psychology, *Teachers and Teaching*, 20 (5), 609-621.

Gibson, S., Oliver, L., & Dennison, M. (2015) *Workload Challenge: Analysis of teacher consultation responses Research report.* Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_ data/file/401406/R445_-_Workload_Challenge_-_Analysis_of_teacher_consultation_responses_FINAL.pdf [Accessed April 2021].

Glaser, B. G. (1978). *Theoretical sensitivity*. Mill Valley, CA: Sociology Press

Glaser, B. G., & Holton, J., 2007. Remodeling grounded theory. *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 5(2), pp. 47-68.

Glaser, B. G. & Strauss, A. L. (1967). *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research.* Beverly Hills, California: Sage.

Glover, J. (2009). *Every night you cry. The realities of having a parent in prison. Believe in children*. Barnardo's, 2. Retrieved from http://www.barnardos.org.uk/everynightyoucry_briefing_final_double.pdf [Accessed July 2020].

Goddard, R.D., Hoy, W.K. & Woolfolk, H.A. (2004). Collective efficacy beliefs: Theoretical developments, empirical evidence and future directions. *Educational Researcher*, 33(3), 3–13.

Goldkuhl, G., & Cronholm, S. (2010). Adding theoretical grounding to grounded theory: Toward multi-grounded theory. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 9, pp. 187–205.

Guba E. & Lincoln Y. (1989) *Fourth Generation Evaluation*. Sage Publications, Newbury Park, CA.

Guba, E.G., & Lincoln, Y.S. (1994). Competing paradigms in qualitative research. In N. K. Denzin & Y.S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* pp.105-117. London: Sage.

Gubrium, J. F. & & Holstein, J. A. (2001). From the individual interview to the interview society. In J. A. Gubrium & J. F. Holstein (EDS) *Handbook of interview research: Context and method* (pp. 3-32) Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Guest, G., Bunce, A., & Johnson, L. (2006). How many interviews are enough? An experiment with data saturation and variability. *Field Methods,* 18(1), pp. 59-82.

Gest, S. D., Welsh, J. A., & Domitrovich, C. E. (2005). Behavioural predictors of changes in social relatedness and liking school in elementary school. *Journal of School Psychology,* 43, 281–301.

Gribble, R., Connelly, V. & Fear, N. T. (2020). Living a life less ordinary: What can families of essential workers responding to COVID-10 learn from UK military families? *Journal of military, Veteran and Family Health*, 6(2), pp. 27-34.

Gulliford, A. (2015). *Evidence-based practice in educational psychology: The nature of evidence.* In Cline, T., Gulliford, A., & Birch, S. (Eds.), Educational Psychology (Second, pp. 31–56). London: Routledge

Guskey, T. R. (1988). Teacher efficacy, self-concept, and attitudes toward the implementation of instructional innovation. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 4, 63-69.

Hammersley, M. and Atkinson, P. (1995). *Ethnography, Principles in Practice*, (2nd ed), London: Routledge.

Hanewald, R. (2013). Transition Between Primary and Secondary School: Why is it Important and How can it be Supported? *Australian Journal of Teacher Eduaction, 38*(1), pp. 62-74.

Hanko, G. (1995). *Special needs in ordinary classrooms. From staff support to staff development* (3rd edition). London: David Fulton Publishers.

Hanko, G. (1999). *Increasing competence through collaborative problem-solving*. London: David Fulton Publishers.

Hardy, J., & Majors, K. (2017). Qualitative methodologies that give young people a voice: Grounded Theory (GT) and Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). In J. Hardy & C. Hobbs. *Using qualitative research to hear the voice of children and young people: The work of British educational psychologists*. Leicester: BPS. (pp. 13-33).

Hatcher, R. (1995). *Audiocassette 2, E826, Gender Issues in Education.* Milton Keynes: The Open University.

Hawkins & Shohet (2012). *Supervision in the helping professions*. McGraw-Hill Education:UK.

Hefling, Kimberly. 2009. More Military Children Seeking Mental Care. *Marine Corps Times. Springfield*, VA: Army Times Publishing Company.

Henwood, K., & Pidgeon, N. (2003). Grounded theory in psychological research. In P. M. Camic, J. E. Rhodes, & L. Yardley (Eds.), *Qualitative research in psychology: Expanding perspectives in methodology and design* (pp. 131-155). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Higgins, H., & Gulliford, A. (2014). Understanding teaching assistant self-efficacy in role and in training: Its susceptibility to influence. *Educational Psychology in Practice, 30*(2),120–138. https://doi.org/10.1080/02667363.2014.896250

Hill, C. E. (2005). Qualitative research. In J. C. Norcross, L. E. Beutler, & R. F. Levant (Eds.), Evidence-based practices in mental health: Debate, dialogue on the fundamental questions (pp. 74 – 80). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Holloway, I. and Todres, L. 2003: The status of method: flexibility, consistency, and coherence. *Qualitative Research* 3, 345/57.

Holmes, E. (2005). *Teacher well-being*. London: Routledge Falmer.

Horten, D. (2005). Consultation with military schools: A proposed model. *Consulting Psychology Journal,* 57(4), pp. 259–265.

House of Commons Defence Committee (2005; 2006). *Educating Service Children: Eleventh Report of Session.* The Stationery Office: London.

House of Commons Defence Committee (2013) The Armed Forces Covenant in Action? Part 3: Educating the Children of Service Personnel: Fourth Report of Session 2013-14. London: The Stationery Office.

Hoy, A. W. (2008). What motivates teachers? Important work on a complex question. *Learning and Instruction*, 18, 492–498.

Hulusi, H.M. & Maggs, P. (2015). Containing the containers: Work Discussion Group supervision for teachers – a psychodynamic approach. *Educational and Child Psychology*, *32*(3), 30-40.

Hussein, M. E., Hirst, S., Salyers, V., & Osuji, J. (2014). Using Grounded Theory as a Method of Inquiry: Advantages and Disadvantages. *The Qualitative Report,* 19(27), 1-15. Retrieved from https://nsuworks.nova.edu/tqr/vol19/iss27/3 [Accessed July 2020].

Hutchinson, S.A. (1993). Grounded theory: The method. In P.L. Munhall & C.A. Boyd (Eds.), *Nursing research: A qualitative perspective* (2nd ed., pp. 180–212). New York: National League for Nursing Press.

Ingersoll, R. M., & Smith, T. M. (2003). The wrong solution to the teacher shortage. *Keeping Good Teachers, 60*(8), 30-33.

Jackson, E. (2002). Mental health in schools: What about the staff? Thinking about the

impact of work discussion groups for staff in school settings. *Journal of Child Psychotherapy*, 28, 129–146.

Jackson, E. (2008). The Development of Work Discussion Groups in Educational Settings. *Journal of Child Psychotherapy*, 34(1), 62–82.

Jensen, P., Martin, D. & Watanabe, H. (1996). Children's Response to Parental Separation During Operation Desert Storm. *Journal of American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry* 35(4), pp. 433-441.

Jeon, Y. (2004). The Application of Grounded Theory and Symbollic Interactionalism. *Scandinavian Journal of Caring Sciences*, 18, pp. 249-256.

Jolly, R. (1987). *Military Man, Family Man.* London: Brassey's Defence Publishers.

Johnson, W. B. (2002). Consulting in the military context: Implications of the revised training principles. *Consulting Psychology Journal*, 54, pp. 233-241.

Keller, M. & Decoteau, G. (2000). *The Military Child - Mobility and Education*. Bloomington, Indiana, USA: Phi Delta Kappa Educational Foundation.

Kenny, M., & Fourie, R. (2015). Contrasting Classic, Straussian, and Constructivist Grounded Theory: Methodological and Philosophical Conflicts. *The Qualitative Report*, 20(8), 1270-1289. Retrieved from https://nsuworks.nova.edu/tqr/vol20/iss8/

Klassen, R. M., & Chiu, M. M. (2010). Effects on teachers' self-efficacy and job satisfaction: Teacher gender, years of experience, and job stress. *Journal of educational Psychology*, 102(3), 741.

Klassen, R. M., & Chiu, M. M. (2011). The occupational commitment and intention to quit of practicing and pre-service teachers: Influence of self-efficacy, job stress, and teaching context. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 36(2), 114-129.

Klassen, R. M., Perry, N. E., & Frenzel, A. C. (2012). Teachers' relatedness with students: An underemphasized component of teachers' basic psychological needs. *Journal of*

Educational Psychology, 104(1), 150.

Knox, J. & Price, D. H. (1999). Total force and the new American military: Implications for social work practice. *Families in society: The Journal of Contemporary Human Service*, 80(2), pp. 128-137.

Lambert, R., McCarthy, C., O' Donnell, M. & Wang, C. (2009). Measuring elementary teacher stress and coping in the classroom: Validity evidence for the classroom appraisal of resources and demands. *Psychology in the Schools*, 46, 973-988.

Langenkamp, A.G. (2009). Following Different Pathways: Social Integration, Achievement and the Transition to High School. *American Journal of Education*, 116, pp. 69-97.

Leary, M. R., & Baumeister, R. F. (2000). The nature of function of self-esteem: Sociometer theory. *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, 32(1), 1–62.

Leiter, M. P. & Maslach, C. (2015). Burnout. *obo* in Psychology. doi: 10.1093/obo/9780199828340-0166

Lester, P., Leskin, G., Woodward, K., Saltzman, W., Nash, W., Mogil, C., et al. (2010). *Wartime deployment and military children: Applying prevention science to enhance family resilience*. In: MacDermid-Wadsworth S, Riggs D, et al., editors. Risk and resilience in U.S. military families. New York: Springer Science + Business Media, pp. 149–173.

Lincoln, Y. & Guba, E. (1985). *Naturalistic Inquiry*. Beverly Hills, USA: Sage Publications.

Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (2000). Paradigmatic controversies, contradictions and emerging influences. In N. K. Denzin, & Y. S. Lincoln, *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (pp. 163-188). Thousand Oaks California: Sage.

Lincoln, A., Swift, E., & Shortena-Fraser, M. (2008). Psychological adjustment and treatment of children and families with parents deployed in military combat. *Journal of Clinical Psychology, 64*(8), pp. 984-992.

Lo, C. O. (2016). Literature Integration: An Illustration of Theoretical Sensitivity in Grounded Theory Studies. *American Psychological Association,* 44(2), pp. 177-189.University of British Columbia.

MacDonald, M. (2001). Finding a Critical Perspective in GT. In R. Schreiber, & P. N. Stern, *Using grounded Theory in Nursing* (pp. 113-158). New York: Springer.

