# Factors Associated with Children's Defending against Unkind Behaviour – A Mixed Methods Study

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## Abstract

Over the past forty years the topic of bullying has generated considerable research interest. Schools spend a large amount of their budgets on interventions designed to reduce the incidence of bullying and to promote prosocial behaviours (Viding, McCrory, Blakemore and Frederickson, 2011). Nationwide initiatives such as the Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) curriculum (DfE, 2005) have been widely implemented across schools in the United Kingdom with a view to increasing social and emotional competence and reducing bullying. Despite this, bullying remains a prominent concern and anti-bullying interventions do not always seem to lead to a significant decrease in bullying behaviour (Salmivalli, Kaukiainen & Voeten, 2005).

Although much of the bullying research has focused primarily on bullies and victims it seems more widely accepted now that bullying is a group process which happens within a social context. More recent studies have looked at the other roles that children can adopt in a bullying situation such as defender, reinforcer, assistant and outsider (Salmivalli, 1996), however research in this areas is relatively limited to date. Existing research is largely quantitative in design and is considerably reliant on fixed response questionnaires.

The current study looks at defending in particular and explores the factors associated with children's expressed intentions to defend. Due to complexities involved in operationalising bullying as a construct, the focus of this study is on unkind behaviour rather than bullying. A mixed methods approach is used incorporating both qualitative and quantitative methodologies. 113 upper Key Stage 2 children (66 boys and 47 girls) from two schools in the south east of England completed questionnaires designed to assess behavioural tendencies in relation to unkindness, friendship quality, social group structure and attitudes towards unkind behaviour. Paired interviews were conducted with 32 children (17 girls and 15 boys). Correlation, regression and thematic analyses were used to explore factors seemingly associated with defending. Results are discussed in light of existing literature on defending along with implications for the professional practice of Educational Psychologists (EPs).

I hereby declare that, except where explicit attribution is made, the work presented in this thesis is entirely my own.

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# Chapter 1: Introduction

## 1.1 Study Overview

The current study uses an ecosystemic framework (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) to focus on one aspect of peer relationships – unkind behaviour - with a view to exploring how children themselves can be supported to defend victims of peer aggression. Ecosystemic theory states that child development is influenced by the environmental systems surrounding that child. These systems include the microsystem (the child's immediate environment such as family, friends and teachers), the mesosystem (the interactions between the various microsystems), the exosystem (school and community environment), the macro system (cultural context), and the chronosystem (socio-historical context). An ecosystemic framework which considers the influence of multiple interacting systems (political, school, family, peer and individual) on child behaviour is used in this study as peer aggression is a complex issue which cannot be fully understood through linear examination of one system alone (e.g., a child's individual personality characteristics).

## 1.2 The UK Bullying Context

In recent years in the United Kingdom there has been intense public concern and debate about the issue of bullying – a form of peer aggression. Blatchford and Baines (2010) describe how high profile cases of child aggression have pushed the subject of bullying into the UK media spotlight. The negative behaviour of children and adolescents has been the subject of much media attention. Violence between London gangs, an increased focus on the issue of cyber bullying, as well as a focus on high profile suicide cases reported to be the result of bullying, have all been documented by UK media in recent years and seem to have contributed to a sense that the behaviour of young people is deteriorating. In addition, Childline have reported receiving a high volume of

bullying related distress phone calls (National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, 2013). It appears that bullying remains a very real problem for children and young people in the UK. As a primary role of the Educational Psychologist (EP) is to promote the wellbeing of children, schools and families, bullying is thus an important issue that Educational Psychology Services should strive to address.

### ***1.2.1 The Political and Legislative Context***

The Every Child Matters Agenda (2003) and The Children Act (2004) set out a legal duty for schools and Local Authorities to ensure that the happiness and well-being of children is actively promoted in all aspects of education. The law requires Children's Services to work towards improving the well-being of children in their area (The Children Act, 2004). The Education and Inspections Act (EIA) (2006) sets out a legal duty for schools to prevent bullying in all its forms (Smith, Smith, Osborn & Samara, 2008) and schools in England are legally obliged to have an anti-bullying policy. A focus on preventing bullying is also maintained in the (proposed) 2014 Children and Families Act where it is argued that too many students with special educational needs are bullied in UK schools. It would seem from the content of recent legislation, that bullying is considered a problem within UK society which still needs addressing.

### ***1.2.2 The School Context***

Nationwide initiatives such as The SEAL (Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning) Curriculum (DfES, 2005) have been implemented in UK schools with a view to developing children's social and emotional competence and promoting pro-social behaviour. Despite this, bullying remains a prominent concern. In addition, anti-bullying interventions incorporating a focus on the development of social and emotional skills have not always led to a significant reduction in the amount of bullying occurring (Salmivalli, Kaukiainen & Voeten, 2005), so it

seems that there is more to defending against bullying than social and emotional competence.

## 1.3 The Shortcomings of Research to Date

### ***1.3.1 Research Methods***

The majority of bullying research has been based on adult understanding of bullying which does not necessarily equate to children's experience. There is an overreliance on self-report questionnaires which allow little flexibility in responding. The majority of research is cross-sectional and correlational in nature which limits our ability to really understand the causes and consequences of bullying and how bullying may change over time. Bullying is a complex process influenced by a variety of inter-related factors. A drive towards evidence-based research and generalisable findings has meant that quantitative methods are over-represented in the research evidence base. It is questionable whether quantitative methods based on adult definitions and administered in artificial structured settings can really provide a deep understanding of an issue as complex as bullying and how it may manifest in real life interactions.

### ***1.3.2 Difficulties with Identification***

Identifying behaviour as bullying is not always easy. At times, children may not even notice that it is happening to them (e.g. gossip and rumours).The subtle nature of peer interactions in unstructured settings such as the school playground may be difficult for adults to monitor (or indeed understand) fully, and so subtle acts of bullying can easily go unnoticed. Indeed, in the personal experience of the author as a teacher, it is often difficult for school staff to disentangle the complexities of a bullying incident when it is reported. Children's accounts often differ, which could be due to their differing perceptions of the situation. In addition, the extent to which a child will feel aggrieved often depends on the nature of their previous interactions with the perpetrator. The

historical context of a child's interactions with a peer who they feel has been unkind towards them can be very hard for teachers to access and understand fully.

The current study aims to extend the scope of previous studies by focusing on *unkind behaviour* rather than bullying. Unkind behaviour in the current study is defined as any act (isolated or repeated, direct or indirect, intentional or unintentional) perpetrated by one or more children towards another, which causes the child (or children) on the receiving end of that act to feel unhappy and to perceive that they have been unfairly treated.

One of the reasons for this decision to focus on unkind behaviour lies in the ambiguous nature of the concept of bullying itself. Definitions of bullying tend to incorporate elements of repetition and the wilful intent to cause harm (e.g. DfE, 2010a); however identifying such elements in acts of peer aggression can be problematic. Isolated incidents of aggression which are not repeated may not be considered bullying, yet such incidents may still cause significant harm to those children on the receiving end of the aggressive act. Assessing the wilful intent to cause harm also poses a challenge. Many aggressive acts may be spontaneous – occurring in the 'heat of the moment' rather than being deliberately premeditated with a view to causing harm. In addition, deciding whether an act is considered bullying or not relies on subjective interpretation. It can often be difficult to pin down whether an incident is bullying or not, as it depends on how the victim, and others, perceive and interpret the bullying action. How a victim interprets the action will in turn determine the level of negative impact. Bullying as it occurs in a real life context is not always clearly defined, and there is no clear point at which an act switches from being an aggressive act to an act of bullying. As such it may be more relevant to focus on incidents of unkind behaviour as these may be more readily identified and understood by children. Furthermore, many bullying incidents may start out as unkind behaviour, and so focusing on unkind behaviour from the outset could facilitate a preventative approach.

### *1.3.3 Difficulties with Intervention*

Children often choose not to report incidents of bullying to adults (Smith & Sharp, 1994). In the author's experience as both a teacher and a Trainee EP, it is often the case that many children who have been treated unfairly do not report it. It often falls to adults to notice that a child has been treated unkindly, or in some cases another child will relay the incident to the adult rather than the child who has been victimised. This situation is worrying as there is the potential for many incidents to go unnoticed. Focusing on how children themselves could intervene could reduce the likelihood of incidents going unnoticed, as peer observers of the incident are often more likely to be present than adults.

## 1.4 A Focus on Defending rather than Bullying

Bullying is a group process during which children can adopt a variety of roles such as bully, victim, assistant, reinforcer, outsider or defender (Salmivalli, 1996). Since the publication of Salmivalli's (1996) study, research has moved away from primarily focusing on bullying and victimisation to involve other behaviours such as defending. Defending in the current study is defined as 'the active intervention of one child (or group of children) to protect or stand up for another child (or children) being treated unkindly. Defending may be direct (e.g., confronting the perpetrator in person) or indirect (e.g., going to fetch an adult without confronting the perpetrator) and can be verbal (e.g., attempting to verbally persuade the perpetrator to stop) or physical (e.g., standing between a perpetrator and victim using the body as a barrier or shield) in nature. Recent research has looked at defending in more detail, attempting to identify characteristics of children who defend with a view to increasing bystander intervention (e.g. Gini, Albiero, Benelli and Altoè, 2008). Such studies tend to be primarily quantitative in nature and focus on isolating specific character traits unique to children who defend. However, these studies have failed to significantly differentiate children who defend from those who do not in terms of personal characteristics. It remains that very little is known about defending and what influences children to intervene when they see bullying. It could be argued

that success in tackling the problem of bullying depends on enabling bystanders to positively intervene to defend. Focusing research on the process of defending and the contexts in which such behaviour occurs (rather than focusing solely on identifying specific character traits unique to those children who defend) could lead to a better understanding of defending behaviour and of how it could be promoted amongst children.

## 1.5 Practical Implications

An increased understanding of child interpersonal dynamics and reflections may help teachers (and EPs) feel more competent at times when they need to intervene to resolve an incident of unkindness. They may be better able to intervene successfully and without generating further problems for the child who was initially targeted.

Knowledge arising from the study could be shared by EPs in consultation with schools and as a result, approaches to intervention could be designed which aim to increase the use of successful defending strategies. In addition, if certain factors which inhibit defending are highlighted, the EP could then make recommendations to schools about how they could attempt to reduce or eliminate such factors.

## 1.6 The Current Study

The current research aims to extend understanding of peer intervention by exploring factors which may be associated with defending. The study will use both quantitative and qualitative approaches to focus on defending against unkind behaviour.

Bullying is a subjective experience which can be difficult to define and to examine empirically through quantitative approaches based on adult conceptualisations and involving closed ended, self-report questionnaires. In addition, bullying can be subtle and covert in nature and not easily recognised

by adults or children themselves. A focus on a more general notion of unkind behaviour, rather than bullying, may overcome some of the problems of definition and identification, while also expanding the research focus to incorporate a broader spectrum of interpersonal behaviour thus potentially helping more children, not just those who would be classified as victims of bullying.

The primary question posed in this research is ‘are there common factors which seem associated with defending?’ By attempting to answer this question the current study aims to increase understanding of the process of defending and the contexts in which defending occurs.

# Chapter 2: Literature Review

## 2.1 Overview

This chapter reviews literature in relation to bullying and defending. An overview of some main findings from bullying research to date is provided along with a critique of some existing studies. Prominent theories of bullying (relative to the current study) are also discussed. Gaps in the existing evidence base are identified and the rationale for the current study is explained.

While the focus of the current study is on unkind behaviour, the majority of the research reviewed in this chapter relates to 'bullying' as the majority of research conducted to date has focused on bullying rather than unkind behaviour. An empirical understanding of unkind behaviour, its causes, consequences and implications, is generally lacking in the current research evidence base.

## 2.2 Bullying

Interest in the prevalence of bullying and its causes is a relatively recent development in the history of psychology. Real research interest in the area is thought to have begun in Norway in the 1970s with the work of Olweus (Sutton, Smith & Swettenham, 1999). Since the early 1980s there has been a dramatic increase in the amount of research articles published in relation to bullying (Stassen Berger, 2007). Reported prevalence rates for engagement in frequent bullying in adolescence vary across studies ranging from 9% to 25% of pupils depending on type of bullying, how it is measured and characteristics of the children such as age, gender and disability status (James, 2010) and estimates of experiencing bullying range from 40-75% (DfE, 1994; Nishina, 2004).

### *2.2.1 Consequences of Bullying*

Studies have shown that victimisation from bullying behaviour is associated with substantial adverse effects on physical and psychological health (Bond, Carlin, Rubin & Patton 2001; Forero, McLellan, Rissel & Bauman, 1999; Salmon, James & Smith, 1998; Williams, Chambers , Logan & Robinson 1998). Hawker and Boulton (2000) found that children who are bullied tend to experience more negative affect and negative thoughts about themselves than other children. The same authors also found that victims of bullying can experience anxiety and depression not only while they are being victimised but also for years afterwards. Furthermore, research has shown that witnessing bullying can have a dramatic effect even if the witness is not directly involved as either a bully or a victim. Nishina and Juvonen (2005) found that children who witnessed harassment of peers were more likely to report higher levels of anxiety than those who did not.

### *2.2.2 Researching Bullying – A Complex Task*

According to James (2010) bullying is a pervasive type of aggression often seen in schools, intentionally inflicted with the defining features of repetition and imbalance of power. In her summary of the existing evidence base she states that much remains to be established in terms of the causes, characteristics of those involved and the features of effective intervention. She notes that peer and family relationships seem to play a role, as do group dynamics. She states that other pupils' behaviour can reinforce, condone or help stop bullying and indicates that bullying is context specific as it can vary depending on the characteristics of a particular class or school. James (2010) concludes that more research is needed to clarify the nature of group processes involved in school bullying and how these factors interact with individual differences.

James (2010) notes that family and peer relationships play a part in bullying, however much of the research to date which has been designed to explore such issues has been based on quantitative fixed response questionnaire type

measures which could be considered an inadequate tool for gathering a full picture of a person's experience of peer and family relationships. She also notes that bullying is context specific. While quantitative measures may capture important aspects of context, it is unlikely that the use of quantitative methods alone would account for an adequately broad range of contextual variables. This focus on self-report and the reliance on quantitative measures may perhaps be driven by a desire to derive conclusions which can be generalised across contexts. But this drive towards generalising findings is paradoxical in itself. James (2010) points out that as bullying is context specific, findings from one study may not necessarily be applicable to all. It could be stated that the predominant methodology used in the field to date has tended to lack depth, and the research tools which have been favoured may not have always adequately captured the full nature of children's interpersonal experience.

Some researchers have even questioned whether bullying in the United Kingdom is in fact a 'problem'. Furedi (2001) critiques the apparently unconditional public acceptance of the issue of bullying as being a serious problem. He focuses on workplace bullying and describes how the pathologisation of workplace stress (and subsequent compensation claims) has given the unions a new rationale for their existence. The same reasoning could be applied to the bullying within a school context. The pathologisation of children's interpersonal interactions provides adults with an opportunity for intervention and further micromanagement of children's behaviour. It could be argued that this drive towards adult control stems right up through the ecosystemic layers surrounding the child – parents and teachers feel the need to micromanage behaviour for fear of criticism from others that their child is out of control (Furedi, 2008), which stems from a general sense in society that children's behaviour is deteriorating and which is reflected in government policies which are designed to regain control of our children's behaviour (DfE, 2010b).

### ***2.2.3 Defining Bullying***

In 2010 a review of the evidence base in relation to bullying was carried out with a view to developing governmental policy on reducing bullying amongst the worst affected (DfE, 2010a). In summarising the variety of definitions of bullying evident in the literature, Peter Smith (the author of the review) noted five components of bullying evident in commonly used research definitions. It could be argued that definitions of bullying based on these components may prove problematic when conducting research on bullying with children.

Firstly, he noted that bullying involves the intention to cause harm. However, that raises the issue of how one questions a child about their understanding of another child's intent? How do we know that their assessment of the other child's intent is accurate? Assessing the intent of another individual is a cognitively complex process, and children (particularly at primary level) may not yet have reached a level of cognitive maturity which would enable them to do this.

He also states that bullying involves repetition - an isolated aggressive act would not be considered bullying. However, it may not always be possible for a witness of bullying to determine whether that act was a repetitive act or an isolated incident. When questioning children about bullying we assume that their understanding of bullying incorporates an acknowledgement of repetition. But it could be reasonable to assume that a child who has seen another child being pushed over deliberately, may consider this bullying even if they have not seen it happening before.

The author then notes that bullying results in a harmful outcome. Again, this is subjective and difficult to assess in practice, perhaps especially so for young children. Perpetrators may be unaware of the negative effects of their actions and may feel that their behaviour is intended as fun, or is a justified way of maintaining their position as a secure member of social group. It may even be the case that victims themselves (especially in the case of younger children or

children with special educational needs) are not aware that they have been subject to an unkind act and it is only upon later reflection or repetitions of the unkind behaviour that they may begin to realise that what they are experiencing is making them unhappy. Furthermore, from such definitions it seems that in order for an act to be considered bullying it must reach a certain threshold of severity of harm. For example, teasing may not be considered bullying unless it is directed repeatedly at a particular victim with negative intent. Not picking someone to be part of a football team would not necessarily qualify as bullying, yet such an act has the potential to contribute towards a child feel significantly unhappy especially if occurring alongside or following a series of other slights. Determining at which point an unkind behaviour enters the realm of bullying is not necessarily a straightforward process.