Mansfield, A. J., Kaufman, J. S., Engel, C. C., & Gaynes, B. N. (2011). Deployment and mental health diagnoses among children of US Army personnel. *Archives of Paediatrics & Adolescent Medicine,* 165, pp. 999–1005.

Martin J. Rosen L. and Sparacino, L. (eds) (2000). *The Military Family: A Practice Guide for Human Service Providers*. Westport, USA: Praeger Publishing.

Marston, J.L. (2008). *Perceptions of Students and Parents involved in Primary to Secondary School Transition Programs*. Brisbane, Qld: Australian Association for Research in Education.

Maslach, C., Schaufeli, W. B. & Leiter, M. P. (2001). Job Burnout. *Annu. Rev. Psychol.* 52, pp. 397–422.

Maxwell, J. A. (2005). *Qualitative research design: An interactive approach* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

McCaffrey, T. (2004). Responding to Crises in Schools: A Consultancy Model for Supporting Schools in Crisis, *Educational and Child Psychology*, 21(3), 109-123.

McCullouch, J., Hall, M. & Ellis, S. (2018). The Education of Children from Military Families: Identity and Agency. Educational Futures, 9(2), pp. 4-27.

McLaughlin et al., (2015) An Evaluation of the Effect of Military service on Mortality: Quantifying the Healthy Soldier Effect.

McLeod, J. (2001). Qualitative research in counselling and psychotherapy. London: Sage.

Miller, A. (1995). Building grounded theory within educational psychology practice.

Educational and Child Psychology, 12(2), 5-14.

Miller, A. (2003). Teachers, parents, and classroom behaviour. A psychosocial approach. Maidenhead: Open University Press.

Mills, J., Bonner, A., & Francis, K. (2006). The Development of Constructivist Grounded Theory. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods, 5*(1), pp. 25-35.

Mintz, J. (2007) Psychodynamic perspectives on teacher stress. *Psychodynamic Practice*, 13 (2), pp. 153-166.

Mmari, K., Bradshaw, C., Sudhinaraset, M., & Blum, R. (2010). Exploring the role of social connectedness among military youth: Perceptions from youth, parents and school personnel. *Children and Youth Care, 39*, pp. 351-366.

Mmari, K., Roche, K. M., Sudhinaraset, M., & Blum, R. (2009). When a parent goes off to war: Exploring the issues faced byadolescents and their families. *Youth and Society, 40*(4), pp. 455-475.

Ministry of Defence (MOD, 2014a). *Defence Statistics (Tri-Service),* 2014.

Ministry of Defence (MOD, 2014b). *Op Herrick Casualty and Fatality Tables, Afghanistan Casualty and Fatality Tables: 2014*. Retrieved from https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/op-herrick-casualty-and-fatality-tables-released-in-2014 [Accessed July 2020].

Ministry of Defence (MOD, 2015). SDSR Defence Key Facts. Retrieved from https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/494895/SDSR_2015_Booklet_vers_15.pdf [Accessed July 2020].

Ministry of Defence [MOD, 2020]. *UK Armed Forces Quarterly Service Personnel Statistics 1 April 2020.* Retrieved from https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/quarterly-service-personnel-statistics-2020/quarterly-service-personnel-statistics-1-april-2020 [Accessed July 2020].

Monsen, J.J. & Frederickson, N. (2008). The Monsen et al. Framework Problem Solving Model 10 years on. In B. Kelly, L. Woolfson & J. Boyle (Eds.), *Frameworks for*

practice in educational psychology: A textbook for trainees and practitioners (pp.69–93). London: Jessica Kingsley.

Morris, R., & Atkinson, C. (2018). The role of educational psychologists in supporting post-16 transition: findings from the literature. *Educational Psychology in Practice, 32*(2), pp. 131-149.

Morrow, S. L. (2007). Qualitative research in counselling psychology: Conceptual foundations. *The Counselling Psychologist*, 35, 209 –235.

Morse J.M., Barrett M., Mayan M., Olsen K. & Spiers (2002) Verification strategies for establishing reliability and validity in qualitative research. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 1(2).

Neal, S., & Frederickson, N. (2016). ASD transition to mainstream secondary: a positive experience? *Educational Psychology in Practice, 32*(4), pp. 355-373.

NHS England (2020) *mental health children and young people*. Retrieved via https://www.england.nhs.uk/mental-health/cyp/ [Accessed July 2020].

Olsen, J. M., Breckler, S. J., & Wiggens, E. C. (2008). *Social psychology alive*. Toronto: Thomson Nelson.

O'Neil, J. (2013). Parliament Defence Commitee. *The Children Support Network*.

Osborne, C., & Burton, S. (2014). Emotional Literacy Support Assistants' views on supervision provided by educational psychologists: What EPs can learn from group supervision. *Educational Psychology in Practice*, *30*(2), 139–155. https://doi.org/10.1080/02667363.2014.899202

Page, S., & Wosket, V. (2001). *Supervising the counsellor: A cyclical model (2nd Edition)*. PA, Brunner-Routledge: Philadelphia.

Pexton, S., Farrants, J., & Yule, W. (2018). The impact of fathers' military deployment on child adjustment: the support needs of primary school children and their families separated during active military service: A pilot study. *Clinical Child Psychology and Psychiatry, 23*(1), pp. 110-124.

Polit, D., & Beck, T. B. (2010). Generalization in quantitative and qualitative research: Myths and strategies. *International Journal of Nursing Studies,* 47, 1451-1458. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.ijnurstu.2010.06.004

Pollock, D. and Van Reken, R. (2001). *Third Culture Kids - The Experience of Growing Up among Worlds*. London: Nicholas Brealey Publishing/Intercultural Press.

Ponterotto, J. G. (2010). Qualitative research in multicultural psychology: Philosophical underpinnings, popular approaches, and ethical considerations. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology*, 16, 581-589.

Ponterotto, J. G., Kuriakose, G., & Granovskaya, Y. (2008). Counselling and psychotherapy. In C. Willig & W. Stainton-Rogers (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of qualitative research in psychology* (pp. 455– 471). London: Sage.

Powell, B., & Gibbs, S. (2011). A case-study exploration of the processes involved in developing efficacy beliefs within the context of managing classroom behaviour. Manuscript in preparation Preparing for Adulthood (2013). *Delivering support and aspiration for disabled young people.* Bath: Preparing for Adulthood Programme.

Price, P. (2002). *Behaviour of Civilian and Military High School Students.* In Ender, M. (ed), Military Brats and Other Global Nomads. Westport, USA: Praeger Publishing.

Price, D., & McCallum, F. (2015). Ecological influences on teachers' wellbeing and "fitness". *Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education,* 43(3), 195-209

Proctor, B. (1988). 'Supervision: a co-operative exercise in accountability'. In M Marken and M. Payne (eds) *Enabling and ensuring.* Leicester: National Youth Bureau and Council for Education and Training in Youth and Community Work.

Proctor, B. (2000). *Group Supervision*. London: Sage Publications.

Rae, T., Cowell, N. & Field, L. (2017). Supporting teachers' well-being in the context of schools for children with social, emotional, and behavioural difficulties. *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties,* 22(3), 200-218, DOI: 10.1080/13632752.2017.1331969

Reid, H. & Soan, S. (2019). Providing support to senior managers in schools via 'clinical' supervision: a purposeful, restorative professional and personal developmental space, *Professional Development in Education*, 45:1, 59-72, DOI: 10.1080/19415257.2018.1427132

Rice, F., Frederickson, N., & Seymour, J. (2010). Assessing pupil concerns about transition to secondary school. *British Journal of Educational Psychology, 81*, pp. 244-263.

Robson, C. (2011). *Real world research*. John Wiley & Sons.

Robson, C. & McCartan, K. (2016). *Real World Research.* (4th Ed.) John Wiley & Sons.

Roffey, S. (2012). Pupil wellbeing - teacher wellbeing: two sides of the same coin? *Educational and Child Psychology*, 29(4), 8-17

Rowe, Keeling, Wessely & Fear (2014). Perceptions of the impact a military career has on children. *Occupational Medicine* 64, pp. 490–496.

Ruff, S. B. & Keim, M. A. (2014). Revolving Doors: The Impact of Multiple School Transitions on Military Children. *The Professional Counsellor*, 4(2), pp. 103–113 http://tpcjournal.nbcc.org © NBCC, Inc. and Affiliates doi:10.15241/sbr.4.2.103

Ryan, R.M., & Deci, E.L. (2017). *Self-determination theory: Basic psychological needs in motivation, development, and wellness*. New York, NY: Guilford Press.

Salter-Jones, E. (2012). Promoting the Emotional Well-Being of Teaching Staff in Secondary Schools. *Educational and Child Psychology*, 29 (4): 18–31

Scaife, J. (Ed). (2001) *Supervision in the mental health professions: a practitioner's guide* (Hove: Brunner – Routledge).

Sciarra, D. T. (1999). The role of the qualitative researcher. In M. Kopala & L. A. Suzuki (Eds.), Using qualitative methods in psychology (pp. 37– 48). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Seidman, I., 2013. Interviewing as qualitative research: A guide for researchers in education and the social sciences. *Teachers' college press.*

Service Children in State Schools (SCISS, 2019). Retrieved from https://www.sciss.org.uk/sciss-neac [Accessed 27th July 2020].

Seymour, C. B. (1998). Children with parents in prison: Child welfare policy, program, and practice issues. *Child Welfare New York*, 77, pp. 469–494.

Skaalvik, E. M., & Skaalvik, S. (2018). Job demands and job resources as predictors of teacher motivation and well-being. *Social Psychology of Education*, 21(5), 1251-1275.

Smith, J.A., Jarman, M. and Osborn, M. (1999). *Doing interpretative phenomenological analysis*. In Murray, M. and Chamberlain, M.M.K., editors, Qualitative health psychology: theories and methods. Sage.

Smith, J.A. and Osborn, M. 2003: Interpretative phenomenological analysis. In Smith, J.A., editor, *Qualitative psychology: a practical guide to methods*. Sage.

Soni, A. (2015). A case study on the use of group supervision with learning mentors. *Educational and Child Psychology, 32* (3), 65-77.

Soni, A. (2019). Opportunities for development: the practice of supervision in early years' provision in England. *International Journal of Early Years Education*, *27*(1), 52–67. https://doi.org/10.1080/09669760.2018.1444586

Squires, G. (2007). *Community Psychology: 'Capacity building' by meeting the needs of the adults in schools*. Conference: International School Psychology Association 29th Annual Colloquium, Tampere, Finland.