In addition, Smith states that bullying can involve direct acts (such as hitting someone) or indirect acts (such as spreading rumours). Again, such a criterion is problematic, as how does one assert a child's level of knowledge of whether an act is aggressive or not? If a child is unaware of a rumour being spread about them and so is not negatively affected by the rumour then would this still constitute bullying? The element of subjectivity adds further complexity to the issue. Being hit by a friend may not be construed as bullying if it occurs in the context of rough and tumble play, but being hit in a similar way by a perceived enemy may be interpreted very differently. Such subjective interpretation is difficult to assess empirically.

Finally, it must also be acknowledged that definitions of bullying such as those explored in the 2010 review are adult derived. Studies have shown that when young people themselves are asked to define bullying, their definitions are often different to those composed by adults (Cuadrado-Gordillo, 2012). Cuadrado-Gordillo (2012) found that adolescents did not tend to simultaneously consider 'repetition', 'intent to harm' and 'abuse of power' as criteria to define an act as bullying or not. Furthermore, many adolescents in their study seemed to classify an act as bullying even if there was no intent to harm evident – meaning that even unintentional or accidental acts of harm could be perceived as bullying.

### *2.2.4 Bullying versus Unkind Behaviour*

Definitions of bullying are vague, difficult to interpret and difficult to apply objectively in practice, therefore the current study will focus on the concept of unkind behaviour instead. While cut off criteria or the identification of common components may be necessary in order to define bullying as a distinct construct, they fail to take account of the multitude of ways in which children can make other children feel neglected, unaccepted and miserable. By broadening the research focus to unkind behaviour (an act which is perceived by the recipient as causing them to feel upset and unfairly treated) rather than focusing more specifically on bullying it is hoped that the study may produce findings which could be beneficial for a broader range of children. Not all children will be victims of bullying, but it could be argued that most children will experience an act of unkindness being directed at them at some point.

A thorough consideration of the less obvious ways in which children can behave unkindly towards one another is not yet evident in the existing research literature. It may be that children are more likely to defend if they witness an overtly aggressive act which they readily perceive to be unkind and are less inclined to notice the more subtle ways in which children can be mean. Or the converse may be true - perhaps children are more willing to interject in instances of minor teasing but are more intimidated by stronger aggressive acts, hence it may take a much more confident child to defend in such instances. Furthermore, perhaps children feel more confident to defend if the negative behaviour is being perpetrated by a member of their peer group towards another member of the peer group – or again the opposite may be the case and children may be less inclined to confront their friends for fear of being rejected by the group. Such issues do not appear to have been fully examined in the research literature.

### *2.2.5 Conceptualisations of Bullies*

Initial theories of bullying behaviour depicted the bully as someone who was somewhat socially inept and 'oafish' in character – physically powerful yet intellectually simple (Sutton, Smith & Swettenham, 1999). Dodge and Crick (1990) outline a social information processing model of aggressive behaviour. According to this model, a child's response to a problematic social stimulus is derived by progressing through five steps of processing: encoding of social cues, interpretation of social cues, response search, response evaluation, and enactment. They argue that skilful processing at each step leads to competent (pro-social) performance within a situation, whereas biased or deficient processing at any stage leads to deviant social behaviour. It could be that children who defend tend to process social information skilfully and therefore progress competently through each stage.

Crick and Dodge (1994) describe aggressive children as being biased in their social information processing skills and more likely to attribute hostile intent to neutral social cues. Crick and Dodge (1996) expand on their previous theory and distinguish between reactive aggressive and proactive aggressive children. They argue that reactive aggressive children demonstrate hostile biases in their attributions of peers' behaviour and so their own aggressive behaviour is a reactive response to this perceived hostility. On the other hand, proactive aggressive children are likely to view aggression positively, to use aggression in a calculated manner and to see it as an effective means of obtaining social goals.

This conceptualisation of bullies as being deficient social information processors is challenged by Sutton, Smith and Swettenham (1999). They found that bullies significantly outperformed both victims and reinforcers on theory of mind tasks, thus suggesting that rather than lacking in insight and social emotional perception, bullies could in fact be conceptualised as skilled social manipulators who are more than capable of coercively controlling social power and resources and using their skills in processing social information to their advantage.

Pepler, Jiang, Craig and Connolly (2008) combine these differing theories in relation to bully characteristics (socially inept versus socially skilled) and conclude that the population of bullies at any given time probably consists of both types of individual. They stress the heterogeneity of the bully population. They adopt a developmental perspective and identify three distinct trajectories of bullying behaviour that a child can follow – (i) consistently high levels of bullying throughout childhood and adolescence (career path bullies), (ii) early moderate levels reducing to almost no bullying in late adolescence and (iii) consistently moderate levels of bullying.

Pepler et al., (2008) found that the children in the consistently high group could be distinguished from the other bully types in terms of moral disengagement, physical and relational aggression, parent relationship variables (monitoring, trust, communication and conflict), and peer relationship variables (peers who bully, conflict within the peer group and susceptibility to peer pressure). This broad view encompassing contextual factors could be thought of as a strength of this study. Much of the existing bullying research tends to concentrate on individual factors such as characteristics of the bullies or victims yet fails to account for the social settings or family backgrounds that these children may come from. Pepler et al. (2008) refer to the families characterised by conflict, low levels of trust and poor boundaries from which career bullies tend to come. Such a broad view draws the focus away from the within-child perspectives on bullying which seem to predominate the research and instead gives weight to the systemic nature of bullying which is consistent with the ecosystemic approach of the current study.

The Pepler et al. (2008) study is limited however in terms of its overreliance on quantitative methods. The authors assess bullying behaviour by means of self report, but it is likely that many of the children's responses may have been influenced by a social desirability bias and they may not have admitted the full extent of their bullying behaviours. The current study will use peer reports of unkind behaviour in order to overcome this issue.

In terms of defending behaviour the Pepler et al. (2008) model is pertinent. Children may be reluctant to defend against bullying perpetrated by career path bullies. High levels of aggression combined with moral disengagement could mean that such bullies would react severely towards any attempt to defend and so the child who defends may end up being hurt themselves. In addition, such bullies are likely to be surrounded by a large peer group of other potentially aggressive children who (due to their susceptibility to peer pressure) may be more likely to conform to the bullying norms of their group. Therefore, a child who chooses to confront a career path bully is not just confronting that individual bully, but is confronting the whole bullying peer group. The risks involved in confronting a career path bully and their friends may mean that defending behaviour against this group is reduced. An exploration is needed of children's perceptions of perpetrators of unkind behaviour, their level of awareness of the social risks they may face and how this may influence their decision to defend.

In sum, bullies seem to be a heterogeneous group. Some are lacking in social skills and compensate for this with aggressive behaviour by which they acquire social dominance through fear. Others are socially skilled and acquire dominance through more subtle and manipulative means. Sutton, Smith and Swettenham (1999) conclude that bullies opine that bullying is easy, it works and it makes them feel good. It is a way of gaining power over others and establishing a firm footing in the social hierarchy. The social benefits that stand to be gained from bullying are significant. When the benefits of bullying in terms of power and dominance (perhaps leading to improved self-esteem), reward (both social and material) and kudos (particularly important during early adolescence) are explored, one can understand why school based sanctions or rewards for pro-social behaviour are often not enough of a deterrent to prevent bullying.

### *2.2.6 Victims*

Persistent victims of bullying are often rejected by their peers. Research suggests that they tend to be lonely children who do not have many friends, who are somewhat socially incompetent and who can suffer from low self-esteem, anxiety and depression (Hawker & Boulton, 2000). This lack of a supportive peer network can make persistent victims an easy target for bullies. This low social status of victims may influence defending behaviour. Perhaps children feel more inclined to defend when they can see that a child has no-one else to stick up for them. Or perhaps the converse is true. Perhaps there is little social reward to be gained by intervening to protect a socially anxious, submissive child. Research to date has not looked at whether victim status influences defending and so the current research hopes to address this.

### *2.2.7 Bully-Victims*

In contrast to the passive victims described above, bully-victims tend to be reactively aggressive children who often have poor social skills (Griffin & Gross, 2004). This poor social competence could lead to a biased interpretation of social situations. Bully-victims are thought to provoke aggressive behaviour to a certain extent and to respond aggressively in retaliation. Bully-victims are often viewed by their peers as engaging in bullying themselves. They tend to be universally rejected by their peers. A child's status as a bully-victim could influence defending. Children may be reluctant to defend bully-victims as they may fear that the bully-victim will react aggressively towards them in spite of their attempts to help (i.e., the child defending may be at risk from both the bully and the bully-victim and so the costs of intervening may outweigh the rewards). In addition, the poor social competence of the bully-victim may mean that they do not repay the child who defended them for their help. While a passive victim may be thankful towards their defender and attempt to repay them in terms of friendship, bully-victims may not have the social competence to do this. So for children who defend, intervening to protect bully-victims may be seen as more trouble than it's worth. Unfortunately, research to date has not explored

children's reasoning in this respect. The current research will investigate how victim characteristics may influence a child's decision to intervene to defend them.

## 2.3 Defending

### *2.3.1 Characteristics of Children who Defend*

Many early studies focused on identifying the personality characteristics of bullies and victims at the expense of considering the effects of the various other individuals involved in a bullying situation. This was problematic as bullying is often a group process that occurs within a social context (Salmivalli et al., 2005). Salmivalli et al. (1996) expanded the focus from 'bullies and victims' to encompass various other bully roles. As well as the bully and victim, she categorised the various 'participant roles' occupied by individuals involved in bullying situations as 'assistant', 'reinforcer', 'defender' and 'outsider'. This conceptualisation is useful in that it could be thought to reflect the complex nature of any bullying situation. However, it is problematic in the sense that membership of a particular category is not fixed in complex real-life situations. For example, a child may not consistently adopt the same role in every situation. Children may adopt an outsider role if the victim is someone unknown to them, however if the victim is a friend, the outsider may quickly become a defender. There is a lack of research exploring these factors which influence a child's decision to adopt a particular role at a particular point in time. This is a gap which the current research hopes to address.

Research in the area of defending is also subject to an over-reliance on purely quantitative methods. Much of the research which exists focuses on identifying individual traits which seem to be commonly found in defenders. This focus on individual characteristics seems to pervade the bullying literature, for example the bully biased in social information processing characterised by Crick and Dodge (1994) or the cognitively skilled social manipulator described by Sutton, Smith and Swettenham (1999). Salmivalli (2010) summarises that defenders

are likely to be empathetic, emotionally stable, cognitively skilled, to have high self-efficacy for defending and to be well-liked and perceived as popular by their peers.

However, other researchers have found that such characteristics are not necessarily unique to defenders. Gini et al. (2008) found that empathy and high levels of social self-efficacy were associated with active defending, but they also found a relationship between empathy and passive bystanding. Subsequent studies have failed to identify character traits in defenders which would make them significantly different from their peers (Gini et al., 2008). It seems that the possession of certain character traits alone does not seem to be enough to ensure consistent defending across all situations. Research has yet to elucidate what factors contribute to this inconsistency.

The Gini et al. (2008) study mentioned above could be described as typical of many studies in the field of bullying. They use self-report measures to highlight differences between defenders and outsiders in terms of empathy and social self-efficacy. Perhaps unsurprisingly, they find no significant difference in empathy levels between defenders and outsiders. It could be argued that most children feel that bullying is wrong and usually do not enjoy seeing someone else being victimised, which could be thought of as being related to empathy. But empathising with a victim does not mean that a child will always intervene to defend them. In a similar vein the authors attempt to distinguish defenders from outsiders in terms of their social self-efficacy, concluding that outsiders seem to have lower levels of social self-efficacy than defenders. However, social self-efficacy is not necessarily a stable trait. A child could feel particularly self-efficacious when surrounded by their friends, but may feel less efficacious when alone. So, a measure of social self-efficacy may not necessarily determine how a child will respond across all incidents of witnessing bullying. In addition, when significant correlations were found in this study (for example between defending and social self-efficacy or defending and empathetic concern) the strength of these correlations was weak. The authors discuss the nature of bullying as a group process early on, however they then proceed to focus primarily on within-person individual level factors. Furthermore, the focus on defender and outsider

personal characteristics means that bully characteristics (whether the bully is physically stronger, or has a reputation for extreme violence) and victim characteristics (whether the victim is a friend or disliked by other children) are not considered.

Poyhonen and Salmivalli (2012) explore some of the factors potentially influencing a child's decision to defend against bullying. They examine children's self-efficacy, outcome expectations and outcome values in relation to bystander responses. They propose that a child's decision to defend will be influenced by the outcomes they predict will follow their defending. Interestingly, they also suggest that pupil expectations alone are not enough to predict defending. They argue that the value a pupil places on a particular outcome influences their chosen course of action. For example, if a child feels that by defending the bullying will probably decrease, but they do not particularly value bullying decreasing as an outcome, then they will be less likely to intervene. This could be thought of as a worthwhile element of their study as it acknowledges the complex decision making process a child is likely to go through when deciding whether to intervene or not. For example, if a child has the self-efficacy and the skills to intervene, but they do not particularly like the victim, then they may be less likely to defend.

Another strength of the Poyhonen and Salmivalli (2012) study is that it acknowledges the influence of social context and group factors on a child's decision to defend. They note that an examination of the personal characteristics of an individual child is not likely to sufficiently explain their decision to defend. A child may feel that bullying is wrong and that they have the capacity to intervene to prevent it, however if defending behaviour is not rewarded amongst their peer group, and the anti-bullying norms in their class and school are weak, then they may be less inclined to intervene as the social repercussions might outweigh the benefits.

A further strength of Poyhonen and Salmivalli's (2012) study is sample size. They questioned 6397 primary school children, using a computer based package (which may have meant that children were more inclined to answer

truthfully than if they were interviewed, where they may be more influenced by social desirability bias). Interestingly, despite this large sample, the magnitude of the effects found in the study were small. After conducting a multiple regression analysis their predictor variables only managed to account for 4-16 percent of the shared variance in defending, remaining passive and reinforcing. The authors are explicit about this limitation in their discussion and suggest that this may indicate that there are other important factors at play apart from self-efficacy, outcome expectations and outcome values, which may influence a child's decision to defend. They conclude that bystander responses may be influenced by specific situational variables such as whether the victim is a friend, or whether there are other people present, and they suggest that future studies explore these issues. The current study aims to address this gap by using a qualitative interview to question children about how their defending behaviour might change depending on the situation specific variables suggested by Poyhonen and Salmivalli (2012). A further limitation of their study which the authors draw attention to is the lack of focus on contextual factors which may influence a child's decision to defend. The current study plans to address this by exploring attitudes towards unkind behaviour at individual, friendship group and class group levels. A consideration of peer group effects and class norms may shed further light on how a child decides whether to intervene or not.

In summary, research has failed to depict defenders as a distinct group who are significantly different from their peers across a variety of individual difference measures. It seems that there is more to defending than individual traits. Children may vary in their defending behaviour depending on who is being bullied and they may become less likely to defend as they grow older. Even though children may have negative attitudes towards bullying and display high self-efficacy for defending this is no guarantee that defending will actually occur. This lack of firm conclusions could suggest that defending is not necessarily a characteristic inherent in an individual child, but is instead a more constantly evolving behaviour which is sensitive to the subtle complexities of the social context and peer group dynamics. Hence research into the nature of the social and group processes which may influence defending is needed.

### ***2.3.2 The Process of Defending***

Research in the area of social psychology has shown that bystanders are often slower to help or fail to help a victim in an emergency situation where there are other bystanders present (Darley & Latané, 1968). Previous literature has suggested that the processes of 'pluralistic ignorance' (where each individual looks to another individual for clues about how to react and interprets others' inaction as indicative of lack of emergency), 'audience inhibition' (where bystanders worry that they may commit a social blunder by intervening) and 'diffusion of responsibility' (where the responsibility to help is shared by all bystanders and so each person may be less likely to intervene) may all contribute to the 'bystander effect' (Thornberg, 2010).

Thornberg (2010) explores these 'bystander effect' ideas in relation to school students and proposes a grounded theory for why students behave as they do in school situations in which they witness another student in distress. In his study he identifies five main moral frames which he suggests may guide a student's response when confronted with a student in distress. His proposed moral frames are as follows: the moral construction of the good student, institutionalised moral disengagement, tribe caring, gentle caring girl morality and social hierarchy dependent morality.

The moral construction of the good student is described as being composed of two sub-constructions. Firstly, that of the *kind friend* who complies with school rules in terms of behaviour towards others, for example, the student who is kind and does not tease or fight with others, followed by the sub-construction of the *well behaved* student who follows school and classroom rules. So, it may be that children who defend are those who see themselves as being 'good' (in both of the senses described above). Thornberg (2010) also describes school settings in which the school rules and teacher expectations actually inhibit children from helping others, for example he describes situations where the expectation is that children should tell an adult if they see something bad happening to another student rather than getting involved themselves. It could be argued that such an ethos is common in many schools and while it may be

intended to minimise conflict between students, it could also simultaneously be inhibiting their ability to manage conflict situations. Thornberg (2010) terms this moral frame 'institutionalised moral disengagement' and suggests that this process demoralises students into becoming passive bystanders.

The moral frame of 'tribe caring' involves children's tendency to protect those who they perceive to be from their own 'tribe', for example, those children they feel closely related to and categorise as being part of their social group. Thornberg (2010) notes that students who act as helpers often define the peer in distress as being a member of a significant in-group (friend, sibling, classmate or associate). Conversely, children who do not intervene tend to classify the student in distress as not being a tribe member, and so there appears to be a responsibility transfer to the victim's friends or associates. Such findings could be particularly concerning in the case of children who may not have friends – those who are particularly isolated within their class or year group.