Stites, M. L. (2016). How Early Childhood Teachers percieve the Educational Needs of Military Dependent Children. *Early Childhood Educational Journal*, *44*, pp. 107-117.

Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1990). *Basics of Qualitative Research: Grounded Theory Procedures and Techniques.* Newbury Park: Sage.

Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1998). Basics of qualitative research. Grounded theory: techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (2008). Basics of qualitative research. Grounded theory: techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Sutcliffe, A. (2016). Grounded tehory: A method for practitioner reserach by educational psychologists. *Educational & Child Psychology, 33*(3), pp. 44-54.

Swan, R., Barros, E., Chang, Y., Kurek, K.E., Kwon, Y.I., Robbins, N., Wenz, H., Groves, M., Beal, D., MacDermid, S.M. and Weiss, H.M. (2002) *Deployment and Family Separation: An Annotated Bibliography*, West Lafayette, in: Military Family Research Institute.

The Nation's Commitment: Cross-Government Support to our Armed Forces, their Families and Veterans. London: *HMSO.*

The Office of National Statistics (ONS; 2005). *Mental Health of children and young people in Great Britain.*

The Office of National Statistics (ONS; 2013). *Statistical Bulletin: families and Households.*

Thornberg, R. (2012). Informed grounded theory. *Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research,* 56(3), pp. 243-259.

Tobias, A. (2019). A grounded theory study of family coach intervention with persistent school non-attenders. *Educational Psychology in Practice, 35*(1), pp. 17-33.

Tschannen-Moran, M., & Hoy, A. W. (2001). Teacher efficacy: Capturing an elusive construct. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 17, 783–805. doi:Doi: 10.1016/s0742-051x (01)00036-1

Tschannen-Moran, M., & Hoy, A. W. (2007). The differential antecedents of self-efficacy beliefs of novice and experienced teachers. *Teaching and Teacher Education,* 23, 944–956. doi:10.1016/j.tate.2006.05.003

Tschannen-Moran, M. (2009). Fostering teacher professionalism in schools: The role of leadership orientation and trust. Educational Administration Quarterly, 45(2), 217–247.

Turner, B. (1992) Looking Closely and Creating Grounded Theory. Paper presented at ESRD Research Seminar, University of Warwick, 5 March, 1992. In Miller, A. (1995). Building grounded theory within educational psychology practice. *Educational and Child Psychology*, 12(2), 5-14.

Van Dick, R., & Wagner, U. (2001). Stress and strain in teaching: A structural equation approach. British journal of educational psychology, 71(2), 243-259.

Van Droogenbroeck, F., Spruyt, B., & Vanroelen, C. (2014). Burnout among senior teachers: Investigating the role of workload and interpersonal relationships at work. Teaching and Teacher Education, 43, 99-109.

Vygotsky, L. (1962). *Thought and language*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Weidberg, F. (2017). Giving Cgildren of imprisoned parents a voice. *Educational Psychology in Practice, 33*(4), pp. 371-386.

Wheeler, S., & Richards, K. (2007). The impact of clinical supervision on counsellors and therapists, their practice and their clients. A systematic review of the literature. *Counselling and Psychotherapy Research*, *7*(1), 54–65.

White CJ, de Burgh HT, Fear NT, Iversen AC. 2011 The impact of deployment to Iraq or Afghanistan on military children: a review of the literature. *International Review of Psychiatry,* 23, pp. 210–217.

Wilks-Wiffen, S. (2011). *Voice of a child*. London: Howard League for Penal Reform www.i-hop.org.uk

Willig, C. (2001). *Introducing Qualitative Research in Psychology: Adventures in theory and method.* Buckingham - Philadelphia: Open Univerity Press.

Willis, J., & Baines, E. (2018). The perceived benefits and difficulties in introducing and maintaining supervision groups in a SEMH special school. *Educational Review, 70*(3), 259-279.

Wilson, H. S., & Hutchinson, S. A. (1991). Triangulation of qualitative methods:

Heideggerian hermeneutic and grounded theory. Qualitative Health Research, 1, 263- 276. http://dx doi: 10.1177/104973239100100206

Wong L, Gerras S. *The Effects of Multiple Deployments on Army Adolescents*. Retrieved from http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pubs/display.cfm?pubID=962 [Accessed July 2020].

Wood, J. (2016). *Supervision for school staff: What is valuable about Solution Circles?* UEL EdPsychD thesis.

YouGov. (2018). Teacher Wellbeing Index 2018. Retrieved from https://www.educationsupportpartnership.org.uk/sites/default/files/resources/teacher_wellbeing_index_2018.pdf.

Zafeiriou, M. E. & Gulliford, A. (2020). A grounded theory of educational psychologists' mental health casework in schools: connection, direction, and reconstruction through consultation. *Educational Psychology in Practice*, 36:4, 422-442.

Appendix 1: EBIU census data request form completed by the researcher.

GDPR Compliance Form

Requesters details			
Name:	Amy Biggar		
Team:	Educational Psychology Service	**Job Title:**	Year 2 Trainee Educational Psychologist (TEP)
Email:	Amy.biggar@[redacted].gov.uk	**Telephone:**	07921491942
Date:	27th July 2020	**Deadline:**	September 2020 if possible

Report Details	
Title	This title is that of the TEP's research study that has been approved by the University of Nottingham's ethics committee (ethics reference number: S1270, dated 22nd July 2020) *'Staffs' experience of supporting children from military families within the school context: a grounded theory exploration'*
Purpose Please provide specific details of how the data is to be used	The data provided will be used to identify schools where children from military families are attending. From this, the TEP aims to contact head teachers of schools (in line with the TEP's approved ethics approval) in pursuit of expressions of interest for participants to take part in the research study. All schools, staff and pupil data will be kept anonymous and confidential, on an encrypted and password protected device as per the approved ethics proposal.
Data Fields Required Please only include the data items essential to the report to enable it to fulfil its purpose	If possible, the TEP would like details of: • School's name and location of those who have military children attending • Number of military children attending each setting • The age and/or year group of each military pupil • The length of time each military child has attended for
Data Presentation How is the data to be provided? E.g. excel, PDF etc	No preference
Who is the data shared with? Internally and externally	The data will be used and shared internally. In the write up of the TEP's research thesis, the data may be referenced however in an anonymous and confidential manner as per the approved ethics proposal
Frequency School Census collections are termly (October, January & May) – is this report required termly, just following a specific Census return or as a one off?	One off

Please return completed forms to Educationbiu@[redacted].gov.uk

Appendix 2: Email to schools to discern expressions of interest

From: Amy Biggar
Sent: 07 January 2021 08:39
To [redacted]
Cc: amy.biggar@nottingham.ac.uk
Subject: Military pupils in your school

Hi and Happy New Year,

I am reaching out on the off chance you are able to help, and although I know it may be a long shot given the latest lockdown and all the challenges you are currently facing, I wonder whether one hour of your time is something you could spare?

My name is Amy Biggar, and I am currently the Year 3 Trainee Educational Psychologist for [redacted] EPS. I am working towards completing my doctoral research about the experiences of school staff who are supporting/have supported **pupils from military families**. It is hoped that a greater understanding of the needs of military children and young people will be gained as well as insight into how teachers can too be supported.

I believe that you currently have 6 pupils from military families on roll at your school, so I am wondering whether you and/or another member of your staff would be willing to help me. Volunteering will involve **one hour (approximately) of your time to meet with me via Microsoft Teams at a time and date that is convenient** for you/them.

Please be assured **there is no extra workload for you** to do in advance of the interview, or after. If you were able to engage with my research (and/or know of anybody else in your setting who would be willing to) I would of course provide you with University consent forms. Here, I would just like to highlight that all data will be confidential, recorded and saved on an encrypted device, remain anonymous, and be destroyed after data analysis.

Do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or queries, and please accept my sincere gratitude for even reading this email, I do appreciate how pressured and hectic your role is currently.

Many thanks and best wishes
Amy

Amy Biggar
Trainee Educational Psychologist
Educational Psychology Service
[redacted]

Appendix 3: Information Sheet

School of Psychology

Information Sheet

The University of Nottingham
UNITED KINGDOM · CHINA · MALAYSIA

Title of Project: *Staff's experience of supporting children from military families within the school context: A Grounded Theory Exploration.*

Ethics Approval Number: S1270
Researcher: Amy Biggar | Research Supervisor: Dr Nathan Lambert

Contact details:
Amy Biggar (Trainee Educational Psychologist and Researcher)
Email: amy.biggar@nottingham.ac.uk
Dr Nathan Lambert (Research Supervisor)
Email: nathan.lambertr@nottingham.ac.uk

Dear Head Teacher/SENCO,

My name is Amy Biggar, and I am a Trainee Educational Psychologist at the University of Nottingham and I am currently on placement in [redacted] Educational Psychology Service. As part of my doctoral training, I am conducting a research project to explore staff's experiences of teaching/supporting children from military families in the context of public-civilian schools. I would like to invite your school to take part in this research.

Before deciding, please read the information below outlining the nature and purpose of the research and what it would entail for participants who wish to take part. Please take time to read the following information carefully.

The purpose of my research

The purpose of this research is to explore the experiences of staff who have supported or taught children from military families. While some research has identified many benefits regarding a military child's resilience, their ability to adapt to new situations and to make friends, other research has illustrated many unique stressors that military children/young people face which impact on numerous areas of their school engagement. It is hoped that exploring the experience of staff who have worked with military children will enable identification of important factors in support of these pupils and the staff who support them.

The findings of my research

Once the findings are complete, a summary will be available to share with your school and I will be happy 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. Your school and staff will not be identifiable in these documents. This information will be shared with other professionals and possibly facilitate change within practices at both policy and classroom levels in support of enhancing overall educational experiences for military children attending public-civilian schools, and the staff supporting them.

What will happen?

Taking part will involve a semi-structured interview via Microsoft Teams video call with myself. During the semi-structured interview open-ended questions will be asked which will provide the opportunity to talk freely in relation to their experiences of working with or teaching children from military families. Questions will aim to consider similarities and/or differences noticed between the needs of these pupils and others around communication and interaction; cognition and learning; social, emotional, and mental health, and sensory and physical development. Questions may be extended to consider the support that was required and/or implemented and how this impacted on school staffs' experiences. The online interview should take between 40-50 minutes.

Participation in this study is totally voluntary and you are under no obligation to take part. You are free to withdraw at any point before or during the study. All data collected will be kept confidential, used for research purposes only and will be stored in compliance with the Data Protection Act.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to ask now. We can also be contacted after your participation on the contact details above.

Kind regards

Amy Biggar
If you have any complaints about the study, please contact:
Stephen Jackson (Chair of Ethics Committee)
stephen.jackson@nottingham.ac.uk

Appendix 4: Consent form

The University of Nottingham
UNITED KINGDOM · CHINA · MALAYSIA

School of Psychology
Consent Form

Title of Project: S*taff's experience of supporting children from military families within the school context: A Grounded Theory Exploration.*

Ethics Approval Number: S1270
Researcher: Amy Biggar | Research Supervisor: Dr Nathan Lambert

Contact details:
Amy Biggar (Trainee Educational Psychologist and Researcher)
Email: amy.biggar@nottingham.ac.uk
Dr Nathan Lambert (Research Supervisor)
Email: nathan.lambertr@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? YES/NO (at any time and without giving a reason)
- I give permission for my data from this study to be shared with other researchers provided that my anonymity is completely protected. YES/NO
- Do you agree to take part in the study? YES/NO

"This study has been explained to me to my satisfaction, and I agree to take part. I understand that I am free to withdraw at any time."

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 5: Semi-structured interview schedule

Semi-structured interview schedule
Introductions
Refer to script for the start of the interview.

A Participants' experiences of working with pupils of military families.

1. Can you tell me about your experiences of supporting pupil(s) from military families within the context of your school?
    - *Are there any specific examples you could give?*
    - *In what capacity? Time – duration/frequency. Where – space – allocated? Planned? Off-the-cuff?*
    - *Nature of?*
    - *Do you view these examples as positive or negative? What makes them so?*

B Needs of children from military families.

2. How do you understand the needs of children from military families?
    - *What are their needs?*
    - *What are the highest needs?*
    - *What concerns you most (often)?*

3. What do you feel you understand less well?

4. What has influenced your views of these needs?
    - *What has contributed to this vies?*
    - *Experience?*
    - *School aspects?*
    - *Training?*
    - *Media aspects?*

5. Are there any needs of military pupils that differ from those of other pupils? In what way?
    - *Can you offer any examples?*
    - *Communication and interaction*
    - *Cognition and learning*
    - *Social, emotional, and mental helath*
    - *Sensory and physical development/needs*

6. From your experience, what are the factors that contribute to their needs?
    - *Environmental, social, emotional, and other factors?*
    - *Are there factors that stand out more than others?*

C. SUPPORT

7. What support do you feel children of military families may need?
8. Are there any similarities and/or differences in the supports needed for military children and civilian children?

- *Friendships, academic performance, school engagement, resilience, emotional regulation, socioemotional needs?*
- *Pupil-teacher relationships? What has been the experience of staffs' pupil-staff relationship with military children?*

9. How has your professional role/position in school influenced your experience of supporting pupils?
    - *Time, space, workload, training, pressures, understanding*?

10. How does your understanding of these children and families influence your work/nature of support you offer?
    - *Can you give examples?*

D. Participants' confidence and future ideas

11. How confident do you feel in your work with this group?

12. How confident do you feel in your knowledge of the needs of military pupils?
    - *What do you think underpins this confidence? Training? Prior experience?*

13. Do you receive any support relating to your work with military pupils?
    - *Supervision, resources, reflection time, training?*
    - *Can you tell me more about this?*

14. Are you aware of any supports available for military pupils, and their families?
    - *In-school support e.g., funding, policies?*
    - *External supports e.g., Local Authority/external professional, charities, funding, community?*

15. Are there in-school supports from external agencies that could be helpful? In what way
    - *Such as support for staff/for military pupils/for other pupils/for families?*
    - *From external agencies e.g., educational psychologists?*
    - *Can you think of examples of the capacity in which such support can be offered and to whom?*

16. Is there anything you feel needs to happen/change within your school regarding the support for military pupils?
    - *What about for those who offer the support to these pupils?*
    - *What would that look like?*

Closing statements

- Any further comments/thoughts you would like to add?
- Have we missed anything?
- Is there anything you would like to clarify?
- Do you have any questions?
- Thank the participant for taking part and reiterate ethical matters relating to confidentiality, data storage and right to withdraw.

Note: Questions written in italics are prompts.

Appendix 5a: Questions asked to participant 1

1. Can you please state your role in the school and how many years' experience you have?
2. Thinking about your role, what is your knowledge and experience of working with children and/or young people from military families?
3. Right. So, that is on the back of your own experience?
4. I wonder can you tell me a little bit more about that in terms of your own experience of….
5. I heard at the beginning there you mentioned about slipping through the net despite having the same implications as a military child. Can you tell me a little bit more about your use of the term '*implications'*?
6. So, thinking about your experience supporting this pupil in school - it sounds like staff signposted to you because of your background - can you tell me a little bit more about the nature of that pupil's needs?
7. What I think is standing out massively throughout this, is the support that that young person got from you in school was very much based on your understanding which only really came from your own experience, would you agree?
8. Building on from that, I'm interested in how the needs of military pupils can be understood, the influences that provide that understanding, of course you are leaning on your own experiences but generally, what do you think are the highest needs of military pupils?
9. So, am I right that I'm hearing the importance of ensuring that foundation of emotional regulation is a priority?
10. I feel you may have indirectly answered this with mention to XXXX – but I wonder if there is an area that you feel you understand less well about the needs of military pupils?
11. So, I can hear how your own experiences have influenced the views you are sharing, is there anything else that factor into your understanding of the needs of military pupils?
12. I'm wondering about other influences that impact your understanding, such as the media.
13. I am hearing a confidence in your ability to support these pupils. Would you agree?
14. Would you say there is confidence across the school?
15. Is there anything you think could change or that should change?
16. Is there anything else you would like to add, or do you have any questions?
17. So, you mean pitching it to those higher up?

Appendix 5b: Questions asked to participant 2

1. Can you please state your role and length of time in that role?
2. Just beginning with a bit of background, can you tell me about your experience of supporting pupils from military families within the context of your school?
3. When you say 'it' [build-up of emotion], what is it that you first noticed? Can you expand on that in terms of needs?
4. That was about to be my next question from what you said, actually – so, you notice a difference between genders?
5. Do you know how often that was [how often military parent would go away]?
6. How would you say that you understand the needs of these military pupils – how would you define their needs?
7. So, just to clarify, I am hearing the highest level of need is around emotional support?
8. Are there any concerns that come with that in terms of your role and experience?
9. I wonder then, is there something there about going through it together for that pupil and sibling?
10. In terms of support in school, you touched upon then if something awful happened, and the support you could offer in school, what would that look like? Do you know what that would look like?
11. In terms of day-to-day support, do you feel there is anything that is prevalent regarding how to meet the needs of these pupils or something that distinguishes military pupils as a distinct cohort?
12. I was moving on to ask about what has influenced your understanding of the needs of these pupils – do you feel that your experience is part of that understanding?
13. Would you say that you understand the military/army culture and what that means for these families other than the going away [deployment]?
14. I am wondering whether there are any specific differences you notice other than those emotional needs that you have mentioned?
15. On an individual basis, their needs are met? [clarifying question]
16. So, from your experience then are there any factors that come to mind that play a role in supporting or hindering these pupils in school?
17. How does your role in school influence the support you can offer to these children?
18. Yes, I understand what you're saying. So, in terms of school as a whole but also your position in school, how confident do you feel in working with this group?
19. Thinking about the support that *you* receive, thinking holistically across the school to fit with the [in it together] ethos you've described, is there anything specific that you are aware of such as training or supervision or reflection time?
20. Are you aware of any support available for military children and their families externally – so in the wider community?
21. And thinking about the wider community, so thinking support or understanding outside of your school context?
22. Is there anything else you would like to add, or do you have any questions?

Appendix 5c: Questions asked to participant 3

1. Can I begin by asking you to state your role and how long you have been in that role?
2. Can you tell me about your experience(s) teaching or supporting pupils from military backgrounds within the context of your school?
3. What do you think informs or influences that awareness?
4. Building on from your mention of the community, are you aware of anything that is available, support wise, in the community for military children and families?
5. So, thinking then, in terms of those examples you've given and your understanding, what would you say are the highest needs of military pupils?
6. Can you recall any times when this [military] pupil talks about it [dad in the army]?
7. Do you think the age of this child plays a role in how they present?
8. I wonder, are you aware of things that are in place or available in support of these pupils and families? In school perhaps?
9. In terms of your position/role in school and your understanding based on the experience you've had –how confident would you say you feel in terms of supporting military pupils?
10. So, you're aware of where to signpost or where to access support?
11. Is there anything that you perhaps feel could change or that needs to change in support of, not necessarily the pupils you have spoken about, but for military pupils as a cohort?
12. Is there anything you would like to add or ask?

Appendix 5d: Questions asked to participant 4

1. Can you state your role and length of time in role please?
2. Based on your experience of working to teach or support pupils from military backgrounds, how do you understand the needs of these pupils in the context of school?
3. I hear that you feel emotional needs are the most prevalent for this cohort. Could you elaborate a little more about the emotional ramifications you mention?
4. So, she [military pupil] is quite open about her feelings?
5. How then would you say the most effective way to support her is, or other military pupils?
6. And does your role influence your ability to do that?
7. That really is such a nice gesture, symbolising how she is remembered even when she is not in school, and do you do that with all children?
8. Do you know how often he [military pupil's father] is away?
9. I'm interested in the structures of support for military pupils – but I think what I am hearing from your experience, is that it is you, as the class teacher, who is primarily responsible?
10. I am hearing you are also aware of where you could seek further support from if needed?
11. I feel we have already touched on this a little, but I wonder how confident would you say you feel in supporting military pupils in your school, or in your class?
12. So, I'm hearing, the support you can offer is very much based on your role as class teacher?
13. And what about from a whole school perspective, how confident do you think you are?
14. We've spoken a lot about the support in school, I wonder are you aware of support in the wider community?
15. Would you say there is anything that needs to change as a school?
16. How then would that support look for military pupils transitioning to secondary school I wonder?
17. Is there anything you would like to add or ask?