Thornberg (2010) also notes that moral action in bystander situations tends to be related to social situations within a hierarchy, in which teachers and other school staff occupy the highest position (the 'social-hierarchy-dependent 'frame). He states that students with leader roles more often intervene than those with low social status when other students are present and so social hierarchy seems to inhibit the intervention of lower status students.

Thornberg (2010) concludes that *'the inhibiting process of many moral frames in school involved moral passivity as a result of school and peer cultures keeping students in line, which in turn appeared to informally educate students not to take action to help victims in many situations due to the constructed dictum of not standing out against the social order, norms, expectancy and hierarchy'* (p. 595). The current study aims to explore these ideas further but also hopes to extend Thornberg's study through the addition of a quantitative element. Thornberg's (2010) study was largely qualitative, using classroom observations, informal conversations and group interviews as a basis for his grounded theory. It could be argued that this is a significant strength of his study as it could be

thought to contribute towards redressing the balance in the research evidence base which is heavily skewed in favour of quantitative studies. However, it must be acknowledged that a purely qualitative approach is also subject to criticism. Thornberg's classroom observations may have been biased by his own theoretical background - perhaps some instances of bystanding were more salient to him than they would be to an observer who had less knowledge of the literature on bystanding. As an adult, Thornberg may have identified instances of unkindness which were not construed as such by children, or failed to notice more subtle instances of unkindness which may have only been immediately obvious to the children closely involved. Allowing children to explain how they classify an incident as worthy of intervention would be important, as would allowing children opportunities to explain their reasoning for intervening or standing by and the current study aims to do this.

## 2.4 Social Context

### *2.4.1 Social Networks and Peer Effects*

Although it is widely acknowledged that bullying is a group process very little research to date has focused on group processes in relation to defending. Pozzoli and Gini (2010) investigate the effect that peers can have on a child's decision to defend and find that peer pressure interacts with a child's sense of personal responsibility to predict defending. They note that students who hold moderate to high levels of personal responsibility are more likely to defend if they feel that their peers also hold a positive view of defender behaviour. It may be the case that children are more motivated to defend if they feel that they have the backing of their peer group behind them – if they feel they are based in a stable friendship group and will not be abandoned by their friends if they choose to defend an unpopular victim.

Salmivalli, Huttunen and Lagerspetz (1997) explore the effects of social constellations in class on bullying problems. They explore the constitutional make up of various peer groups in terms of bully role and note that children with

complementary bully roles (e.g., bullies, assistants and reinforcers) tend to socialise together. They also note that defenders are more likely to be members of smaller friendship groups than bullies, and defenders seem to socialise more with other defenders, outsiders and victims than bullies, assistants or reinforcers. The authors conclude that an individual child's behaviour is strongly connected to the behaviour of their peer group and suggest that future anti-bullying interventions are targeted at the group rather than individual level. Their study is valuable in that it moves beyond looking at the individual characteristics of bullies, victims, defenders, assistants, outsiders and reinforcers and instead considers the influence that the views of peers can have on a child's behaviour.

However, Salmivalli, Huttunen and Lagerspetz's (1997) study also has a number of shortcomings. The Participant Role Questionnaire (PRQ) is used in their study. This is a peer nomination questionnaire where children are presented with a range of descriptors for bullying, defending, reinforcing, assisting and outsider behaviour. Children are asked to identify particular classmates who they feel would meet that descriptor. In identifying participant roles the authors assign a role to a child if the child's standardised score falls above the class mean (i.e., they receive more peer nominations for bully/defender/assistant behaviour than the class mean for that role). This could mean that a relatively small number of peer nominations for bullying (in a class where perceived rates of bullying were low) could be enough to tip a child over the class mean and so they would be assigned that role. On the other hand, in a class where bullying is a significant issue and lots of children bully on a regular basis, the class mean would be higher. Children scoring below the mean might still be considered bullies in comparison to other children in classes where bullying is not the norm, however they might not be assigned the role of bully in their own class.

Salmivalli, Huttunen and Lagerspetz (1997) say little in relation to the limitations of their study and directions for future research; however they do suggest that future studies consider friendship quality rather than focusing solely on peer group composition. The number of children in a child's friendship group may influence their bullying behaviour; however it is likely that the quality of their

friendships will also have an impact. The current study intends to pursue this recommendation.

Another study exploring peer influences on bullying is that by Espelage, Green and Polanin (2012). They explore the effect of various predictor variables such as gender, empathy and willingness to intervene, on bullying perpetration. They report that greater bullying perpetration within one's peer group is highly predictive of less individual willingness to intervene in bullying episodes for boys. Interestingly, they do not find the same effect for girls. The authors do not discuss the reasons underlying this gender difference in much detail, but instead suggest that it may be a useful avenue of future research. It could be argued that one of the strengths of the Espelage et al. (2012) study is that it aims to examine individual and peer level effects on bullying using a longitudinal and multilevel design. Since bullying is depicted in the literature as being a complex issue involving both individual and group level variables, a multi-level design seems appropriate. According to the authors this study design was the first of its kind.

One criticism of the design of the Espelage et al. (2012) study lies in their assumption that perpetration and intervention are not likely to co-occur in peer groups given that they are incompatible. It could be argued that many incidences of bullying and defending occur within peer groups, with bullies, victims and defenders being members of the same friendship circle (Adler & Adler, 1995). Therefore, excluding the possibility that defenders and bullies may exist in the same peer group could be considered naive.

Despite finding numerous significant correlations between variables such as empathetic concern, perspective taking, attitudes towards bullying and willingness to intervene, the authors themselves conclude that the magnitude of these correlations is generally modest. This could mean that there is more to a child's decision to intervene than the variables explored in this quantitative study. More in-depth qualitative exploration could shed some light on the subtle individual and contextual factors which may influence a child's decision to intervene. Furthermore, Espelage et al. (2012) suggest future studies look at

contextual factors such as peer group density, embeddedness and concentration – an avenue which the quantitative aspects of the current study intend to pursue.

### ***2.4.2 Friendship***

Mendelson and Aboud (1999) identify the following functions of friendship: stimulating companionship, help, intimacy, reliable alliance, self-validation and emotional security. In light of these functions, it could be argued that friendship serves an important purpose in terms of determining an individual's happiness and well-being and most individuals will strive to develop friendships with others. Majors (2012) discusses how friendship serves a range of developmental needs. She outlines how in middle childhood children have a need to make friends and gain acceptance from their peers. It is important to consider this need for peer acceptance when trying to understand why some children may be inhibited from defending.

Mendelson and Aboud's (1999) domains of friendship could be particularly important in the case of children who defend. These children may need the support of friends to have the confidence to intervene and stand up to someone who is treating another child unkindly. They may need the security of a reliable alliance to know that their friends will not turn against them if they do decide to intervene. While previous research suggests that defenders tend to be popular children who are supported by strong social networks (Salmivalli, 2010), there has been little in-depth analysis of the nature of their friendships and the manner in which their perceptions of their friendships may instil them with the confidence to intervene. A deeper understanding of the nature of the relationships within the social networks of defenders may serve to increase our understanding of what it is that gives these children the confidence to overcome any social inhibition and defend a child from unkind acts.

It could be argued that children are motivated by a need for belonging and acceptance, to be popular (at least amongst their friends) and to be

acknowledged within the social group. While not all children have the personality characteristics which would motivate them to be socially dominant within their peer group, it could be stated that almost all children want to be liked by others, and virtually no children enjoy being rejected. Research suggests that a child's sense of self worth is determined through validation by peers. Adler and Adler (1995) state that membership in a friendship clique provides adolescents with opportunities 'to learn about society, to practice their behaviour and to evolve their selves and identities' (p. 145). The authors go on to describe how the values of adolescent cliques are often distinct from and at times at odds to those of adults. Respect within the adolescent peer group can often be achieved through direct violation of adult expectations and norms. Behaviour which is determined to be pro-social by adults (such as telling a teacher about episodes of unkindness) can often be seen as socially undesirable by adolescents and could in fact provoke rejection by the peer group. As perpetrators of unkindness are often socially popular it can be difficult for children to oppose them, as they may stand to lose their social status if the popular child chooses to reject them. Such a loss of social status is likely to be particularly undesirable in adolescence – a developmental period where peer acceptance and social status is particularly important.

When the social needs of children are considered it becomes easier to understand why many children may choose not to oppose the dominant social groups and defend against unkind behaviour. Conformity with adult expectations of pro-social behaviour may disadvantage defending children in terms of peer acceptance and may make them vulnerable to social rejection. Many anti-bullying interventions are based on adult conceptualisations of what constitutes socially desirable behaviour. This is often at odds with child and adolescent perceptions. Perhaps this is why many anti-bullying interventions have little impact on child and adolescent behaviour. Children can acquire the skills taught as part of anti-bullying interventions within a classroom context, but they choose not to apply these skills in their social settings as the social costs in terms of potential peer rejection outweigh the rewards of being considered a 'good' student by adults.

## 2.5 Pro-Social Behaviour

Eisenberg and Mussen (1990) state that pro-social children tend to be active, sociable, competent, assertive, competent in role taking and moral judgement and sympathetic. They are likely to have supportive and nurturing parents who model pro-social acts and encourage moral thinking and behaviour. Regarding situational variables, children are most likely to intervene when they feel happy, successful or competent and when the cost of pro-social action is low. Eisenberg and Mussen (1990) also point out that the characteristics of the recipient will also influence pro-social behaviour. Children are more likely to help if they like the recipient, if the recipient has an attractive personality or if they have previously helped the recipient. Their conclusions emphasise the multiplicity of factors which are associated with a child's decision to act pro-socially towards others. In light of this, it becomes easier to understand why the study of complex behaviours such as defending can be immensely challenging.

Eisenberg and Mussen (1990) outline a model of pro-social behaviour which could also be useful in developing understanding of defending. According to this model, pro-social behaviour is determined by a variety of factors such as the child's socialisation history (previous exposure to pro-social models, values and previous experiences), which in turn will have an effect on their cognitive functioning and personality. In addition the child needs to interpret situational cues and determine that action is warranted. The child must then decide whether to assist or not, and this decision is made by an evaluation of goals and a cost-benefit analysis of intervention. For example, the authors suggest that the goal of alleviating another person's distress may be at odds with the goal of protecting one's own resources. Conflicting goals will influence the likelihood of intervention. The authors point out that intention to act does not necessarily equate to action, as factors such as personality and perceived competency to assist will also come into play. The authors also refer to the evaluative process which comes after action and which guides a child's future performance. Successful intervention may increase the likelihood of a child intervening in future situations. Eisenberg and Mussen (1990) describe their model as a simple heuristic, yet even this 'simple' model illustrates the multitude of

historical, personal and situational factors which determine a child's decision to behave pro-socially.

## 2.6 Child Development

Piaget's (1953) cognitive developmental theory highlights the important role that peer interactions can play in child cognitive development. It also stresses the importance of acknowledging that children think differently to adults. This is important to hold in mind when considering unkind behaviour and children's reactions to it. Children will not necessarily perceive unkindness in the same was as adults.

In terms of perpetrating unkindness and defending against it, Piaget's theory is relevant. Young children are often highly egocentric and it is likely that their schemas have not yet developed to the point where they can really understand the perspective of someone other than themselves. Therefore, a child may act in an unkind way as a means to achieve their own goals without much understanding of how their behaviour could negatively impact on others.

As children's skills in understanding others' thoughts, feelings and perspectives improve one might see an increase in defending behaviour as they are more able to notice the effects that unkind behaviour can have on others and so take action to prevent it. Furthermore, a child may develop a schema of 'good behaviour' which is largely based on what they have been taught by adults, so they may be more inclined to defend against unkindness as this is what adults often say is the right thing to do.

As a child grows older their cognitive capacity continues to develop to the point where they can manipulate abstract ideas mentally. This cognitive development may have a significant influence on perpetrating unkindness and defending. For example an older child may be more capable of anticipating the abstract rewards they could gain from treating others unkindly in terms of power and social dominance. Or a child may be able to hypothesise about the potential

rewards they could gain from intervening to defend (e.g., in terms of peer and teacher approval) or alternatively the negative consequences they may face in terms of peer rejection if the child they confront is a socially dominant and popular child. Therefore, understanding of a child's decision to intervene to defend could be increased by considering their cognitive development.

## 2.7 Teasing

It could be suggested that teasing may be related to unkind behaviour. Depending on how it is carried out by the perpetrator and how it is perceived by the recipient, teasing could be seen as either kind or unkind. For example, teasing carried out between friends and with positive intent (for instance to lift mood) could be construed as kind teasing whereas teasing carried out with the intention of making fun at another person's expense could be construed as unkind. However, subjective interpretation is important. A child may tease with positive intent, but if this teasing is interpreted negatively by the recipient it may be perceived by the recipient as unkind.

Crozier and Dimmock (1999) explain how teasing can increase social cohesion, enjoyment in interaction and a sense of social inclusion, but alternatively it can be used as an expression of aggression and social exclusion. They describe name-calling and nicknames as ambiguous social events that can serve positive as well as negative goals and that can have consequences which can be difficult to identify. Gossiping and spreading rumours can increase social cohesion between individuals through the generation of excitement and positive emotion. However, such behaviours can also escalate to the point where they may be termed relational bullying. How would a child decide whether gossip was 'just a bit of fun', or whether it was significantly harming another individual? Would a certain 'threshold of severity' have to be reached before a child would intervene to stop it in such situations? It does not seem that such decision making processes have been explored much in the research literature to date. The current study will explore how children make sense of teasing, whether they discriminate between kind and unkind teasing, and whether their

interpretations of teasing may be associated with their expressed intentions to defend against it. Kind teasing in the current study is defined as making fun of another person in a playful way where the intentions of the teaser(s) are positive and the teasing is interpreted positively by the recipient(s). Unkind teasing is defined as making fun of another person where the intentions of the teaser(s) may be positive or negative, but the teasing is interpreted negatively by the recipient.

## 2.8 Conclusions and Rationale for the Current Research

It has not been possible to consistently distinguish children who defend from those who do not in terms of social-cognitive or personality based factors. Therefore it may be the case that the group context (the peer group), the general social context (class and school ethos, inter-group processes, social hierarchies) and the specific situational context (presence or absence of adults, social status of the child perpetrating, the child being victimised and the child defending) are more important in determining defending behaviour than individual characteristics. Such complexity is unlikely to be adequately addressed by research adopting a single methodological approach and so a mixed methods study is needed. As Hong and Espelage (2011) state, the complementary integration of paradigms characteristic of mixed methods research can facilitate improved understanding of the nature of relationships between social phenomena which are fluid and evolving.

Definitions of bullying can be vague and child and adolescent definitions vary from those of adults. Moving the research focus away from bullying towards more generalised ‘unkind behaviour’ may lead to a more nuanced understanding of the complexities of children’s social relationships. Using qualitative interviewing rather than solely relying on fixed response questionnaires may lead to a fuller understanding of how children perceive unkindness, and so could assist in the development of child centred definitions which could be used in future research studies.

This research will be conducted with children of upper primary age. It was felt that much of the research on bullying conducted to date seems to have focused on adolescents, despite evidence suggesting that bullying tends to decline with age (James, 2010). Perhaps older students have learnt more effective interpersonal skills, or older students may be less likely to encounter students who are physically stronger than them (DfE, 1994) Therefore, there appears to be a gap in the evidence base in relation to the experiences of younger children regarding unkind behaviour.

Research has documented that incidents of bullying and pro-bullying attitudes often increase upon secondary transfer, which can be a time of social upheaval where established friendship groups are broken and reformed into new groups (Pellegrini & Long, 2002). Facilitating peer mediation at this age may be an important way of tackling unkind behaviour amongst this population. An analysis of the experience of children approaching secondary transfer could provide useful information to school staff in terms of how they could better understand the children's experience, design effective peer intervention approaches and ultimately reduce the incidence of unkind behaviour upon transfer.

This literature review has highlighted a number of gaps in the existing research evidence base and has identified that many of the studies which have been conducted were methodologically and conceptually naive in some respects. In an attempt to address this, the current study will ask the following research questions:

## 2.9 Research Questions

The primary research question posed in this study will be:

***Research Question 1***

***Are there common factors which seem associated with defending?***
In an attempt to answer this research question the following secondary questions will also be addressed through both qualitative and quantitative means:

***Research Question 2***

***2.1 Is there a relationship between defending and attitudes towards teasing?*** Defending may be associated with strong anti teasing attitudes.
***2.2 Is there a relationship between perpetrating unkind behaviour and attitudes towards teasing?***
***2.3 Is there a relationship between assisting with unkind behaviour and attitudes towards teasing?***
Children who perpetrate unkind behaviour or assist with unkind behaviour may be less likely to hold strong anti-teasing attitudes than children who defend.

***Research Question 3***

***Is there an association between a child's social position within their peer group and their behaviour when witnessing acts of unkindness?*** A child's position within their peer group and their year group may influence their tendency to defend, perpetrate, assist, reinforce or remain outside/distanced from unkind behaviour.

***Research Question 4***

***Do children discriminate between behaviours which could be considered light-hearted teasing and more negative unkind behaviours and if so, what reflections do children have on this discrimination process?*** Children may be less sensitive to more subtle acts of unfair treatment and hence the need for defending in such instances may not be recognised.

***Research Question 5***

***Do the characteristics of the child who is perpetrating and the child who is being victimised influence a child's expressed intention to defend (and manner of defending) against teasing or unkind behaviour?*** The social position of the child perpetrating or the child being victimised, or the defender's relationship with the child perpetrating or the child being victimised may influence a child's expressed intention to defend.