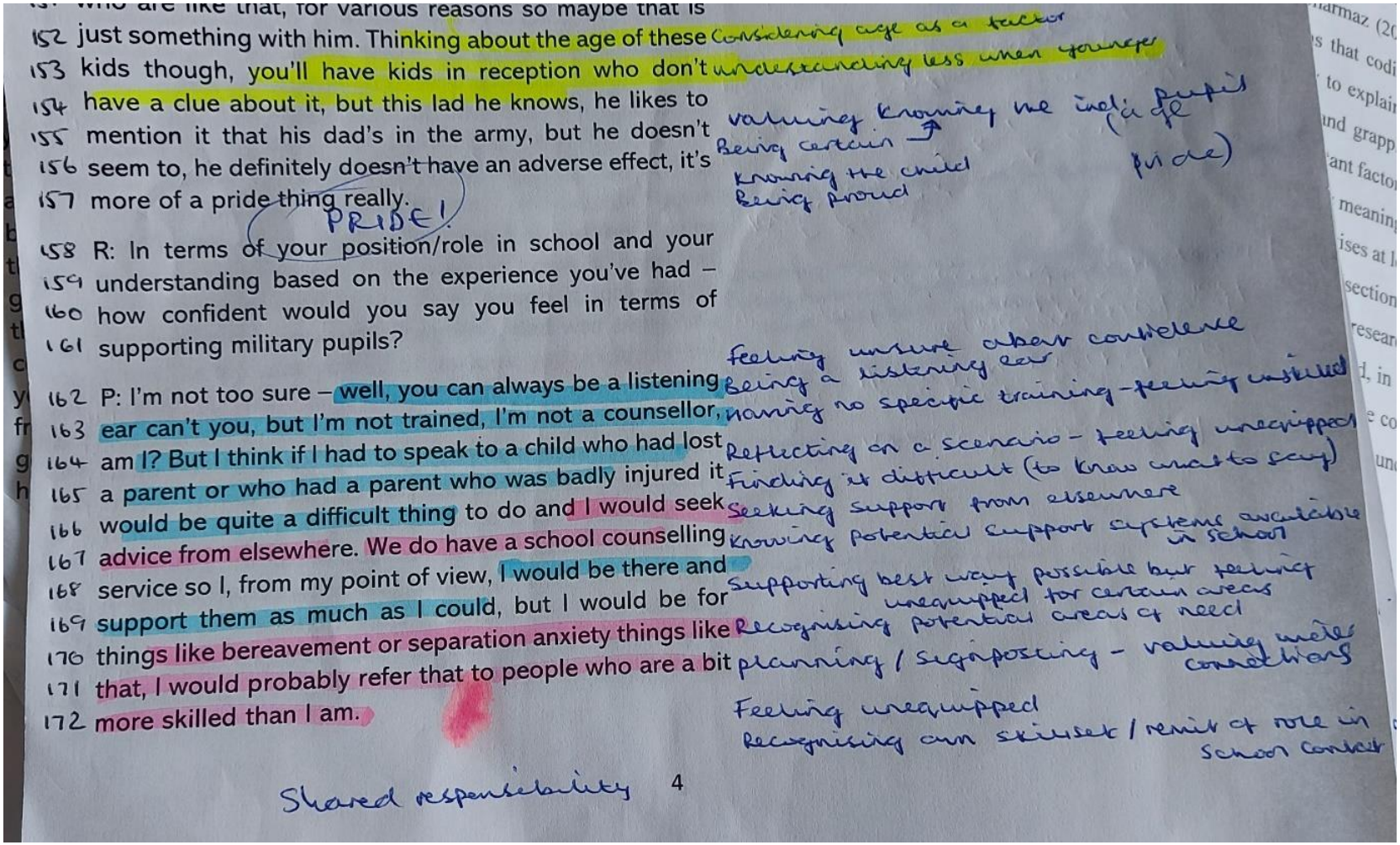
Appendix 6: Researcher script for the start of interviews.

Script for Participant Interviews

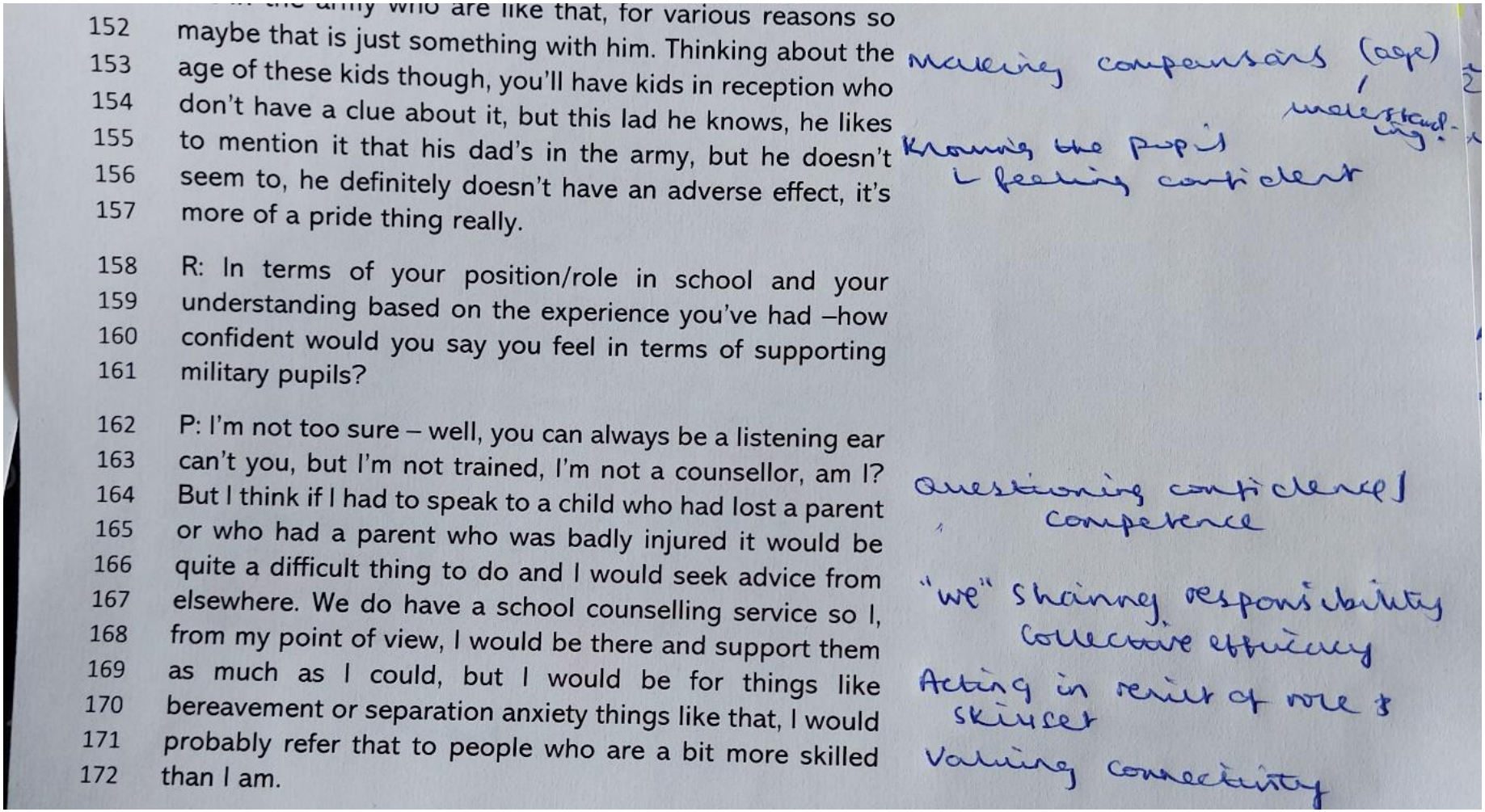
1. Introduction: Introduce myself as a Trainee Educational Psychologist; explain my dual role as a trainee practitioner and a researcher. Reiterate the clear distinction between my role as a researcher here and my professional role within schools, I am working in a researcher capacity during this interview.
2. Aims and rationale of research:
   - My aim is to explore school staffs' (previous and/or current) experiences of supporting and educating pupils from military families in a public civilian school.
   - Clarify what is meant by 'public civilian school' and 'military pupil'.
   - Literature suggests that military pupils as a cohort are largely overlooked by educational researchers, so exploring the experiences of those who support/educate them can contribute to a greater understanding of their needs, as well of those who are supporting them. It is intended that findings can inform EP practice and local authority developments.
3. Data collection:
   - Data will be collected via semi-structured interviews meaning I will begin asking you some specific questions about your own experiences in working to support or teach military pupils, and I may prompt you with additional questions, but the direction of the interview will be guided by your offerings and the discussion that follows.
   - It will be audio recorded and will last up to one hour.
   - You have the right to not answer specific questions and will not need to explain why you do not want to answer.
4. Ethical considerations:
   - Data will be stored securely, and full transcripts will not be included in the thesis.
   - Anonymity will be ensured, including using pseudonym names within the thesis and the anonymised storage of audio-recording, transcripts, observation notes and any personal thoughts or feelings shared during the interview.
   - In the instance of safeguarding concerns arising, regarding the participants or others, participant's rights to confidentiality will be overridden by the professional duty to protect and safeguard children, young people, professionals, and other adults from harm. Such information will be shared with the schools safeguarding lead and reported and recorded following the EPS's safeguarding procedures.
   - You have the right to withdraw from the research up until the point the researcher has begun to process your data, which will be February 2021. You will not be expected to justify or explain your decision, your data will be destroyed, with no negative consequence occurring because of your withdrawal.
   - At the end of the interview, you will be debriefed and provided opportunity for reflection and to ask any questions. I will provide my contact details and those of my supervisors should you have further queries or questions.
   - Interviews will be terminated if it is felt you may be feeling anxious, distressed, or stressed. You can also terminate the interview in the unlikely event of this happening.

5. Do you have any questions?
6. Go through consent form and if the participant is happy to volunteer to take part, receive their written informed consent.
7. Remind them to not to mention their name, the names of colleagues or the name of the school.
8. Ask the participant to state their role and years of experience once the recording starts.

Appendix 7: An example of initial coding



Appendix 8: An example of focused coding



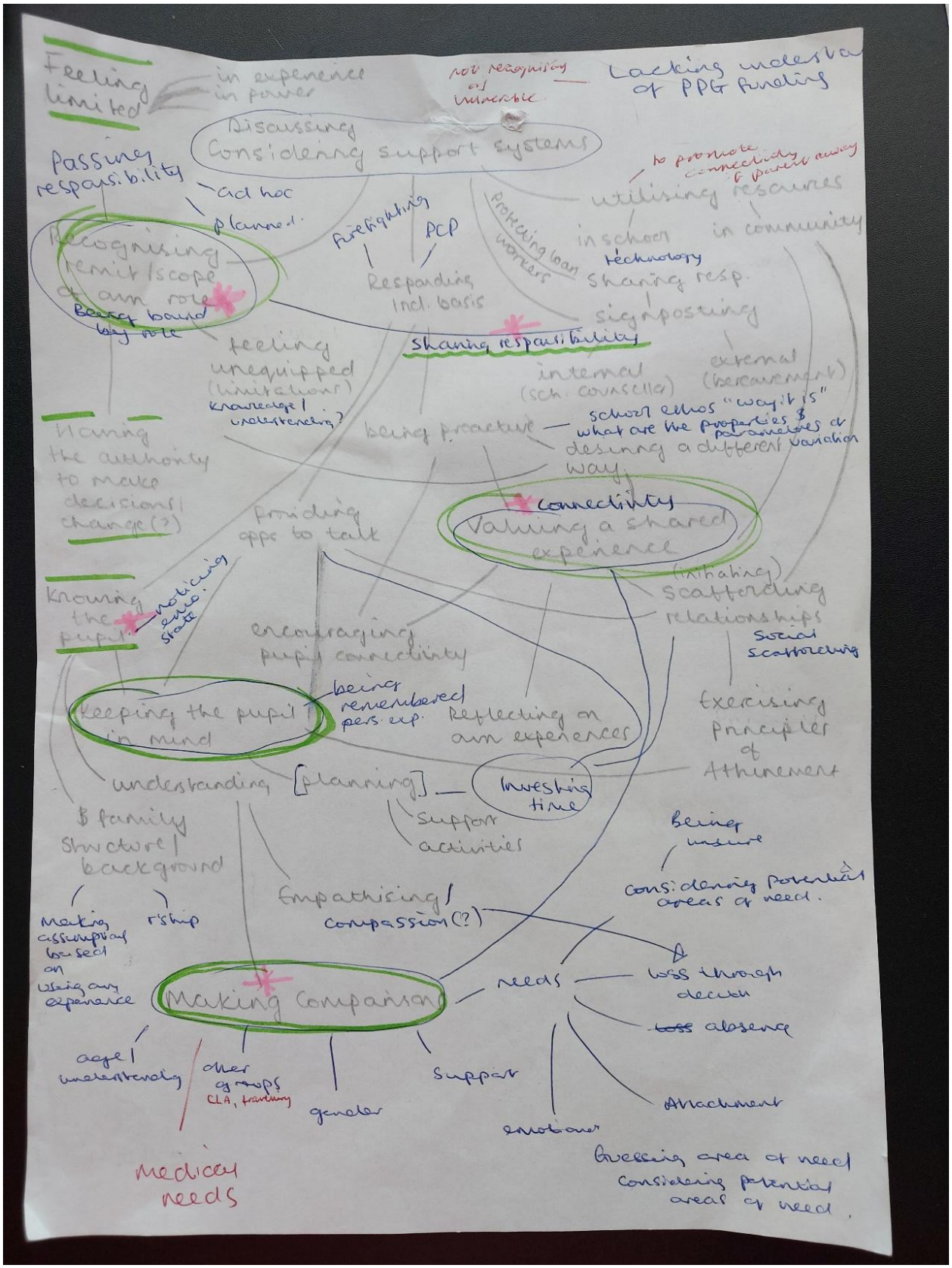
the army who are like that, for various reasons so
maybe that is just something with him. Thinking about the
age of these kids though, you'll have kids in reception who
don't have a clue about it, but this lad he knows, he likes
to mention it that his dad's in the army, but he doesn't
seem to, he definitely doesn't have an adverse effect, it's
more of a pride thing really.

R: In terms of your position/role in school and your
understanding based on the experience you've had –how
confident would you say you feel in terms of supporting
military pupils?

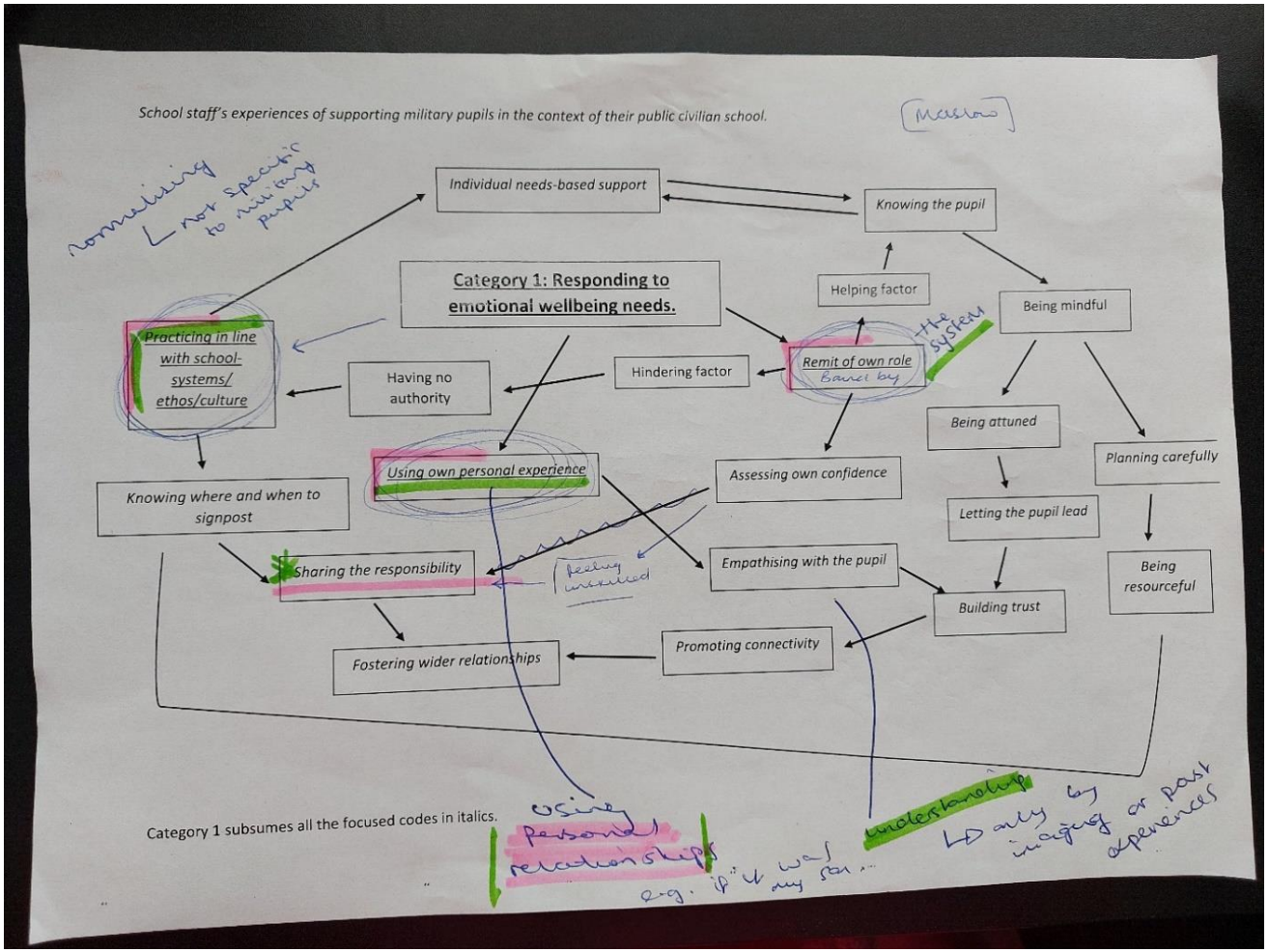
P: I'm not too sure – well, you can always be a listening ear
can't you, but I'm not trained, I'm not a counsellor, am I?
But I think if I had to speak to a child who had lost a parent
or who had a parent who was badly injured it would be
quite a difficult thing to do and I would seek advice from
elsewhere. We do have a school counselling service so I,
from my point of view, I would be there and support them
as much as I could, but I would be for things like
bereavement or separation anxiety things like that, I would
probably refer that to people who are a bit more skilled
than I am.

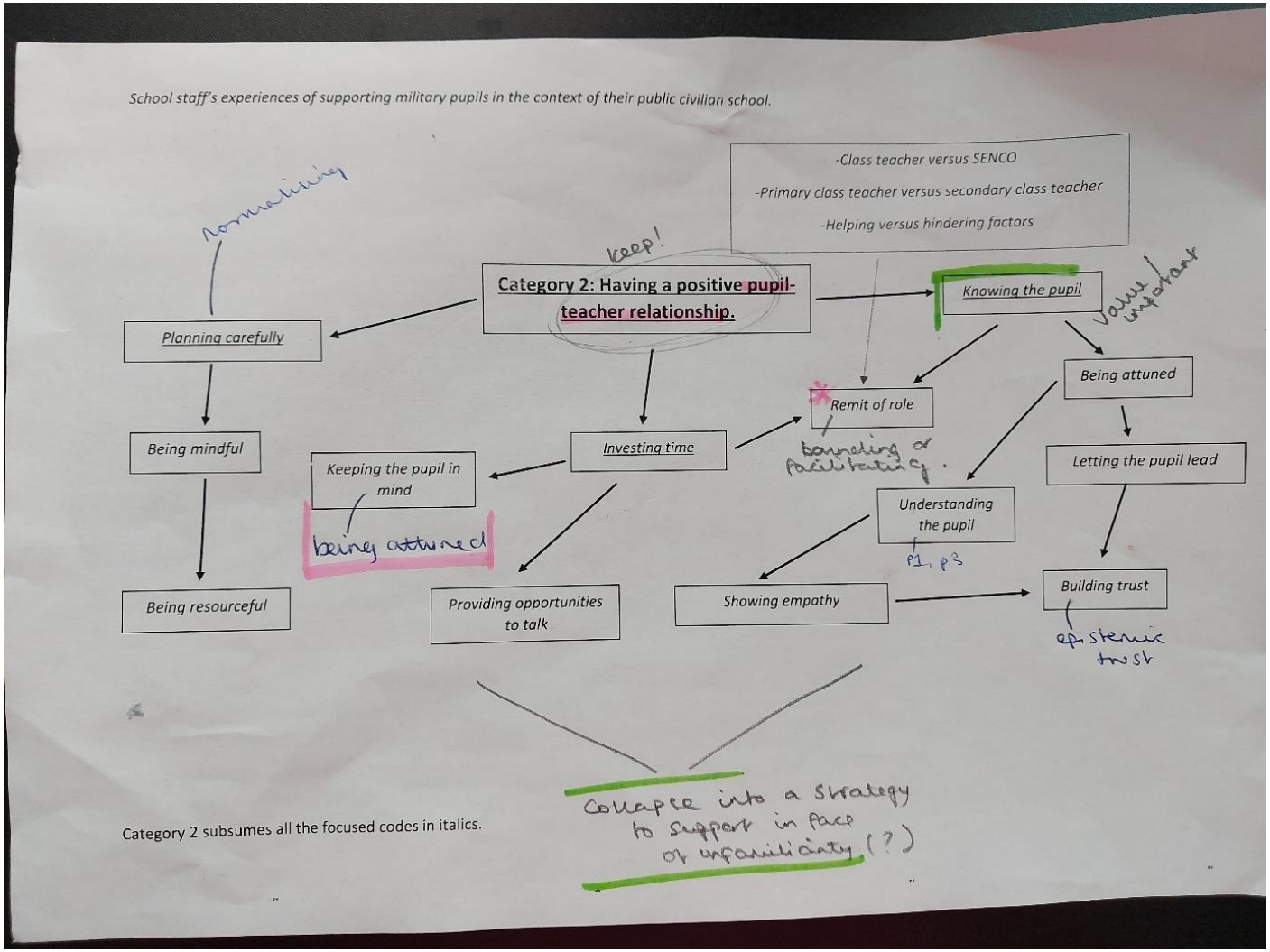
Making comparisons (age) / understanding
Knowing the pupil
Feeling confident
Questioning confidence/competence
"we" sharing responsibility
Collective efficacy
Acting in remit of role & skillset
Valuing connectivity