***Research Question 6***

***Does the presence of adults influence a child's expressed intention to defend and if so how?*** The presence of adults may be an inhibiting factor in some circumstances.

***Research Question 7***

***Is there an association between defending and friendship quality?***
Previous research has suggested that children who defend are well liked by their peers and have friends. However research has also indicated that children who bully also have friends. It may be that friendship *quality* (as opposed to quantity) differentiates children who tend to defend from children who tend to behave unkindly, assist with unkindness, reinforce unkindness, remain distanced from unkindness or those who are victimised.

# Chapter 3: Method

## 3.1 Overview

This method chapter outlines the methodology used in an attempt to answer the research questions. Epistemology and research design are discussed, followed by an outline of how the research measures were constructed and how these measures were administered in schools. The chapter ends with a description of the process involved in conducting the thematic analysis of interviews.

## 3.2 Epistemological Position

### *3.2.1 Pragmatism*

The current study adopts a pragmatic approach and uses both qualitative and quantitative tools. Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) suggest that drawing from both qualitative and quantitative methods can constitute an effective way of answering specific research questions. According to Robson (2011) pragmatism aims to adopt a moderate (commonsense) approach - the choice of research methods adopted in a pragmatic study is based on how well they answer the research questions posed (are practically useful).

As discussed in the literature, the experience of an act as being 'unkind' is a somewhat subjective one and how one perceives and interprets the act may significantly influence the consequences of that act for that particular individual. It was decided that for the purposes of this study an epistemological stance which values the importance of subjective interpretation in the construction of experience would be necessary, while at the same time acknowledging some degree of acceptance of an external reality in which there is some overlap in perspectives about what constitutes an unkind act. It could be argued that pragmatism aims for a middle ground in terms of objectivity versus subjectivity,

with knowledge being both constructed and based on the reality of the world we experience and live in (Robson, 2011). In relation to the current study for example, in order for an act to be perceived as unkind it would be assumed that some 'real' form of act has been carried out by a person and the act itself is not entirely a construction on the part of the recipient.

## 3.3 Research Design

### ***3.3.1 Mixed Methods***

This was a mixed methods study and followed a sequential transformative design (Robson, 2011) with quantitative methods being employed first. Quantitative methods were used to measure the degree to which each child tended to engage in the following behaviours: being unkind (perpetrating unkindness), assisting with unkind behaviour, reinforcing unkind behaviour, defending against unkind behaviour, distancing oneself from unkind acts (remaining outside) and being victimised (being on the receiving end of an unkind act). Quantitative methods were also used to measure children's perceptions of their friendship quality, along with children's expressed attitudes towards teasing and unkind behaviour. In addition, quantitative methods were used to generate social cognitive maps which can provide an indication of a child's social position within the existing social groups in a class (or year group). Qualitative interviews were then conducted with children who were higher than average (in relation to their year group), according to their peers, in their tendencies towards the aforementioned behaviours (as measured by the Unkind Behaviour Scale).

An additional focus of the study was on the conduction of qualitative interviews. As discussed in the literature review there is a dearth of qualitative studies in the area of bullying, with the majority of studies being quantitative in nature and focused on identifying particular traits in bullies, victims and so on. It has been argued in the literature that such a quantitative approach alone is unlikely to

give a full understanding of an issue which is multifaceted, possibly context dependent and arguably rather subjective in nature.

Quantitative methods tend to be prescriptive and limit the participants' responses to a number of researcher predetermined categories. Such restriction is unlikely to capture the broad range of experience of children who witness unkind behaviour. While qualitative interview questions are still influenced by the researcher's preconceptions and world view, the flexibility of a qualitative format provides children with more of an opportunity to express their views in detail and initiate discussion about areas which may not have been anticipated by the researcher.

### ***3.3.2 Rationale for a Mixed Methods Approach***

According to Creswell (2003) the concept of mixing different methods probably originated in 1959 when Campbell and Fiske used multiple methods to study validity of psychological traits. The researchers suggested that all methods have limitations, but the shortcomings inherent in any single method could potentially neutralise those of other methods. Or perhaps this could be thought of as the strengths of one approach compensating for the limitations of another.

Such approaches can be particularly useful when the background theory for a particular research area is lacking (as is the case in relation to defending). Furthermore, Gorard and Taylor (2004) discuss how using only one method can lead to the unnecessary fragmentation of explanatory models when exploring multifaceted social phenomena. It could be argued that defending against unkind behaviour is a social phenomenon which is influenced by both individual characteristics and thought processes of the child, the characteristics of the child's peer group and also the particular social context within which the act of unkindness occurs. It was felt that exploring such a multiplicity of factors would be best addressed by means of a mixed methods approach.

In addition, it was acknowledged that the research questions posed varied in breadth and this was one of the reasons underlying the choice of mixed methods. While some research questions were focused and specific in nature (i.e., Is there a relationship between defending and attitudes towards teasing?) others were more exploratory (i.e. Does the presence of adults influence a child's expressed intention to defend and if so how? It was felt that quantitative methods could be useful in answering research questions with a specific focus, whereas qualitative methods could be an effective means of addressing more open ended, exploratory research questions.

## 3.4 Participants

The participants in this study were from two state primary schools located in the south east of England. Data was collected in two phases, with the first phase involving the administration of quantitative questionnaires and the second phase involving qualitative interviewing.

The first phase of data collection was carried out in the second half of the summer term 2013 in School A and in the first half of the autumn term 2013 in School B. In school A, 59 children (35 boys, 24 girls) from Years 5 and 6 completed questionnaires (mean age 10.36 years, SD=0.66). In school B, 54 children (31 boys, 23 girls) from Year 6 completed questionnaires (mean age 10.05 years, SD=0.23). In the second phase of the study 32 children (17 girls and 15 boys) participated in paired interviews. All children interviewed were students from School B.

Both schools were broadly similar in terms of demographics. The majority of children spoke English as a first language and were of white ethnicity. Table 3.1 provides an indication of pupil demographics in terms of intake, Special Educational Needs (SEN), social deprivation (as indicated by the number of children qualifying for Free School Meals - FSM) and English language competency (as indicated by the number of children speaking English as an

Additional Language - EAL). Data were reported to be accurate as of January 2014:

Table 3.1

*Pupil Demographics in terms of Intake, Special Educational Needs (SEN), Social Deprivation and English Language Competency*

| | School A | School B |
|---|---|---|
| Number of Children on Roll | 381 | 579 |
| Free School Meals (FSM) | 44% | 31% |
| Special Educational Needs (SEN) | 31% | 36% |
| English as an Additional Language (EAL) | 8% | 12% |

The vast majority of children in both schools were of White British ethnicity (87% in School A and 72 % in school B) with the remainder coming from a range of backgrounds including Black, Asian and White (Non-British).

## 3.5 Ethical Considerations

In designing this study the British Psychological Society (2004) ethical guidelines were considered. The study was approved by the ethics committee in the Institute of Education.

It was acknowledged that the subject matter could potentially be upsetting for any children who had experienced bullying or unkind behaviour in the past and so steps were taken to reassure children that they were free to skip questions (both on questionnaires and in interviews) if they so wished. Class teachers and

teaching assistants (TAs) were on hand to assist with any children who became upset during the administering of questionnaires; however no children seemed to become upset during this time. The researchers' contact details were left with the school should any issues arise following administration; however neither school contacted the researcher to report any issues of student distress following questionnaire or interview completion.

In relation to informed consent, children, parents and school staff were informed that the research was designed to explore the areas of friendships and social relationships amongst children, as well as to gather views about how children react if they witness unkind behaviour happening to others.

## 3.6 Measures

### ***3.6.1 The Unkind Behaviour Scale***

To determine behavioural tendencies relating to unkind behaviour, children completed an adapted version of the peer nomination procedure described by Goossens, Olthof and Dekker (2006) which was itself an adaptation of Salmivalli, Lagerspetz, Bjorkqvist, Osterman and Kaukiainen's (1996) 'Participant Role' procedure. Goossens et al. (2006) use their scale in a repeated measures study with a sample of 224 Dutch children (mean age 9 years 9 months at Time 1 and mean age 11 years 8 months at Time 2). The authors report internal consistency (Cronbach alpha) results falling within the high range for all roles (bully, follower, outsider, defender and victim) both at Time 1 and Time 2. Goosens et al. (2006) assign specific bully roles to each child depending on the number of nominations they receive for statements falling within the categories of bully, victim, assistant, reinforcer, defender and outsider.

The current study did not aim to assign specific roles to children or to fit them into categories. Instead, behaviours were construed as tendencies rather than specific role types, as it was felt that the assignment of roles was too absolute

(involving arbitrary thresholds to include or exclude children within a role), and any one child could be likely to display multiple behaviours in relation to unkindness depending on the context. For example, children might behave unkindly towards disliked peers, but might act defensively if it was one of their friends who was being victimised. In addition, the terminology was adapted from the Goosens et al. (2006) study. Terminology was changed from reflecting behavioural *categories* in relation to *bullying* (i.e., bullies, victims, assistants, reinforcers, defenders and outsiders) to reflect behavioural *tendencies* in relation to *unkind behaviour* (i.e., perpetrating unkind behaviour, assisting the perpetrator, reinforcing the unkind behaviour, defending against unkind behaviour, remaining distanced/outside and being victimised).

Children were presented with a series of statements describing the various ways in which children can behave when faced with unkind behaviour. These statements were designed to reflect the following behavioural tendencies: 'Perpetrating unkind behaviour' (2 statements), 'being victimised (2 statements), 'assisting the perpetrator' (2 statements) 'reinforcing the unkind behaviour' (2 statements), 'remaining distanced/outside' (3 statements) and 'defending against unkind behaviour' (4 statements). Children were asked to nominate a child in their class that might fit each description. As well as item wording being adapted from the Goosens et al. (2006) study to reflect unkind behaviour rather than bullying, item wording was also simplified in some cases. For example, 'someone who takes the initiative in bullying' was adapted to 'someone who starts the unkind behaviour'. A copy of the Unkind Behaviour Scale can be seen in Appendix 1.

### ***3.6.2 Friendship Qualities Scale***

An adapted version of Bukowski, Hoza and Boivin's (1994) 'Friendship Qualities Scale' was used to ascertain a measure of the quality of each child's friendship. According to Bukowski, Hoza and Boivin (1994) their original scale is a theoretically grounded measurement tool designed to assess the quality of children's and early adolescents' relationships with their best friends according

to conceptually meaningful aspects of the friendship relation. According to the authors the original scale has a high level of reliability and internal consistency values for the subscales range from .71 to .86.

Bukowski, Hoza and Boivin's (1994) scale consists of 23 items which assessed the dimensions of companionship, conflict, help (subdivided into items reflecting mutual aid and protection from victimisation), security (subdivided into items reflecting reliability or level of trust within the friendship and the ability to transcend problems) and closeness. In the current study, items on the companionship and closeness scale were not used. As the current study was concerned primarily with the experience of defending it was felt that the subscales of conflict, help and security would be most relevant in identifying distinguishing features of this population. For instance it would seem reasonable to assume that children who remain outside, reinforce or assist with unkind behaviour are likely to have companions (they would not necessarily be isolated children) and they may also have a number of friends to whom they are close. Therefore, they may not necessarily be overly different from children who defend in these respects. However, they may differ from children who defend in terms of how secure their friendships are, to what degree they feel they can rely on their friends for help and also in relation to the level of conflict within their friendships.

The original measure used by Bukowski, Hoza and Boivin (1994) asked each child to consider their one best friend when responding to questions. The current study adapted this feature and asked children to think about three good friends when responding. It was theorised that the presence of a supportive friendship *group* (i.e., three friends or more whose relationships together were of good quality) rather than a single best friend may influence the behaviour of children who defend, as previous studies have documented the important influence of social factors on behaviour in bullying situations (Pozzoli & Gini, 2010). Item wording was adapted to reflect children responding about multiple friends rather than one single friend.

The 18 items on the adapted scale were designed to reflect the friendship categories of conflict (e.g., I argue with my friends), help (e.g., If other children were bothering me my friends would help me) and security (e.g., I can trust my friends). The help scale was comprised of the subscales aid and protection from victimisation. The security scale was subdivided into transcending problems and reliable alliance. A copy of this adapted version of the Friendship Qualities Scale, along with the item assignments can be seen in Appendix 2. Children's mean scores across these subscales were summed to give a global friendship quality score. In the current study the Cronbach alpha coefficient for the overall scale was .9 indicating very good internal consistency for the scale with this sample. See Table 3.2 below for a summary of Cronbach alpha coefficients for the subscales of the adapted Friendship Qualities Scale.

Table 3.2

*Internal Consistency Analysis for the Friendship Qualities Scale Subscales*

| Friendship Questionnaire Subscale | Alpha |
|---|---|
| Help-aid | 0.70 |
| Help – protection from victimisation | 0.66 |
| Security – transcending problems | 0.67 |
| Security – reliable alliance | 0.78 |
| Conflict | 0.60 |

Upon examination, some of these alpha values seemed somewhat low. However, Pallant (2010) notes that Cronbach alpha values are sensitive to the number of items in the scale and where scales have small numbers of items it is common to find low Cronbach alpha values such as .5.

### ***3.6.3 Social Cognitive Mapping***

In an attempt to capture the social groupings within the year group as well as each child's social standing in relation to their peers, children completed a Social Cognitive Map (SCM) of their year group derived from the techniques used by Cairns, Xie & Leung (1998). Children were given a sheet with 6 boxes. It was explained to the children that in any one year group there will be lots of different groups of children who tend to play or 'hang around' together. Children were told that each box on the sheet represented one group of children. They were then asked to write down the names of children who played together in the appropriate box. In this manner each child's perception of the social clusters within their year group (their social cognitive map) was identified. See Appendix 3 for a copy of the social cognitive mapping tool.

Using the SCM technique via the SCM 4.0 computer program, individual reports were aggregated to summarise the number of times a child was nominated as being a member of a particular friendship cluster. Individual social cognitive maps can be aggregated into a composite social cognitive map which provides an approximation of actual peer group interaction patterns (Cairns, Perrin & Cairns, 1985). This composite map is a co-nomination matrix in which each cell represents the number of times a particular pair of children are nominated by peers as being part of the same group (Cairns et al., 1985). This information can then be used to identify each child's centrality in relation to their group, as well as the centrality of their particular group in relation to the rest of the year group (Cairns et al., 1995).

To determine (i) each individual's social status within their friendship cluster and (ii) the status of each friendship group in relation to the entire year group *Centrality Indices (CI)* were calculated. According to Cairns et al. (1995) a *centrality index* for a group is the average frequency nomination for the two persons within the group who received the highest number of nominations from their peers. In this way, centrality indices can be calculated for each friendship group and groups can be compared in terms of their status relative to one

another. The labels of ‘nuclear’, ‘secondary’, ‘peripheral’ and ‘isolate’ are used to describe the centrality of individuals in terms of salience within their group, and also to describe groups in terms of salience within the entire year group cohort. Nuclear individuals are children who tend to be more often perceived by peers as consistent members of a particular group. A nuclear child may be perceived as being a leader of the group or a popular member of the group. Their name is likely to emerge more often within this group across the questionnaires (social cognitive maps) of all the children within the year group. If a child plays with children in one particular group for most of the time, but then plays with other friendship groups at other times (or is very quiet or shy), they may be seen as less central to (or salient within) the primary group, and so may be classified as a secondary member of the group. Children who play with various different groups and do not seem to be associated with any one group in particular may be classified with peripheral status. Children who play alone and are not identified by peers as being a member of any of the perceived groups within the year may be classified as ‘isolate’.

According to Cairns et al. (1995) nuclear network status means that an individual is a highly central member of a social group which is highly central within the year group. Secondary status represents children who have intermediate levels of centrality. Peripheral status is used to describe children who have low centrality in a group or are members of low centrality groups. Finally, isolates are children who have not been nominated by peers as being part of any particular friendship group.

### ***3.6.4 Teasing Questionnaire***

The teasing questionnaire (see Appendix 4) was designed specifically for this study and was intended to determine a child’s attitudes towards both positive (pro-social) and negative (anti-social) forms of teasing in addition to attitudes towards unkind behaviour. Items were adapted from measures used in three pre-existing studies.

To assess negative (anti-social) forms of teasing, items were adapted from The Moral Disengagement Scale (MDS) (Pelton, Ground, Forehand & Brody, 2004). The MDS consists of 32 items. Five of these items were used in the current study. The wording of certain items was adapted as it was felt by the researcher that this would make the items easier for UK ten and eleven year olds to understand. For example 'someone who is obnoxious does not deserve to be treated like a human being' (from the MDS) was adapted by the researcher to 'it is alright to be unfriendly to someone who says unkind things to you'.

Items to assess anti-bullying attitudes were loosely based on items used by Salmivalli and Voeten (1994). Salmivalli and Voeten (1994) used 10 items to assess attitudes towards bullying. Five of these items were adapted for use in the current study. Items were adapted so that the term 'unkind behaviour' was used instead of the term 'bullying', which was used by the original authors. Some items were also simplified in terms of wording in an attempt to make them easier for young children to understand. The use of the third person was avoided. For example the item 'one should try to help the bullied victims' was adapted in the current study to 'you should try to help someone who is being teased unkindly'.

The remaining items on the Teasing Questionnaire were composed by the researcher and were designed to assess pro-social forms of teasing in acknowledgement that teasing is not always carried out with negative intent. Items on the scale aimed to cover pro-social forms of teasing in relation to the function that teasing can serve in terms of lifting mood, strengthening positive connections between children and providing a forum for shared joking or fun.