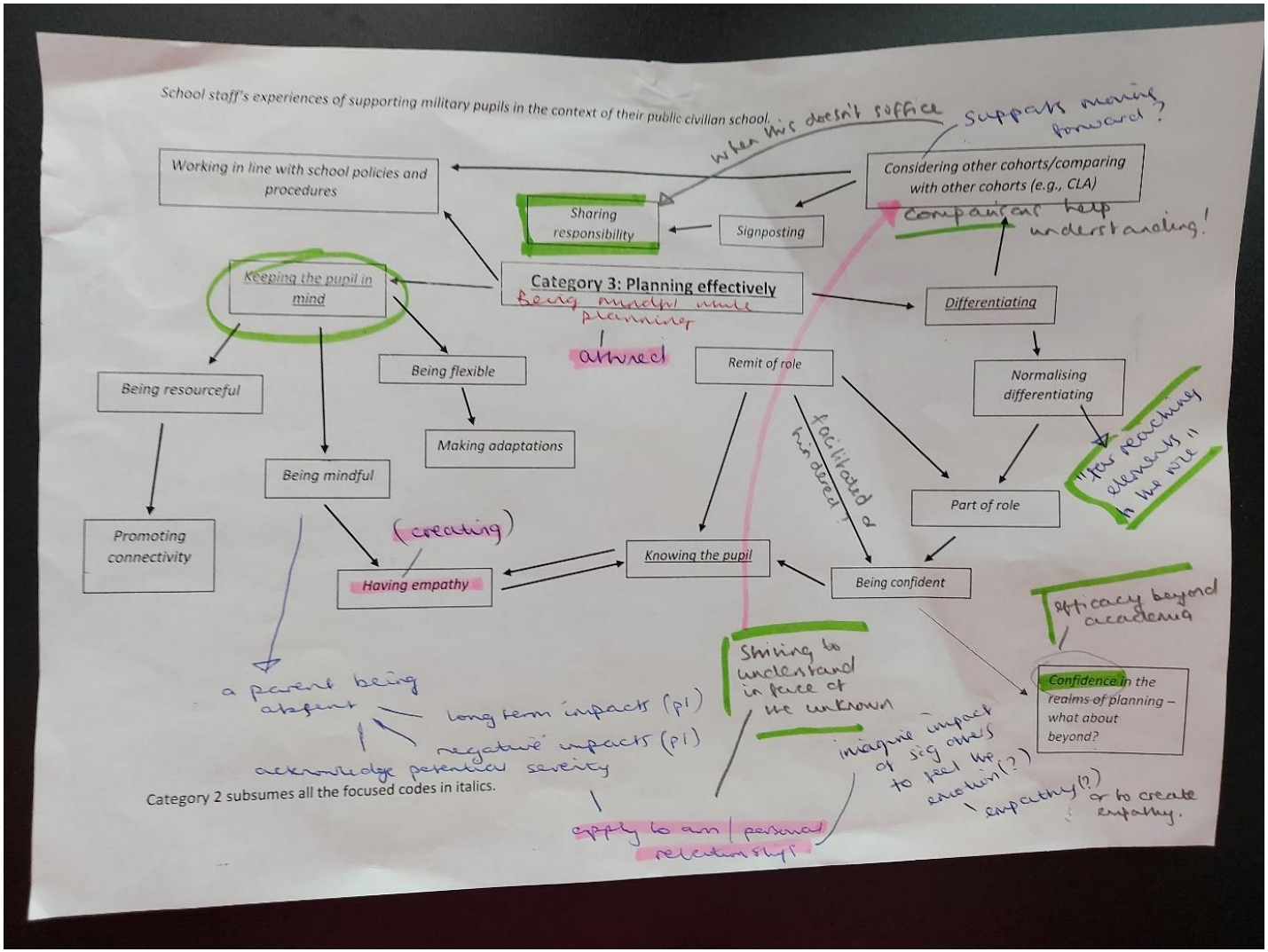
Appendix 9: An example of early diagramming created by the researcher



Appendix 10: **Examples of 'working' mind-map created by the reseracher demonstarting tentative categories that informed theoretical sampling.**




School staff's experiences of supporting military pupils in the context of their public civilian school.
-Class teacher versus SENCO
-Primary class teacher versus secondary class teacher
-Helping versus hindering factors
Normalising
keep!
Category 2: Having a positive pupil-teacher relationship.
Knowing the pupil
value important
Planning carefully
Being attuned
Remit of role
bounding or facilitating
Being mindful
Investing time
Keeping the pupil in mind
being attuned
Letting the pupil lead
Understanding the pupil
P1, P3
Being resourceful
Providing opportunities to talk
Showing empathy
Building trust
epistemic trust
Collapse into a strategy to support in face of unfamiliarity (?)
Category 2 subsumes all the focused codes in italics.


School staff's experiences of supporting military pupils in the context of their public civilian school.
Working in line with school policies and procedures
Sharing responsibility
Signposting
Considering other cohorts/comparing with other cohorts (e.g., CLA)
Keeping the pupil in mind
Category 3: Planning effectively
Differentiating
Being resourceful
Being flexible
Making adaptations
Being mindful
Remit of role
Normalising differentiating
Promoting connectivity
Having empathy
Knowing the pupil
Being confident
Part of role
Confidence in the realms of planning – what about beyond?
Category 2 subsumes all the focused codes in italics.

Appendix 11: Tabularising of focused codes, final focused codes and conceptual categories

Focused codes before analysis	**Focused codes after analysis**	**Conceptual category**
- Striving to understand the needs of military pupils and approaches to support through making comparisons and drawing on wider influences. - Making comparisons to anticipate needs; considering how to support. - Comparing: Gender - noticing differences in emotional responses/emotional wellbeing needs. Medical needs (avoiding labelling) Other 'vulnerable' cohorts Young Carers Child Looked After Dyslexia Academic versus emotional needs Past and present military pupils Children of imprisoned parents - Comparing to previous/present military pupil - Comparing to own family members - Using personal relationships to understand - Using personal experiences - Anticipating needs – emotional needs - Leaning on personal experiences - Recalling own negative experiences	<u>Focused Code 1.1:</u> *Making Comparisons.* <u>Focused Code 1.2:</u> *Drawing upon the familiar – personal relationships and personal experiences.* <u>Focused Code 1.3:</u> *"We're missing a trick"* (in-vivo code) – *advocating a different type of support.*	<u>Category 1:</u> Drawing on wider influences to enhance one's own understanding of pupils from military backgrounds, to consider their needs and approaches to support effectively.

- Referencing media, press and film portrayals. - Feeling confused as to why military pupils are vulnerable. - Questioning pupil premium. - Considering representations in press - Media - negative/Deaths/war/conflict - Considering other portrayals - Film portrayals of military impact – emotional needs. - Considering military lifestyle impact - "*the whole family are in it"* (in-vivo) – drawing on personal experiences and personal relationships to understand: Imagining response of own child Anticipating greatest impact Recalling impact on family friend Recalling an old-school friend - Having empathy - Showing empathy - Comparing empathy and sympathy - Advocating for support, or express confusion of vulnerability. - Feeling bound by role – no authority to promote change. - Feeling bound by role to change support approach. - Working in line with school policies and procedures. - Responding on needs-basis. - "Reacting…" - Firefighting – desiring to be proactive in approach.		

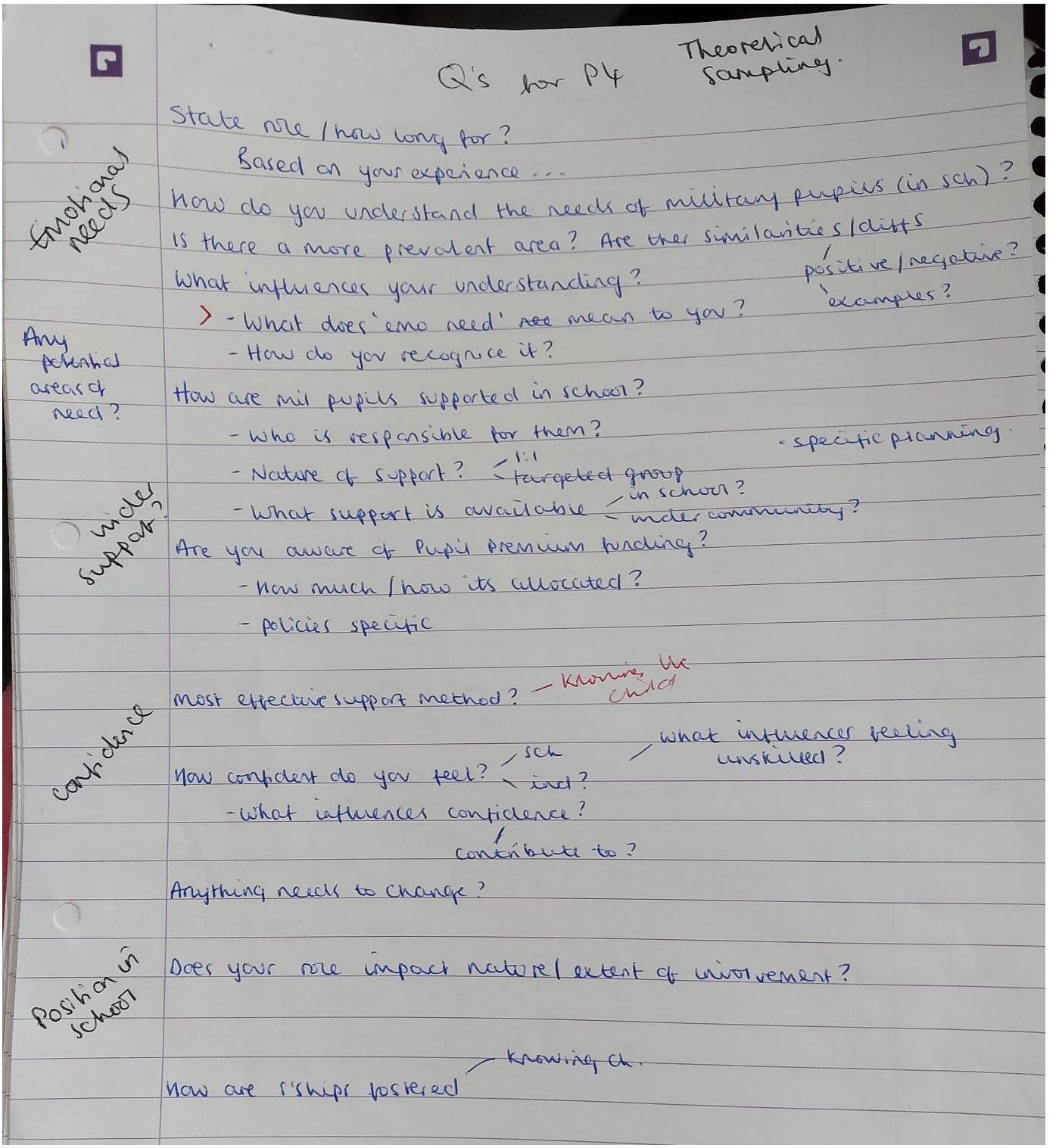
- Feeling bound by role – having no authority to promote change. - Working in line with school policies and procedures. - Feeling frustrated - Feeling unvalued		
- Letting the pupil lead - Being attuned to understanding the pupil - Knowing patterns of behaviour - Being flexible/making adaptations when planning - Having confidence – facilitated by class teacher role. - Being mindful - Being alert - "*Tapping into the child*" (in-vivo) - Being attuned - Investing time/making time to talk/listen - Making use of resources to promote connectivity. - Keeping the child in mind - Using principles of attunement - Knowing patterns of behaviour - Knowing what is typical for a pupil. - Providing opportunities to talk - Building trust - Letting the pupil lead - Checking -in - Being facilitated by role as class teacher. - Acting within remit of own role - Seeing the individual pupil daily.	<u>Focused Code 2.1:</u> *Valuing knowing the individual pupil – facilitated by class-teacher role and pupil-teacher relationship – being attuned; being mindful.* <u>Focused Code 2.2:</u> *Considering one's level of confidence and self-efficacy in understanding the needs of pupils from military backgrounds and to support them effectively.* <u>Focused Code 2.3:</u> *Restoring confidence: the shift from 'I-to-we'; collective efficacy.*	<u>Category 2:</u> Far reaching elements to the role: Teacher self-efficacy beyond academia

- Differentiating – normalising as part of role – - "Far reaching elements of the role". - Being the "first port of call" (in-vivo) as class teacher. - Appreciating position in class. - Knowing patterns of behaviour – noticing when a change. - Importance of knowing the child – responsibility to know the individual. - Questioning confidence and skillset "*if the worst happened*" (in-vivo). - Valuing the opportunity to know the individual pupil, to respond/support accordingly/appropriately (informs planning) - Being resourceful when planning - Feeling unskilled. - Feeling confident in realms of experience to date. - Knowing where to signpost. - Considering emotional wellbeing needs. - Responding on needs-basis. - "Reacting…" - Firefighting – desire to be proactive in approach. - We are in it together - "*we…*" - Knowing how to proceed. - Fostering wider relationships in the community. - Leaning on colleagues and other professionals. - Sharing responsibility. - Feeling supported by colleagues.		

- Promoting connectivity - Being resourceful to make connections – using technology. - Keeping connected/ Scaffolding relationships Pupil-pupil Teacher-pupil Home-school School-school Community - Fostering wider relationships in the community. - Leaning on colleagues and other professionals. - Sharing responsibility. - Feeling supported by colleagues. - Being resourceful. - Building (epistemic?) trust – promoting pupil-staff relationships. - Knowing where to Signposting - "if the worst happened". - Sharing of information Home-school School-absent parent Pupil-absent parent Pupil-teacher - Working in line with school policies and procedures. - Feeling supported through ethos of the school/SLT. - Recognising the school 'way'.	<u>Focused Code 3.1:</u> *Valuing and promoting relational bonding and connectivity within and beyond the school context.* <u>Focused Code 3.2:</u> *The school system (a helping or hindering factor); a system that empowers versus a system of power; collective efficacy; teacher autonomy and efficacy beliefs.*	<u>Category 3:</u> Easing the weight of responsibility through a shared and collective approach.

- Working within school systems. - Working as a team- "*We are in it together*" (in-vivo) - "*we…*" links with Category 2. - Feeling confident in whole school approach – collective. - Knowing how to proceed. - Being able to signpost - Responding on an individual need basis. - Having a consistent approach for all pupils – responsive. - Feeling bound by the system. - Being reactive rather than proactive. - "Firefighting" (in-vivo) as a response to pupil needs – desiring a different approach. - Feeling a different approach is required. - Advocating a different type of support. - Feeling frustrated – unable to suggest a different type of support. - Perceiving no authority to promote change.		

Appendix 12: Amended interview scheduled: theoretical sampling



Q's for P4 — Theoretical sampling.

State role / how long for?

Based on your experience ...

How do you understand the needs of military pupils (in sch)?

Is there a more prevalent area? Are ther similarities / diffs

What influences your understanding?

- What does 'emo need' ~~see~~ mean to you? — positive / negative? examples?
- How do you recognise it?

Emotional needs

Any potential areas of need?

How are mil pupils supported in school?

- Who is responsible for them?
- Nature of support? — 1:1 — ~~targeted group~~ — specific planning.
- What support is available — in school? — under community?

wider support?

Are you aware of Pupil Premium funding?

- How much / how its allocated?
- policies specific

Most effective support method? — knowing the child

confidence

How confident do you feel? — sch — ind? — what influences feeling unskilled?

- What influences confidence? — contribute to?

Anything needs to change?

Position in school

Does your role impact nature / extent of involvement?

How are r'ships fostered — knowing ch.

Appendix 13: Example memo demonstrating the researcher's reflections after final participant interview – reflecting shift in preconceptions of the researcher.

Memo. **22.02.21.**

I am in the process of analysing (focused coding) the final participant interview transcript (theoretical sampling). I now wonder how my engagement with prior literature was perhaps biased - shaded by my assumptions that military pupils are vulnerable (perhaps underpinned by my fears of my own children experiencing an absent father in the future). Did I fully engage with the variants of views in extant literature? Did I fully explore the life of a military child, or is my literature review a product of my attentional biases?

I recognise the shift in my perceptions, and preconceptions - how my mind has opened and how I have closely engaged with participant interview transcripts – letting the data speak for itself, rather than oppressing participant views with my own prejudices. My views have actually shifted!

As a researcher I feel I have achieved appropriate and thorough coding – sticking closely to the data and applying action and meaning instead of my own (now different) views (Charmaz, 2014). Benefits to both my professional and personal development.

Instead of finding the 'gaps' in what military pupils are 'not getting' – I am identifying what *is* in place for them. '*Far reaching elements for the role'* is really grabbing my attention – I am reflecting on how teacher training perhaps equips staff to attend to multiple and varying needs, whether they are well known and presented in literature or whether they pose a lacking confidence on staff ability to move forward – staff use their skills to meet needs, even if beyond their immediate skillset.

Am I now looking at the support needed for staff as opposed to that of military pupils, all vulnerable pupils, all pupils in general? Is supervision appropriate in school given the extent of demands placed on school staff?

Comparing previous participant transcripts (constant comparison method used effectively) I can reframe some excerpts. Staff confidence and perceived competence feels important here. How is this supported or facilitated in school?

Appendix 14: Ethics committee acceptance letter

The University of Nottingham
UNITED KINGDOM · CHINA · MALAYSIA

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

T: +44 (0)115 8467403 or (0)115 9514344

SJ/tp

Ref: S1270

Wednesday 22nd July 2020

Dear Nathan Lambert and Amy Biggar,

Ethics Committee Review

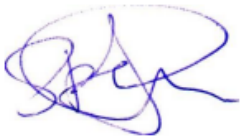
Thank you for submitting an account of your proposed research **'Staff's experience of supporting children from military families within the school context: A Grounded Theory Exploration.'**

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 15: Debrief letter

The University of Nottingham
UNITED KINGDOM · CHINA · MALAYSIA

School of Psychology

Debrief Letter

Title of Project: *Staff's experience of supporting children from military families within the school context: A Grounded Theory Exploration.*
Ethics Approval Number: S1270
Researcher: Amy Biggar | Research Supervisor: Dr Nathan Lambert

Contact details:
Amy Biggar (Trainee Educational Psychologist and Researcher)
Email: amy.biggar@nottingham.ac.uk
Dr Nathan Lambert (Research Supervisor)
Email: nathan.lambertr@nottingham.ac.uk

I am writing to thank you for giving up your time to take part in my research. It is very much appreciated.

The purpose of the research was to explore the experiences of staff who have supported or taught children from military families. The questions used within the semi-structured interviews were chosen to explore your practice, knowledge, understanding, thoughts, feelings, and any differences recognised relating to skills/needs of military children, as well as practice, polices, procedures in your public-civilian school context relating to military dependent pupils.

I am still in the process of synthesising and analysing data, however, if you would like a summary of my findings when they are available, please let me know.

If you have any concerns or questions at this point or in the future, do not hesitate to contact me at amy.biggar@nottingham.ac.uk. I will get back to you and help as best I can or signpost you to another appropriate service.

Many thanks and best wishes

Amy Biggar 

Appendix 16: Research journey timeline