## 3.7 Piloting

### ***3.7.1 Piloting of Questionnaires***

Four Year 6 children (who were not part of the intended study population) completed questionnaires. On the basis of their feedback the wording of one

question on the Unkind Behaviour Questionnaire was changed, however apart from this the children did not report difficulty understanding the questions posed.

### ***3.7.2 Piloting of Interviews***

The same four children who been involved in the piloting of the questionnaires were also interviewed. The Blob Playground Scene (Wilson & Long, 2009) (see Appendix 5) was incorporated into the interview questions as a visual icebreaker. This tool is linked to the principles of Personal Construct Psychology (Kelly, 1991) and is often used as a tool by Educational Psychologists as a stimulus for discussion about a child's self-perceptions. Children were asked to identify blob characters which they felt were similar or dissimilar to them in relation to their friendships. Their responses were then used as a basis for further questioning.

As part of the interview process, children were asked a range of questions designed to explore their experience of witnessing unkind behaviour towards others. Children were asked to recount an experience of witnessing someone being treated unkindly. Further questions then explored the actions of the child upon witnessing the incident, the potential influence of peers on the child's behaviour, the potential influence of adults on the child's behaviour, the characteristics of the perpetrator of the unkind behaviour as well as the characteristics of the victim, to see whether this appeared to influence the child's response. All children seemed able to provide in-depth answers to interview questions and so the interview schedule was not altered following the pilot interviews (See Appendix 6 for interview schedule).

## 3.8 Procedure

### *3.8.1 Study Phases*

Phase 1 – Questionnaires

Parents were sent a consent letter (see Appendix 7) outlining the main aims of the study and the procedure which would be followed. Parents were asked to return a consent slip if they did not wish their child to complete questionnaires in school (opt-out consent). In this manner, the majority of parents consented for their children to complete questionnaires. Only 7 participants from across both schools returned consent forms opting out of the questionnaire phase.

Questionnaires were administered to the whole class at a time that was convenient for school staff. It was felt that administering questionnaires to the whole class (as opposed to small groups being withdrawn from class by the researcher) would cause the minimum disruption for teachers who were under pressure to meet curriculum demands and to prepare the children for Scholastic Aptitude Tests (SATs). Ultimately, it was felt that such a method would cause minimal disruption to children's learning. It also ensured that in addition to the researcher, both teachers and TAs were on hand to assist pupils and to provide reassurance if necessary.

The aims of the study were outlined to the children and the principles of confidentiality were explained in child friendly terms (see Appendix 8 for a copy of the children's information sheet). Children were given the option of skipping questions if they wished. Once children had finished completing the questionnaires they were asked to read a book quietly. They were also encouraged to use their book to cover up their answers as they worked through the questionnaires, to reduce the likelihood of their responses being seen by another child. Children were seated as far away from one another as possible using the maximum space available in the room. Children were reminded that to

maintain confidentiality they should not discuss their responses with anyone else in their class.

The first question of each questionnaire was completed aloud as a whole group. After this children worked individually to complete the rest of the questions but were reassured that they could raise their hand to ask for help or clarification at any point. Following questionnaire completion children were debriefed and were given the opportunity to ask any questions they had about the study. It was explained to children that some of them may be chosen for interview over the next few days.

Phase 2 – Interviews

Children were chosen for interview based on peer nominations regarding behavioural tendencies on the Unkind Behaviour Scale. Percentages were calculated by totalling the number of nominations each child received for each behavioural type and dividing by the number of potential nominations they could receive within each class. For example in a class of 30, each child could potentially receive 58 nominations for being a perpetrator of unkind behaviour (2 statements multiplied by 29 children, as children were asked not to self-nominate). A child receiving 5 nominations for 'perpetrating unkind behaviour' would be given a percentage of 8.62% (5/58 x 100). To determine where each child's percentage score stood in relation to the class mean (and to get an indication of dispersion of scores) percentages were converted to z-scores. Children were interviewed if their z-score was half a standard deviation above the mean for their class in relation to the different behavioural tendencies.

### *3.8.2 Phase 2 Sample Selection*

Children were chosen on the basis of their peer nomination results on The Unkind Behaviour Questionnaire. Initially it was intended to interview only those children who seemed to show a stronger tendency towards defending. Interestingly, initial results showed that many children who seemed to have peer

reported defending tendencies also had tendencies (peer reported) for assisting, reinforcing and in some cases being unkind. Therefore it was felt that 'defending' could not be considered in isolation. So, a selection of children from across all the behavioural tendencies were interviewed. Children whose z scores were less than half a standard deviation above the mean were not chosen for interview as it was felt that children who had displayed stronger behavioural tendencies would be more likely to provide fuller responses in interview that would lead to richer material for thematic analysis. In addition, it was felt that choosing children on the basis of their peer reported tendencies rather than random sampling would be more likely to give a broad view of the variety of thoughts that children might have about unkind behaviour. For example, random sampling might have resulted in children being interviewed who tended to stay away from unkind behaviour or who did not express strong views either way. In keeping with the pragmatic philosophy of the study, the decision was made to interview children who would be most likely to express strong views in relation to unkind behaviour, i.e., those children who received higher than average scores for behaviours related to defending, being unkind, assisting, reinforcing, remaining outside or being victimised.

School A

Following questionnaire administration an additional letter was sent home to the parents of 31 children requesting active consent for their child to be interviewed (see Appendix 9). Out of the 31 letters distributed only 3 were returned consenting for interview. Extra copies of letters were sent home with any children who had not returned forms. A reminder to parents was sent by the school office by means of a text message encouraging them to complete and return the consent letter if they were happy for their children to participate. No further letters were returned resulting in a final interview sample size of N=3.

Individual interviews were conducted with the three children who had been given parental consent. All three children had been nominated as displaying defending tendencies. Unfortunately despite attempts to establish rapport the

children seemed nervous in the interview situation and their answers appeared limited and hesitant. This could have been due to a number of factors. The novelty of the situation, the unfamiliarity of the researcher and the sensitive nature of the topic could have led children to feel nervous. In addition, due to space constraints within the school the room which had been set aside for interviews was also being used for intervention groups. As a result there were a number of other children and adults present in the room while interviews were being conducted (albeit working on the other side of the room behind a screen) and this could have contributed towards the children being inhibited in their responses. Efforts made by the researcher to find an alternative interview space were not successful. Furthermore, although the Blob Playground Scene (Wilson & Long, 2009) had seemed to be a useful tool for initiating discussion during piloting, it did not seem to generate much discussion in children in School A. Therefore the decision was taken to adapt this process for subsequent interviews.

After listening to the audio recordings of these three interviews it was decided that the depth of the children's responses would not provide a sufficient base for a rich qualitative analysis and so it was decided to disregard the data from these interviews and to conduct interviews in a paired interview format in School B instead.

School B

Due to the change in proposed procedure from individual interviewing to a paired interview format a revised application was sent to the Institute of Education Ethics Committee for approval and an alternative consent procedure was outlined (see Appendix 10). It was proposed in this application that children would be interviewed in friendship pairs in an attempt to reduce any anxiety they may have about the interview context. By conducting the interviews in friendship pairs it was hoped by the researcher that the children might feel more confident (by having a friend for support), less anxious about the unfamiliarity of the situation and that discussion between the pair might be provoked. It was felt

that children who had been identified as friends would be more likely to feel comfortable in one another's presence and so might have the confidence to speak more openly. However; the potential drawbacks of paired interviewing were also acknowledged and it was recognised that the presence of a peer might limit a child's willingness to speak openly. It was also acknowledged that the paired format might limit the variability of responses. Despite these potential limitations it was felt that the potential advantages in terms of increased confidence and depth of discussion would outweigh the potential drawbacks.

In the revised ethics application it was proposed that the consent process would be combined and that parents would be sent one letter rather than two (see Appendix 11 for a copy of this combined consent letter). In this letter the aims and procedures for both questionnaire and interview stages were outlined. Parents were given the option of opting out of one or both parts of the study. This revised consent process was approved by the Institute of Education Ethics Committee and so this procedure was employed in the second school. In School B four parents opted their child out of the entire study, while two consented for their children to complete questionnaires but declined consent for their children to be interviewed.

Initially it was intended to compare differences between groups of children (according to unkind behavioural tendency) and to conduct separate thematic analyses for each group. However; this intention changed because children displayed more than one behavioural tendency in relation to their role when witnessing unkind behaviour. For example, some children who were nominated for their defending tendencies were also nominated for remaining outside at times. In addition there also seemed to be a degree of overlap between perpetrating unkind behaviour, reinforcing and assisting. Furthermore, after an initial coding of transcripts it seemed that most of the children who had been peer nominated as displaying tendencies towards unkind behaviour, spoke in depth about defending in their interviews – in their own responses they seemed to indicate a strong tendency towards defending. Upon consideration of these issues it was felt that children could not be meaningfully distinguished in terms of their behavioural tendencies. It was decided that a comparison between

groups would be of limited utility and instead a single thematic analysis across groups was conducted. In this sense the analysis focused on the experience of defending rather than the experience of 'defenders'.

Teachers were given a list of children who had been chosen for interview but were not informed of the children's behavioural tendencies. Teachers were asked to group children into friendship pairs and these pairings were then used in the interviews.

In advance of the interview starting, the process was explained in child friendly terms. Children were told that they would be asked about their experiences of witnessing unkind behaviour and what they might do if they saw unkind behaviour happening to another child. They were informed that their responses would remain confidential unless they disclosed anything which caused the researcher to fear for their personal safely – in which case the researcher would be required to inform a member of school staff. Children were given the opportunity of opting out at this point and were reassured that this was their choice and no adults would be upset with them should they choose to do this. Children indicated their consent by means of a signed consent slip (see Appendix 12). No children chose to opt out of the interviews.

As an ice breaker activity children were presented with vignettes (see Appendix 13) and asked what they might do if confronted with such a scenario. Scenarios were designed to reflect episodes of both physical and relational unkindness. The physical unkindness vignette described a child being physically prevented by two other children from exiting a toilet cubicle. The relational unkindness scenario described a child being excluded from a playground game.

In total, sixteen paired interviews were conducted. Thirty two children were interviewed (17 girls and 15 boys). All pairs were same sex with the exception of one pairing. The following children were interviewed: eight children who had been peer nominated for defending (7 girls and 1 boy), 5 children who had been peer nominated for perpetrating unkind behaviour (all boys), 5 children who had been peer nominated for assisting (4 boys and 1 girl), 8 children who had been

peer nominated for reinforcing (3 boys and 5 girls) and 6 children who were peer nominated as remaining distanced or outside (4 girls and 2 boys). Interviews were then recorded and transcribed.

## 3.9 Analysis

### ***3.9.1 Factor Analysis***

In order to see whether the 16 items of the Teasing Questionnaire could coherently be reduced into three subscales representing 'pro-social teasing', 'moral disengagement' and 'anti-bullying attitudes' a Principal Components Analysis (PCA) was carried out. Prior to performing PCA the suitability of the data for factor analysis was assessed. Inspection of the correlation matrix revealed the presence of many coefficients of .3 and above. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin value was .78, exceeding the recommended value of .6 (Kaiser, 1970) and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (Bartlett, 1954) reached statistical significance, supporting the factorability of the correlation matrix.

Principal components analysis revealed the presence of four components with eigenvalues exceeding 1 explaining 29.3%, 14.2%, 8.2% and 7.4% of the variance respectively. An inspection of the scree plot revealed a break after the third component. Using Cattell's (1966) scree test it was decided to retain three components for further investigation. Cattell's (1966) scree test involves plotting the eigenvalues of the factors and locating the point on the plot at which the shape of the curve changes direction and becomes horizontal. It is recommended that the factors above the break in the plot (the elbow) are retained as these are the factors which contribute to most of the variance in the data. A copy of the scree plot can be seen in Appendix 14.

The three component solution explained a total of 51.8% of the variance with Component 1 contributing to 29.3%, Component 2 contributing to 14.2% and Component 3 contributing to 8.2%. To aid in the interpretation of these

components, oblimin rotation was performed. The rotated solution revealed the presence of a simple structure (Thurstone, 1947) with all three components showing a number of strong loadings. One exception to this was item 16 – 'I don't tease someone if I think it will make them feel embarrassed'. This item presented with a low communality value of .2 and so was removed from further analyses. On the basis of the PCA the remaining items on Components 1 and 2 were taken to represent 'pro-social teasing' (Factor 1) and 'disapproval of unkind behaviour' (Factor 2) respectively. The four items on Component 3 did not seem to add much to the study in addition to the factors already identified, so these items were removed from further analyses.

A reliability analysis was conducted to determine reliability and internal consistency of the two subscales pro-social teasing and disapproval of unkind behaviour. The pro-social teasing subscale had good internal consistency with a Cronbach alpha coefficient of .81. The disapproval of unkind behaviour subscale had acceptable internal consistency with a Cronbach alpha coefficient of .70.

A table displaying pattern coefficients, structure coefficients and communalities can be seen in Appendix 15. For a table of unrotated loadings, see Appendix 16.

### ***3.9.2 Thematic Analysis (TA)***

Thematic analysis has been described as "a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p.79). As this study aimed to identify common elements in children's experience of defending against unkind behaviour it was felt that Thematic Analysis would be appropriate.

In the current study, both theoretical and experiential approaches to Thematic Analysis were used (Braun and Clarke, 2013). Existing theory regarding children's social relationships and unkind behaviour exerted some influence on

the questions posed and the themes which were drawn out in the analysis, while a focus on children's experience and how they interpreted and made sense of this experience was also maintained.

The approach adopted in the current study was descriptive as opposed to interpretative. The aim of the analysis was to identify patterns in the reported experience of children in relation to unkind behaviour without trying to impose any deeper interpretative understanding from the researcher's perspective. It was felt by the researcher that an interpretative stance could increase the risk of subjective misinterpretation – that the researcher would impose meaning which was not an accurate reflection of the child's intended meaning or experience.

The decision to adopt Thematic Analysis as a method of analysis as opposed to alternative qualitative methods was based on a number of factors. Thematic Analysis is described by Braun and Clarke (2013) as being a flexible tool which can be used relatively quickly and easily by researchers to identify patterns across transcripts. For the current study, a method of analysis which was relatively quick to use, while at the same time providing a deep analysis, was required. Furthermore, a primary aim of the study was to identify patterns in the experience of children in relation to defending and unkind behaviour. While the experience of each individual child was deemed important, an in-depth analysis of each individual experience was deemed to be beyond the scope of the study. A tool was needed which could provide a meaningful analysis of each child's experience and then link this to the experience of others in an attempt to generalise findings. In this sense Thematic Analysis was deemed the most appropriate method. In addition, the study did not aim to generate a theory of defending (in which case a Grounded Theory approach might have been suitable), but rather to explore children's experiences on a more general level, drawing out similarities and differences in an attempt to arrive at findings which could be practically useful for EPs in their day to day work in schools.

### ***3.9.3 Phases of Thematic Analysis***

In the current study the steps of Thematic Analysis as described by Braun and Clarke (2006) were followed as outlined in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3

*Phases of Thematic Analysis*

| Phase | Description of the process |
|---|---|
| 1. Familiarising yourself with the data | Transcribing data, reading and re-reading the data, noting down initial ideas. |
| 2. Generating initial codes | Coding interesting features in a systematic fashion, collating data relevant to each code. |
| 3. Searching for themes | Collating codes into potential themes. |
| 4. Reviewing themes | Checking if themes work in relation to the coded extracts and the data set as a whole. |
| 5. Defining and naming themes | Ongoing analysis to refine the specifics of each theme, generating clear definitions and names for each theme. |
| 6. Producing the report | Selection of vivid and compelling extract examples, final analysis of extracts, relate the analysis back to the literature and research questions. |

*Source:* Adapted from Braun and Clarke (2006) p. 87.

To improve reliability; coding and themes were discussed in research supervision sessions. During these sessions, joint examination of transcripts and associated codes took place and the rationale behind decisions to group particular codes into subthemes and themes was discussed. As a result of these discussions the decision was taken to keep codes descriptive rather than interpretative. So, some initial codes which had been based on the researcher's subjective interpretation of the children's reported experience were dropped. For instance an early code 'children are inherently unkind' was discarded. In the researcher's opinion this was an idea which seemed to underpin some of the data, however it was discarded as a code as it was not something which had been directly expressed by any child - the researcher felt it had been alluded to, but had not been verbalised directly.

During research supervision it was also identified that some of the themes seemed related and could potentially be linked into over-arching themes. As a result of this the themes of 'Emotional Aspects of Defending', 'Personal Influences' and 'Costs/Benefits' were all linked together under the over-arching theme of 'Internal Aspects of Defending'.

Phase 1 – Familiarising yourself with the data

Paired interviews were digitally recorded and transcribed verbatim (by a third party) on to a computer using Microsoft Office Word computer software. Once the transcription process was complete the researcher read through each transcript in its entirety whilst listening to the audio recording simultaneously to ensure that the transcribed data matched the recorded data and also to become familiar with the data. Each transcript was then re-read in detail and initial ideas and impressions were noted down using the 'comments' feature in Microsoft Office Word. Each transcript was re-read twice more, and ideas or 'noticings' (Braun and Clarke, 2013) were recorded by the researcher. No attempt was made at this point to generate codes. Rather, the focus was purely on familiarisation and general 'thinking around' the data.

Phase 2 – Generating initial codes

Following the procedure suggested by Braun and Clarke (2013) the researcher began with the first transcript and systematically worked through it looking for chunks of data which could potentially address the research questions. Coded data extracts varied in size. Braun and Clarke (2013) explain that data can be coded in large chunks (e.g., 20 lines of data), small chunks (e.g.,1 line of data) or 'anything in between as needed' (p.210). In the current study a *selective coding* (as opposed to complete coding) process was used. Braun and Clarke (2013) explain that *complete coding* involves coding every part of the data transcript (either in small, medium or large chunks) regardless of whether the chunk of data relates directly to the research questions posed. On the other hand, selective coding involves coding only data which seems relevant to answering the research questions. Any other data which may seem interesting but not directly related to the research questions is not coded. In the current study only data which were deemed to relate directly to the research questions were coded and retained for further analysis. Again, the 'comments' feature in Microsoft Office Word was used to record codes.

Codes were *data derived*. They aimed to briefly describe or summarise what had been expressed by the interviewee verbally without attempting to interpret any potentially latent meaning. In this sense, codes aimed to reflect the semantic content of the data only. On the other hand, *researcher derived* codes are those which are based on the researcher's subjective interpretation of what the data might mean and rely on the researcher applying their own theoretical understanding to the interpretation of data (Braun and Clarke, 2013). In the current study, researcher derived coding was avoided as it was felt that such an approach could be overly subject to bias.

Phase 3 – Searching for themes

According to Braun and Clarke (2006) a theme encapsulates something important about the data in relation to the research question and represents a level of patterned response. In order to identify patterns in the data, initial codes were reviewed and the data relating to each code was collated. Codes (along with their related data) which seemed meaningfully linked in terms of a *central organising concept* (Braun and Clarke, 2013) were grouped together in a separate word document. At this stage of the analysis the following areas of potential thematic overlap were identified by the researcher: 'forms of defending', 'adults', 'teasing', 'popular people', 'witnessing victimisation', 'characteristics of the perpetrators', 'characteristics of the defenders', 'upon defending' and 'values'. At this point the analysis had only identified codes and potential themes – no sub-themes had yet been identified. A list of these initial draft themes and codes can be seen in Appendix 17.Hand-drawn initial thematic maps were also generated by the researcher at this point.

Once initial draft themes were identified an attempt was made to narrow the focus of the analysis by grouping the codes under each draft theme heading into sub-themes. So, for example, the codes under the theme of 'Adults' were grouped into the sub-themes of 'adults give conflicting messages', 'telling an adult means people are more unkind to you', 'adults can reprimand/misinterpret the situation', 'presence/absence of adults' and 'adults have power that children do not'.

Codes under the theme headings of 'Forms of Defending', 'Popular People' and Characteristics of Perpetrator' were merged and grouped into the sub-themes of 'shared history', 'characteristics of child perpetrating, 'characteristics of child being victimised', and 'nature of the incident'. Once organised into sub-themes the theme name of 'Forms of Defending' was replaced by 'Situational Influences on Defending' as this seemed more fitting with regards the sub-themes themselves.

Codes relating to the theme of ‘Witnessing Victimisation’ were grouped into the sub-themes of ‘fear’, ‘anger’ and ‘guilt’ and the theme was then renamed ‘Emotional Aspects of Defending’. Codes relating to the themes of ‘Characteristics of Defender’, ‘Upon Defending’ and ‘Values’ were merged and grouped into the sub-themes of ‘strength of friendship’, ’moral virtue’, ‘empathy/ theory of mind, ‘sense of duty’ and ‘agency/competence (experience)’. The theme was renamed ‘Personal Influences (Characteristics of the Child Defending)’

Phase 4 - Reviewing themes/defining and naming themes

At this stage, the themes identified previously were finalised. ‘Adults’ was retained as a theme but renamed as ‘The Effect of Adults’, as ‘Adults’ as a theme was deemed to be too general. ‘Teasing’ was retained as a theme but renamed as ‘Teasing – Break your Sticks and Bones’. This choice of name was a quote from one of the children and was chosen as a theme name to reflect how teasing and its effects can be (mis)interpreted uniquely by each child. The themes of ‘Costs/Benefits of Defending’ was identified as a theme in itself at this point. It was felt that this theme encompassed important elements from the themes of ‘Emotional Aspects of Defending’, ‘Personal Influences (Characteristics of the Child Defending)’ and ‘Adult Influences on Defending’ and as such could be considered as a theme in its own right. All five themes were then grouped under the over-arching themes of ‘Internal Aspects of Defending’ and ‘External Aspects of Defending’. As recommended by Braun and Clarke (2013) coded and collated data were revisited and re-read to ensure that data related appropriately to the named theme. See Appendix 18 for an example of an interview transcript.

## 3.10 Integration

Results of the quantitative questionnaires along with results of the thematic analysis were partially mixed. Data collected to address specific research questions were either qualitative or quantitative. It was felt that each research

question had a distinct focus and so it was not necessary to mix methods within questions. Findings were integrated during the final interpretation stage.

# Chapter 4: Results

## 4.1. Overview

This chapter will provide an overview of the main findings derived from both the quantitative and qualitative parts of the study. In the first part of the chapter the quantitative questionnaire results will be outlined. The second part of the chapter will focus on the qualitative interview results.

## 4.2 Quantitative Results

The quantitative part of the study aimed to address the following research questions:

**Research Question 1**

*Are there common factors which seem associated with defending?*

**Research Question 2**

*2.1 Is there a relationship between defending and attitudes towards teasing?*

*2.2 Is there a relationship between perpetrating unkind behaviour and attitudes towards teasing?*

*2.3 Is there a relationship between assisting with unkind behaviour and attitudes towards teasing?*

**Research Question 3**

*Is there an association between a child's social position within their peer group and their behaviour when witnessing acts of unkindness?*

**Research Question 7**

*Is there an association between defending and friendship quality?*

### *4.2.1 Descriptive Statistics*

#### 4.2.1.1 Means

Table (4.1) provides an indication of means and standard deviations of variables across the entire dataset. The source of each variable (the questionnaire from which it originates) is listed in parentheses after the variable name. UBS is used to represent items from the Unkind Behaviour Scale, SCM is used to represent variables from the Social Cognitive Maps, FQS is used to represent variables from the Friendship Qualities Scale and TQ is used to represent variables from the Teasing Questionnaire.

The same system of abbreviations is also used in the remaining tables in this chapter.

Table 4.1

*Means and Standard Deviations of Variables relating to Age, Behavioural Tendency, Friendship Quality, Teasing Attitudes and Social Position*

| | Boy | | Girl | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Mean | SD | Mean | SD | Mean | SD |
| Group Size | 9.76 | 4.40 | 5.87 | 1.62 | 8.14 | 4.00 |
| Remaining Distanced/Outside (UBS) | 4.41 | 4.89 | 7.16 | 5.95 | 5.55 | 5.50 |
| Defending (UBS) | 4.41 | 4.38 | 8.45 | 6.28 | 6.09 | 5.60 |
| Perpetrating Unkind Behaviour (UBS) | 5.96 | 10.84 | 2.62 | 4.97 | 4.57 | 9.00 |
| Being Victimised (UBS) | 5.21 | 7.04 | 2.99 | 4.96 | 4.29 | 6.33 |
| Reinforcing Unkind Behaviour (UBS) | 5.08 | 5.56 | 3.68 | 4.65 | 4.50 | 5.22 |
| Assisting the Perpetrator (UBS) | 4.60 | 8.36 | 2.82 | 5.62 | 3.86 | 7.37 |
| Percentage Nominations per Year Group (Centrality) (SCM) | 2.38 | 0.95 | 2.49 | 0.96 | 2.42 | 0.95 |
| Help – Aid (FQS) | 3.13 | 0.66 | 3.59 | 0.46 | 3.32 | 0.63 |
| Help - Protection from Victimisation (FQS) | 3.25 | 0.68 | 3.56 | 0.46 | 3.38 | 0.62 |
| Security - Transcending Problems (FQS) | 3.03 | 0.70 | 3.49 | 0.47 | 3.22 | 0.65 |
| Security-Reliable Alliance (FQS) | 3.14 | 0.71 | 3.63 | 0.42 | 3.34 | 0.65 |
| Conflict (FQS) | 2.73 | 0.54 | 3.14 | 0.59 | 2.90 | 0.60 |
| Global Friendship Quality (FQS) | 15.28 | 2.65 | 17.43 | 1.60 | 16.17 | 2.50 |
| Pro-Social Teasing (TQ) | 1.80 | 0.67 | 1.54 | 0.48 | 1.69 | 0.61 |
| Disapproval of Unkind Behaviour (TQ) | 3.33 | 0.64 | 3.75 | 0.33 | 3.50 | 0.57 |
| Age | 10.23 | 0.55 | 10.19 | 0.50 | 10.21 | 0.53 |

#### 4.2.1.2 Exploratory Data Analysis

Indicators of normality suggested that scores on all scales were not normally distributed. A table of skewness, kurtosis and Kolmogorov-Smirnov values can be seen in Appendix 19.

Box plots also revealed the presence of outliers on all scales. Traditional approaches to outliers often involves removal or adjustment of the data so that the order of the data remains the same but there is less leverage on mean scores. However, the very scores which were skewed in the data (e.g., those children who had marked scores on measures of defending against unkind behaviour) were those that the current study was interested in. Removal or adjustment of outliers would mean removing the participants that the research was interested in. The scores were left unchanged and retained for subsequent analyses.

Initial explorations indicated that data were not normally distributed thus indicating that non-parametric statistical procedures would be a safe approach to the analysis. However, parametric tests are robust to deviations away from normality and Kolmogorov-Smirnov tests are often reported to be overly sensitive to departures of normality in large samples (Field, 2013). However to ensure a cautious approach to the analyses both parametric and non-parametric correlations were undertaken. Where both parametric and non-parametric tests identified significant results it was (cautiously) concluded that there was a higher likelihood of an effect being present. The correlations reported in the text in this chapter are parametric.

## ***4.2.2 Inferential Statistics***

### 4.2.2.1 Correlations

*Correlations between roles*

Correlations were run to explore the relationships between behavioural tendencies as measured by the Unkind Behaviour Questionnaire. Parametric results are illustrated in Table 4.2. Non-parametric results can be seen in Appendix 20. Yellow has been used to highlight large correlations which were found to be significant using both parametric and non-parametric methods. Green has been used to highlight medium strength correlations which were found to be significant using both parametric and non-parametric methods. Red has been used to indicate where results were conflicting (i.e., where a result was significant parametrically but not non-parametrically and vice versa). For gender specific correlations see Appendix 21 where colour is again used to highlight associations of interest.

Table 4.2

*Pearson Correlations between Behavioural Tendencies*

| | Remaining Distanced/Outside | Defending | Perpetrator of Unkind Behaviour | Being Victimised | Reinforcing the Unkind Behaviour | Assisting the Perpetrator |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Remaining Distanced/Outside | - | .680** | -.310** | -.240* | -.299** | -.339** |
| Defending | | - | -.227* | -.156 | -.140 | -.272** |
| Perpetrating Unkind Behaviour | | | - | .249** | .712** | .837** |
| Being Victimised | | | | - | .138 | .294** |
| Reinforcing the Unkind Behaviour | | | | | - | .707** |
| Assisting the Perpetrator | | | | | | - |

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Significant associations emerged between defending and remaining distanced / outside in both parametric and non-parametric correlations suggesting that children who intervene to defend in some instances may opt to remain distanced from unkind behaviour in others. In addition, the negative correlation between defending and perpetrating unkind behaviour was relatively weak, indicating that defending and perpetrating are not necessarily always mutually exclusive. Furthermore, there seemed to be a good degree of overlap between behavioural tendencies related to perpetration (such as assisting and reinforcing) – children may switch between these behavioural tendencies quite readily. In sum, results of these correlations seem to suggest that behavioural tendencies are not necessarily fixed.

*Roles in relation to Unkind Behaviour*

Correlations were undertaken between the main variables in the data set to explore relationships between variables relating to unkind behavioural tendency, friendship quality, teasing attitudes and social positioning. Pearson correlation results are presented in Table 4.4. For Spearman correlation results see Appendix 22. Associations that were highly significant both parametrically and non-parametrically are highlighted in yellow. Associations that were moderately significant both parametrically and non-parametrically are highlighted in green. Correlations are only highlighted in green in cases where both methods showed at least medium strength correlation. For example a correlation which was of medium strength parametrically but of weak strength non-parametrically would not be highlighted in any colour. A correlation which was strong parametrically but only of medium strength non-parametrically would be highlighted in green. Where there was a conflict between parametric and non-parametric tests the coefficient is highlighted in red.

Table 4.3

*Pearson Correlations Between Measures of Unkind Behavioural Tendency, Friendship Quality, Teasing Attitudes and Social Positioning across all Participants.*

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **1. Group Size** | 1 | -0.179 | -.266** | 0.138 | 0.055 | 0.07 | 0.097 | 0.075 | -0.182 | -0.055 | -0.184 | -0.169 | -0.17 | -.191* | 0.059 | -0.119 |
| **2. Remaining Distanced/Outside (UBS)** | | - | .680** | -.312** | -.240* | -.299** | -.339** | .196* | 0.155 | 0.093 | .222* | .229* | 0.15 | .215* | 0.066 | .385** |
| **3. Defending (UBS)** | | | - | -.227* | -0.156 | -0.14 | -.272** | .324** | .226* | 0.126 | .318** | .252** | 0.078 | .255** | -0.02 | .407** |
| **4. Perpetrating Unkind Behaviour (UBS)** | | | | - | .249** | .712** | .837** | 0.062 | -0.089 | -0.017 | -0.11 | -0.069 | -0.087 | -0.094 | 0.169 | -.325** |
| **5. Being Victimised (UBS)** | | | | | - | 0.138 | .294** | -.227* | -0.183 | -.188* | -.255** | -0.15 | -0.18 | -.241* | 0.093 | -.218* |
| **6. Reinforcing Unkind Behaviour (UBS)** | | | | | | - | .707** | 0.045 | -0.109 | 0.057 | -0.031 | -0.098 | -0.054 | -0.06 | 0.136 | -.323** |
| **7. Assisting the Perpetrator (UBS)** | | | | | | | - | -0.014 | -0.034 | 0.034 | -0.087 | 0.048 | -0.05 | -0.022 | 0.126 | -.367** |
| **8. Percent Nominations (Centrality) (SCM)** | | | | | | | | - | 0.045 | -0.024 | -0.024 | 0.012 | -0.034 | -0.006 | -0.014 | 0.084 |
| **9. Help-Aid (FQS)** | | | | | | | | | - | 0.614** | .663** | .725** | .383** | .855** | -.276** | .403** |
| **10. Help – Protection (FQS)** | | | | | | | | | | - | .563** | .638** | .327** | .792** | -0.125 | .223* |
| **11. Security - Transcending Problems (FQS)** | | | | | | | | | | | - | .657** | .460** | .846** | -0.087 | .338** |
| **12. Security - Reliable Alliance (FQS)** | | | | | | | | | | | | - | .334** | .851** | -0.108 | .297** |
| **13. Conflict (FQS)** | | | | | | | | | | | | | - | .622** | -.316** | .243* |
| **14. Global Friendship Quality (FQS)** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | - | -.225* | .377** |
| **15. Pro-social Teasing (TQ)** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | - | -.219* |
| **16. Disapproval of Unkind Behaviour (TQ)** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | - |

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

*Defending and Social Positioning*

There was a weak negative statistically significant relationship between defending and group size; r (111) = -.27, p = .01. It seemed that defenders were more likely to be members of smaller friendship groups. Defending also seemed related to centrality within the year group; r (111) = .32, p = .01, suggesting that children who tend to defend seem to be more central in their year group than others.

*Defending and Attitudes towards Teasing*

There was a moderate positive correlation between defending and disapproval of unkind behaviour; r (104) = .41, p = .01. It seemed that defenders were more likely to hold attitudes which were disapproving of unkind behaviour towards others. Disapproval of unkind behaviour was also positively related to remaining distanced/outside; r (104) = .39, p = .01. Children who tended to remain distanced/outside also seemed to hold attitudes which were disapproving of unkind behaviour. On the other hand, perpetrating, reinforcing and assisting with unkind behaviour all seemed negatively correlated with disapproval of unkind behaviour.

*Defending and Friendship Quality*

There was a positive relationship between defending and Global Friendship Quality; r (109) = .26, p = .01 indicating that those children who tended to defend also tended to report higher quality in their friendships. More specifically, defending seemed positively correlated with Help-Aid; r (109) = .25, p = .01 suggesting that those children who tended to defend also had expressed more confidence that their friends would offer them support if they needed it. Defending also seemed positively correlated with Security Transcending Problems; r (109) = .32, p = .01, suggesting that children who tended to defend seemed to have confidence in their ability to successfully negotiate and resolve

personal problems between themselves and their own close friends. Finally, defending seemed positively correlated with Security Reliable Alliance; r (109) = .25, p = .01, indicating that children who tended to defend seemed confident that their friends were reliable and could be trusted.

*Gender Specific Correlations*

Gender specific analyses were carried out as the literature suggests some gender differences in relation to peer aggression. Separate Pearson correlations according to gender were run to explore relationships between variables relating to unkind behavioural tendency, friendship quality, teasing attitudes and social positioning (Spearman correlations can be seen in Appendix 23). Results are presented in Table 4.5. Once again, significant correlations of medium or large strength (or conflicting results) are highlighted.

Table 4.4

*Pearson Correlations Between Measures of Unkind Behavioural Tendency, Friendship Quality, Teasing Attitudes and Social Positioning in Boys (above the diagonal) and Girls (above the diagonal)*

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **1. Group Size** | - | -0.02 | -0.04 | 0.04 | -0.08 | 0 | 0.01 | .259* | 0.01 | 0.08 | -0.02 | 0.03 | -0.05 | 0.01 | -0.04 | 0.14 |
| **2. Remaining Distanced/Outside (UBS)** | -0.29 | - | .655** | -.310* | -0.19 | -.300* | -.332** | 0.09 | 0.14 | 0.07 | 0.23 | 0.18 | 0.13 | 0.19 | 0.19 | .346** |
| **3. Defending (UBS)** | -.389** | .656** | - | -0.19 | -0.06 | -0.06 | -0.2 | 0.18 | 0.18 | 0.12 | .283* | 0.15 | -0.06 | 0.18 | 0.14 | .397** |
| **4. Perpetrating Unkind Behaviour (UBS)** | 0.23 | -.301* | -0.23 | - | .304* | .751** | .906** | 0.21 | 0 | 0 | -0.11 | 0 | -0.05 | -0.04 | 0.17 | -.323* |
| **5. Being Victimised (UBS)** | 0.24 | -0.26 | -0.17 | -0.11 | - | 0.22 | .317** | -.266* | -0.21 | -0.22 | -0.2 | -0.19 | -.284* | -.269* | 0.11 | -0.14 |
| **6. Reinforcing Unkind Behaviour (UBS)** | 0.04 | -0.26 | -0.15 | .643** | -0.13 | - | .765** | .263* | -0.09 | 0 | -0.07 | -0.06 | -0.08 | -0.07 | 0.17 | -.398** |
| **7. Assisting the Perpetrator (UBS)** | 0.29 | -.339* | -.357* | .557** | 0.17 | .555** | - | 0.12 | 0.01 | 0.04 | -0.04 | 0.08 | -0.03 | 0.02 | 0.16 | -.399** |
| **8. Percent Nominations (Centrality) (SCM)** | -.364* | .306* | .479** | -.331* | -0.14 | -.297* | -0.27 | - | -0.08 | 0.03 | -0.06 | -0.06 | -0.1 | -0.07 | -0.03 | 0.07 |
| **9. Help-Aid (FQS)** | -0.11 | -0.02 | 0.04 | -0.15 | 0.08 | -0.01 | -0.01 | 0.22 | - | .604** | .679** | .763** | .323** | .855** | -0.19 | .362** |
| **10. Help – Protection (FQS)** | 0.08 | -0.02 | -0.06 | 0.19 | 0.04 | .328* | 0.15 | -0.19 | .512** | - | .593** | .710** | 0.24 | .803** | 0 | 0.16 |
| **11. Security - Transcending Problems (FQS)** | -0.01 | 0.03 | 0.18 | 0.2 | -0.24 | 0.22 | -0.08 | -0.03 | .422** | .310* | - | .753** | .401** | .869** | 0.1 | 0.24 |
| **12. Security - Reliable Alliance (FQS)** | -0.07 | 0.13 | 0.16 | -0.01 | 0.24 | -0.03 | 0.17 | 0.1 | .407** | 0.25 | 0.08 | - | .307* | .903** | 0.03 | 0.22 |
| **13. Conflict (FQS)** | 0.14 | 0.01 | -0.04 | 0.04 | 0.14 | 0.09 | 0.03 | -0.01 | 0.27 | .340* | .392** | 0.11 | - | .533** | -.254* | 0.09 |
| **14. Global Friendship Quality (FQS)** | 0.02 | 0.04 | 0.07 | 0.08 | 0.08 | 0.18 | 0.07 | 0.02 | .760** | .712** | .664** | .513** | .685** | - | -0.06 | .270* |
| **15. Pro-social Teasing (TQ)** | -0.15 | 0.06 | -0.02 | 0.02 | -0.16 | -0.03 | -0.12 | 0.05 | -0.29 | -0.29 | -.313* | -0.19 | -0.29 | -.402** | - | -0.16 |
| **16. Disapproval of Unkind Behaviour (TQ)** | -.389** | .327* | 0.23 | -0.04 | -0.21 | 0.01 | -0.04 | 0.07 | 0.16 | 0.1 | 0.22 | 0 | 0.29 | 0.24 | -0.15 | - |

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

*Attitudes towards Teasing*

Disapproval of unkind behaviour seemed positively correlated with defending for boys (r=.40) but not for girls (r=.23) indicating that girls who tended to defend did so even in the absence of strong anti-teasing attitudes.

On the other hand, in relation to children who tended to remain outside or distanced from unkind behaviour, both genders seemed to disapprove of unkind behaviour.

*Social Positioning*

Defending seemed to be negatively correlated with social group size for girls (r=.39), but no significant relationship was noted for boys (r=.04). Defending was positively correlated with centrality within the year group for girls (r=.48) but not for boys (r=.18), indicating that girls who were more salient within the year group tended to defend more than those girls who were less salient. On the other hand, saliency within the year group did not seem significantly associated with defending for boys.

*Friendship Quality*

There appeared to be a positive relationship between Security Transcending Problems and defending for boys (r=.28) but not for girls (r=.18), indicating that perceived competence at being able to solve disputes with close friends was associated with increased defending for boys, but this effect was not noted for girls.

4.2.2.2 Regressions

A series of multiple regressions were undertaken using variables identified on the basis of significant correlations. In the process the variables of nominations

per year group (centrality), security transcending problems and disapproval of unkind behaviour were found to be the best predictors of defending after gender was taken into account. The following variables were dropped from the analysis - group size, global friendship quality, help-aid, help-protection from victimisation, security-reliable alliance, conflict and pro-social teasing. See Appendix 24 for further details of these regressions.

*Final Regression Model*

A multiple regression was undertaken to explore the effects of nominations per year group (centrality), security transcending problems and disapproval of unkind behaviour on defending. This was a statistically significant model ($F(3, 100) = 13.88$, $p<.001$). The R squared indicated that 29.4 % of the variance in defending could be explained by variance in the predictors. All three predictors were statistically significant – centrality (beta = .30, $p< .001$), security transcending problems (beta = .22, $p< .05$) and disapproval of unkind behaviour (beta = .31, $p< .001$). Results can be seen in Table 4.6 below. See Appendix 25 for outputs.

Table 4.5

*Summary of Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Defending*

| Variable | B | S.E | β | *t* | Sig. (*p*) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Percent Nominations per Year Group (Centrality) (SCM) | 1.79 | 0.497 | 0.304 | 3.599 | 0 |
| Security Transcending Problems (FQS) | 1.907 | 0.771 | 0.221 | 2.474 | 0.015 |
| Disapproval of Unkind Behaviour (TQ) | 2.995 | 0.875 | 0.307 | 3.424 | 0.001 |

A hierarchical multiple regression was used to assess the ability of nominations per year group (centrality), security transcending problems and disapproval of

unkind behaviour to predict levels of defending after controlling for the influence of gender.

Gender was entered at Step 1 explaining 12.8% of the variance in defending. After entry the three other predictors at Step 2, the total variance explained by the model as a whole was 32.2%, F (4, 99) = 11.73, P< .001. The control measures explained an additional 19% of the variance in defending after controlling for gender, R squared change = .19, F change (3, 99) = 9.43, p< .001, and this was a statistically significant result. In the final model both nominations per year group (centrality) (beta = .30, p< .001) and disapproval of unkind behaviour (beta = .26, p< .05) were statistically significant predictors of defending. Results can be seen in table 4.7 below. See Appendix 26 for outputs.

Table 4.6

*Summary of Hierarchical Multiple Regression for Variables Predicting Defending with Gender Controlled*

| | Model 1 | | | | | Model 2 | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Variable | B | S.E | β | *t* | Sig. (p) | B | S.E | β | *t* | Sig. (p) |
| Gender | 4.04 | 1.05 | 0.36 | 3.87 | 0.00 | | | | | |
| Gender | | | | | | 2.09 | 1.04 | 0.19 | 2.01 | 0.05 |
| Percent Nominations per Year Group (Centrality) (SCM) | | | | | | 1.74 | 0.49 | 0.30 | 3.55 | 0.00 |
| Security Transcending Problems (FQS) | | | | | | 1.50 | 0.79 | 0.17 | 1.91 | 0.06 |
| Disapproval of Unkind Behaviour (TQ) | | | | | | 2.50 | 0.90 | 0.26 | 2.78 | 0.01 |

## 4.2.2.3 Summary

In summary, associations seemed to emerge between defending and remaining outside suggesting that children who tend to defend might remain outside at other times. Perpetrating, reinforcing and assisting seemed related, so perhaps

children switch between these behaviours according to context. Children who tended to defend seemed to be more salient within their year group – more well known by their peers, so probably not socially isolated children. Children who tended to defend, along with children who tended to remain outside, seemed to express attitudes which were disapproving of unkind behaviour, whereas children engaging in the behavioural tendencies of perpetrating, assisting and reinforcing seemed less disapproving of unkind behaviour. Defending seemed associated with good friendship quality in general. More specifically, children who tended to defend seemed to express more confidence that their friends would offer them support if necessary and they seemed more inclined to report that their friendships were stable and reliable. These children also seemed to have more faith in their own conflict resolution skills and seemed to express more confidence in their ability to successfully resolve disputes within their own immediate friendship groups. Once gender is taken into account regression results indicate that the strongest predictors of defending seem to be centrality (saliency within the year group) and disapproval of unkind behaviour; however the percentage of variance explained remains small suggesting that in relation to defending, there is a lot of variance that remains unaccounted for, and so there are likely to be other important factors at play.

## 4.3 Qualitative Results

The qualitative component of this study aimed to address the following research questions:

- *Are there common factors which seem associated with defending?* All of the following themes identified could be thought to relate to this question.
- *Does the presence of adults influence a child's expressed intention to defend and if so how?* This will be addressed specifically in section 4.3.1.
- *Do the characteristics of children who tend to perpetrate and children who tend to be victimised, influence a child's expressed intention to defend (and manner of defending) against teasing or unkind behaviour?* This will be addressed specifically in section 4.3.2.
- *Do children discriminate between behaviours which could be considered light-hearted teasing and more negative unkind behaviours? If so, what reflections do children have on this discrimination process?* This will be addressed specifically in section 4.3.6.

Over the course of the thematic analysis the following six themes were identified:

- Adult Influences on Defending
- Situational Influences on Defending
- Personal Influences on Defending (Characteristics of the Child Defending)
- Costs/Benefits of Defending
- Emotional Aspects of Defending
- Teasing

Five out of these six themes were grouped under two over-arching themes: Internal Aspects of Defending and External Aspects of Defending.

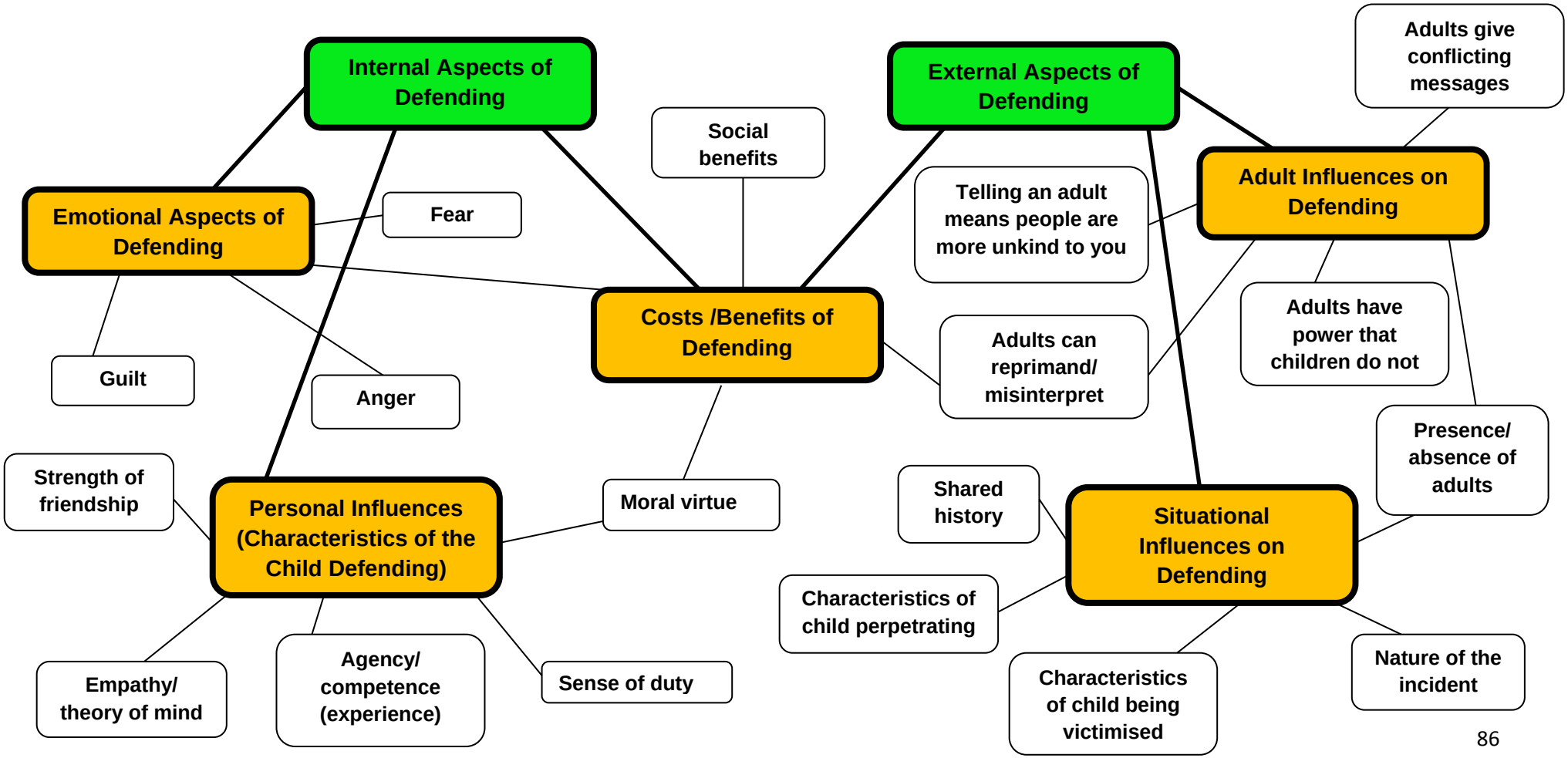
'Emotional Aspects of Defending' and 'Defender Characteristics' were grouped under the over arching theme of 'Internal Aspects of Defending', whereas 'Adult

Influences on Defending' and 'Situational Influences on Defending' were grouped under the overarching theme of 'External Aspects of Defending'. 'Costs/Benefits of Defending' was linked to both overarching themes.

'Teasing' was viewed as a separate theme, not directly related to two over-arching themes. An overall thematic map (excluding Teasing) can be seen in Figure 4.1. Overarching themes are coloured in green. Themes are coloured in orange and subthemes are coloured in white. Unbroken lines are used to represent relationships between overarching themes, themes and subthemes.

A table of over-arching themes, themes, illustrative quotations and a numerical measure of frequency of the number of times each theme was raised can be seen in Appendix 27.

Figure 4.1 *Final Thematic Map of Over-Arching Themes, Themes and Sub-Themes*



Each theme and related subthemes are discussed in more detail below.

### ***4.3.1 Adult Influences on Defending***

This theme was raised 169 times. It was raised by 32 children. The following subthemes were identified as part of the 'Adult Influences on Defending' theme:

- Adults give conflicting messages
- Adults can reprimand/misinterpret the situation
- Telling an adult means people are more unkind to you
- Adults have power that children do not

#### 4.3.1.1 Adults give conflicting messages

Many of the children referred to the difficult decision they faced when trying to choose whether to tell an adult about an incident of unkind behaviour. It seemed that in relation to low level problems or incidents which were non-physical in nature, children reported that adults would want them to intervene to try and sort things out. Anthony and Benjamin referred to the pro-social ethos promoted in their school where there is an expectation that children will treat one another kindly:

> *Interviewer: Why would you still help?*
> *Anthony: Because you're being nasty to other people, and that's not right in school - -*
> *Benjamin: School wants you to be a nice person.*
> *Anthony: Yeah. Than being a horrible person.*
> *(Interview 5, p. 2)*

On the other hand, children reported that in relation to physical incidents of aggression, adults generally would not want them to become involved. As Laura illustrates in the excerpt below:

*Interviewer: Do you think grown-ups want you to get involved to try and help?*
*Laura: Em, it depends I think. If there's not...well if they're your friend, I think yes. Em, but if something really bad and maybe a bit dangerous is going on, I don't think so.*
*(Interview 4, p. 9)*

Three children referred to the expectations they felt that their parents would have of them to intervene. It seemed that parental values were a guide to the child's response in some instances, but again children seemed aware of a fine line between defending friends against minor incidents of unkindness, versus intervening in serious situations involving physical threat which may put the child defending at personal risk.

*Interviewer: [...] Would adults want you to get involved to try and help?*
*Kevin: Well, if it's your friend, not physically. But if you have to then I think they would. Because my - my mum sort of likes me helping my friends. But I don't think she'd want me to get involved physically.*
*( Interview 6, p.13)*

Some children reported that in some instances adults would expect them to intervene – indeed, intervention to solve minor incidents or friendship problems was seen by some as the 'duty' of children, especially in Year 6 as Lorraine expressed when she explained *'If it's - if it's a very light argument, because em - - I am a 6th leader and it's actually my duty to help these things' (Interview 4, p. 9).*

It appeared that when deciding whether an adult would approve of defending or not, there was a threshold of severity of the incident, beyond which adults would disapprove of intervention and indeed could reprimand the child for getting involved and putting themselves at personal risk. So, in order to be able to defend effectively, without getting in trouble oneself, children needed to be able to gauge this threshold, judge the severity of the situation and consider how the

situation might be interpreted by the adult. It appeared that children were balancing the conflicting messages given by adults, and should they get this balance wrong then they could end up in trouble themselves.

4.3.1.2 Adults can reprimand/misinterpret the situation

Many children expressed a reluctance to defend for fear that this would lead them to get in trouble with adults themselves. The reasoning behind this reluctance to defend seemed varied. Some children reported that adults might construe their defending as making the situation worse – getting involved in something that was nothing to do with them. Nick explained that he felt that adults would not want him to get involved because *'it's none of our business' (Interview 7, p. 12),* while Maria reported that *'some teachers would prefer you to stay out of it and let them sort it out' (Interview 9, p.13).*

Many children reported a fear of getting in trouble for getting involved. They reported a reluctance to get involved for fear that the teacher might misconstrue the situation and think that the child defending had in fact perpetrated the unkind act, as Dominic illustrates in the comment below:

> *Interviewer: Have you ever seen anything unkind happening, where you've got involved to try and help?*
> *Dominic: Eh. Yeah, but I don't think I've actually got involved...because I've always been a little bit shy of like...bullies and stuff.*
> *Interviewer: And what makes you a bit shy?*
> *Dominic: Em...me getting involved and a teacher thinks that I'm doing the bad thing.*
> *(Interview 13, p. 9)*

Some children expressed concern that the real perpetrator of the act might manipulate the truth, which could cause the child defending to be reprimanded by the adult, when in fact they had only been trying to help, as Mary explained

by saying *'If you got involved they might, like, tell a lie about you, because like, you told the teacher' (Interview 2, p.9).*

Jennifer recounted a previous negative experience of intervention when she ended up getting in trouble herself for trying to defend.

> *Jennifer: Because if you get involved, then you don't know what will happen to you. You might have an argument and then I'll get a card change, and then it will just, yeah...*
> *Interviewer: ...How do you know this would happen?*
> *Jennifer: Because it's happened to me before.*
> *Interviewer: Oh, ok. When you've got involved to try and help?*
> *Jennifer: Yeah and then - - I haven't done it since.*
> *(Interview 16, p.12)*

It seems that this fear of getting in trouble for becoming involved, the risk of the perpetrator manipulating the truth and the child's perception of inability to effectively convey their side of the story to the adult, can deter a child from becoming involved in some instances.

#### 4.3.1.3 Telling an adult means people are more unkind to you

Many children referred to the risk of becoming targeted by the perpetrator should they attempt to intervene by telling an adult, and so this seemed to make some children hesitant to become involved as Catherine expresses in the following statement:

*I think that children sometimes don't tell grown-ups because they're afraid that the grown-ups - - the bullies or the people that hurt them, might actually start to have, like, go and see their weaknesses on them - - they might come back to you and be like, 'what did you tell me off for??' and stuff like...*
*(Interview 3, p. 13)*

It seems that in weighing up whether they should defend or not, children consider the risk they are putting themselves at in terms of potential victimisation by the child perpetrating.

4.3.1.4 Adults have power that children do not

Another idea which seemed to recur within the theme of adults was the idea that adults have a power to impose sanctions whereas children do not. This in turn could mean that children perpetrating would be more willing to stop unkind behaviour when confronted by an adult as opposed to when confronted by another child. Indeed some children expressed a lack of faith in their own ability to intervene effectively. When explaining why she would choose to get an adult rather than intervene directly herself, Jennifer stated *'Because if I get involved then they're not - - they're not going to listen to me' (Interview 16, p. 6),* indicating an awareness that her authority as a child may be unlikely to deter children from perpetrating some unkind acts.

Many children reported the intention to defer to adults rather than trying to intervene themselves, especially in cases where an adult was in close proximity or where the unkind act was physically aggressive in nature – and this often seemed based on the understanding that adults had the power to impose sanctions which children could not

*Matthew: Another reason why I'd get an adult is because [...] the children, they don't really want to get punished. Children only stop doing something if they get threatened by being punished.*
*(Interview 14, p. 9)*

Or as expressed by Anthony who gave an example of the power differential in relation to the school's behaviour management technique of giving card changes as a sanction:

*Anthony: Because we can't sort it out by ourselves. We can't say this, 'go to the tunnel, change your card'. If we were a teacher, they'd let us change the cards because we'd be a teacher.*
*(Interview 5, p. 11)*

It seems from the views expressed by children in the interviews that adults are a significant factor to take into consideration when reflecting on whether they would intervene or not. It could be argued that this influence goes beyond the mere physical presence or absence of the adult. Children in this sample also seem to carefully consider the likelihood that the adult might reprimand them for becoming involved, the likelihood that the adult might misconstrue the situation and see the child defending as a perpetrator, the moral values that adults promote in terms of being a good student, friend, son or daughter in addition to the likelihood that the child defending may be victimised by other children for telling an adult.

### ***4.3.2 Situational Influences on Defending***

This theme was raised 182 times. It was raised by 32 children. The following subthemes were identified as part of the 'situational influences on defending' theme:

- Presence/absence of adults
- Characteristics of the child being victimised

- Characteristics of the child perpetrating
- Nature of the incident
- Shared history

#### 4.3.2.1 Presence/absence of adults

As mentioned in the previous section, in situations where adults were physically present in the immediate vicinity, children reported choosing to defer to them, perhaps feeling it was safer to let the adult sort things out, rather than run the risk of getting involved themselves. Fourteen children (three of whom were peer nominated for defending) explained that they would choose the option of deferring to an adult if an adult were available. On the other hand, on occasions where adults were unavailable some children reflected that they would intervene themselves either directly by confronting the perpetrator, or indirectly by going to fetch an adult.

#### 4.3.2.2 Characteristics of the child being victimised

The characteristics of the child being victimised seemed relevant to the children's reflections on whether they would intervene or not. In cases where the child being victimised was a friend, most children reflected that they would intervene to stop the unkind behaviour from happening. It also seemed that children were more likely to intervene to defend against *physical* acts of aggression when the child being victimised was a friend, whereas if the child was not a friend direct intervention against physical aggression seemed less likely. When presented with the range of scenarios and asked whether he would get involved to defend, Nick explained that he would either leave it to a teacher or he would ignore the incident completely, with the exception being if the victimised child was his friend:

*Interviewer: What would you do if Jacob was one of your good friends?*
*Nick: I would get involved.*
*Interviewer: ... Would you not still be afraid you might get in trouble?*
*Nick: (shakes head)*
*Interviewer: Why not?*
*Nick: Because he is my friend.*
*(Interview 7, p. 2)*

Eleven children reported that they would intervene to defend even if the child being victimised was someone they did not really like; however twelve children reported that they would not intervene to defend if the child being victimised was a neutral child (someone they did not know particularly well), someone they had fallen out with, or someone whom they disliked. Interestingly, if the child being victimised was unanimously disliked across the year group then the likelihood that children would intervene to defend seemed to increase – 17 children expressed an intention to defend a child being victimised who was universally disliked (and some of these were children who had received peer reports of behaving unkindly in the Unkind Behaviour Questionnaire). As expressed by John:

*Interviewer: Ok. And what about if Jacob was somebody that you didn't really get along with? [...]*
*John: I wouldn't care. I'd walk off.*
*[...]*
*Interviewer: What about if nobody in school liked Jacob?*
*John: I'd try and get him some friends to play with. It's a bit unfair if no - - if like, there's a bunch of children walking around and playing with loads of people and someone's left out. But if I don't like him and he doesn't like me, then too right. I'd just leave him out. I don't care.*
*(Interview 8, p. 3)*

4.3.2.3 Characteristics of the child perpetrating

The characteristics of the child perpetrating also seemed relevant to children's expressed intentions to defend or not, with children seeming less likely to defend against children perpetrating who were known to be physically aggressive or who had a history of violence which was recognised within the year group. Understandably, this seemed related to an underlying fear of getting hurt, although a small number of children reported examples of times when they had managed to overcome this fear and intervened to defend even if this meant placing themselves at risk of physical harm, for example as illustrated by Chris:

> *I have to admit I was quite scared of him and I went over and I said, 'Pl - - please can you not do that?' and he said, em, 'Shut up, you f'er'. And em, and I said - - and I went, 'Well, ok. Let's not get into this'. So I kind of walked away, and then like, and then went back and was like, actually, why am I scared of him? He's no different to me. He's doing it because he wants everyone to respect him, but in a bad way. So - so I went over there and said, 'Let him g - -' , em, 'Stop it!' (Interview 13, p. 7)*

The popularity of the child perpetrating also seemed associated with children's expressed intentions to defend, with some children reporting reluctance to defend against popular children, for fear that these children would use their popular status to turn the other children against the child defending. In their interview, Georgia and Kate discussed the potential for popular perpetrators to be particularly unkind. They refer to the power of popular children to 'spread' unkindness:

> *Interviewer: Ok, and what do you think you'd do Kate, if you saw a really popular girl being unkind to Sarah and leaving her out?*
> *Kate: I would [...], tell her to walk away, because if they started to be really mean bullies and stuff, to hit her and stuff, I would just go and*

*tell the teacher quick and then it would get sorted and if I don't get involved then it would probably be a big issue.*
*Georgia: Yeah.*
*Kate. It would get, it would get big- - [...] bigger and bigger and they would start teasing her and all - -*
*Georgia: Yeah.*
*Kate : Being like 'oooh' and saying stuff about it.*
*[...]*
*Georgia : And spreading it. [...] it's all about themselves[...]*
*Kate: They don't care about other people - -*
*Georgia: They always think that they're the best, they don't care [...]*
*(Interview 1, p. 5)*

Some children also expressed reluctance to intervene if the child perpetrating was a friend and described the difficult situation they could find themselves in such an instance. For example:

*Mason: Say my friend Fred is a really good boy and em, he does normally get into like, arguments [...], but then [...] if he started bullying someone, and I told on him, I'd feel guilty because I've told on my best friend.*
*(Interview 6, p.14)*

4.3.2.4 Nature of the incident

This subtheme is closely linked to the 'characteristics of the child being victimised' and 'characteristics of the child perpetrating' subthemes. Children tended to express reluctance to intervene in situations when the incident was physically aggressive in nature, whereas they expressed more willingness to intervene when the incident was non-physically aggressive.

4.3.2.5 Shared history

Children seemed aware of the reputations of others, and those children who had had negative interactions with the child perpetrating in the past seemed to express less readiness to intervene:

> *Patrick: [...]if he doesn't like me and I don't like him, then it's best not for me to get involved and if somebody that is not - - is not very - - he's gets in trouble a lot, I wouldn't to like, get involved.*
> *(Interview 14, p. 3)*

Susan explained how her level of familiarity with the child perpetrating guides her response and suggested that she would be more inclined to intervene against a child who she had confronted successfully before.

> *Susan: Well sometimes it depends on the person. If you know them really well and the way they're acting, you can tell. But if you don't really know them, you can't tell. That's why I would go to an adult, because I don't know them, and I don't know what they're doing. But if it was someone I know really, really well, I would try and sort it out with them.*
> *(Interview 14, p. 8)*

### ***4.3.3 Costs/Benefits of Defending***

This theme was raised 124 times. It was raised by 30 children. The following subthemes were identified in this category:

- Social benefits
- Moral virtue
- Adults can reprimand/misinterpret the situation
- Telling means people are more unkind to you

When reflecting on whether they thought they would intervene to defend or not children seemed to weigh up the possible costs and benefits of that intervention.

#### 4.3.3.1 Social benefits

Some children (especially some of those who had been peer nominated for defending) seemed optimistic about the benefits of their intervention, seeming to view intervention as an opportunity to make a new friend. This seemed particularly true in the case of intervening to defend against an unpopular perpetrator, with some children seeing this as an opportunity to 'teach' both the child being victimised and the child perpetrating how to relate positively to one another, as Louise illustrated when reflecting on confronting a child perpetrating unkindness:

> *You don't have any right to say that she can't play with you if you don't have anyone else to play with. That is someone that you can play with, you might as well take the opportunity. It might be a friend that you've found that will be a lifetime friend.*
> *(Interview 9, p. 5)*

Defending seemed to be seen as a means of reinforcing existing social relationships with some children expressing the view that *'true friends actually stick up for people'* no matter what. In this sense, a perceived benefit of defending could be the maintenance and strengthening of existing relationships, along with reinforcing the position of the child who defends, within the friendship group.

#### 4.3.3.2 Moral virtue

Almost all of the children expressed the view that treating other people unkindly was wrong. Children seemed to have a firm understanding of what was fair and what was not, and leaving someone out of a game was almost unanimously

perceived as being unfair – a sort of violation of a moral rule. For example, according to Anthony *'you have to have your friendship and be kind and don't hurt people's feelings (Interview 5, p. 4).*

Interestingly, this same sort of moral reasoning also seemed to be employed by children who had been peer nominated for perpetrating, although in the cases of some of these children, they reasoned that it would be fair to leave someone out if the child being victimised had been unkind to them in the past, or was disliked by them for some reason.

Most children seemed to express the view that protecting others from unfair victimisation was the right thing to do even though not all of them reported having the confidence to do this directly due to the possible consequences they might face in terms of reprimand or victimisation discussed above.

Even at times when they may have felt apprehensive about confronting a perpetrator, moral principles seemed to guide the reported responses of some children, as Catherine explained *'I knew it was the right choice and the right thing that I should have done' (Interview 3, p. 9).*

In one case, apprehension about intervention seemed to dissipate when the child felt that a moral code had clearly been violated. When Benjamin saw younger children being victimised he seemed to feel that it was his duty to intervene and did not seem to fear reprimand in this instance, explaining *'I wasn't worried that I was going to get told off, because he shouldn't be tripping over little kids in the first place' (Interview 5, p. 10).*

Some children expressed feeling pleased with themselves for overcoming their apprehension and intervening to defend another child. Maria explained *'I kind of felt that I did the right thing' (Interview 9, p. 10)*. It seemed that this feeling that one had done the morally virtuous thing contributed towards a child's feelings of satisfaction with themselves and perhaps further increased their confidence to defend in other situations.

4.3.3.3 Adults can reprimand/misinterpret the situation

4.3.3.4 Telling means people are more unkind to you

Both of these subthemes have been discussed above under the theme of 'adults'.

### ***4.3.4 Emotional Aspects of Defending***

This theme was raised 52 times. It was raised by 27 children. The following subthemes were identified in this category:

- Fear
- Guilt
- Anger

Fear has already been discussed in relation to 'fear of reprimand/ victimisation'; and so will not be discussed again in this section.

4.3.4.1 Guilt

Some children reported feeling guilty when watching unkindness and felt that it was their duty to intervene to try and stop the unkindness from happening. It seemed that there was a sense of tension between the view that they held of themselves as a morally good child versus that of a child who would stand by and allow unkindness to happen. This apparent cognitive dissonance seemed to evoke a sense of guilt in some children which in turn could have contributed towards their impetus to act.

> *Maria : I felt really embarrassed that - - well not embarrassed, but I felt really guilty about it. That I was standing there and I didn't even try to help, em stop them from even starting the fight.*
> *(Interview 9, p. 10)*

Kelly expressed a similar sentiment when describing witnessing an episode of unkindness amongst friends:

> *Kelly: I felt like em, I was being a bit silly standing there watching it because I was standing there before I went and grabbed my friends. So I felt really silly and sorry for Anna.*
> *(Interview 12, p. 10)*

Despite worrying that they might then be targeted, this sense of guilt seemed to drive some children to intervene.

#### 4.3.4.2 Anger

During the interviews a number of children expressed feelings of anger towards children perpetrating unkind acts, particularly when these unkind acts were directed towards friends. In some cases it seemed that it was this sense of anger which drove the children to intervene to defend. This seemed particularly apparent in the case of children who had been peer nominated for perpetrating or assisting – these children expressed feeling angry when witnessing unkind behaviour and this in turn seemed to spur them into retaliating aggressively against the child perpetrating or 'reacting' (in the negative sense).

> *Interviewer: What might you do if you saw this happening? (interviewer presents vignette) 'In the school toilets you see two boys holding the door, so that another boy can't get out. The boys holding the door are laughing.'*
> *John: I'd walk in there and be like, 'what are you doing?' [...] 'Let him out now'. If he didn't let him out I'd just beat him up. I'd beat the kid up. It's a bit unfair like, locking someone in the toilet.*
> *(Interview 8, p. 8)*

Other children expressed feelings of anger directed towards other bystanders. For example, Maria explained how she felt angry at the children perpetrating

unkind behaviour, but also angry at the children who were reinforcing the behaviour by watching.

> *I felt really, really angry at the people that started it. Because - - I felt angry at the people that were cheering them on, because I was thinking that, again, if it was them in that situation they wouldn't be laughing and they wouldn't be cheering people on.*
> *(Interview 9, p. 10-11)*

Maria seemed driven to feel angry both through empathy for the victim but also a sense of frustration at the bystanders who she perceived as treating the victim unfairly (albeit in a less direct manner).

### ***4.3.5 Personal Influences (Characteristics of Child Defending)***

This theme was raised 150 times. It was raised by 28 children.The following subthemes were identified:

- Empathy/theory of mind
- Agency/competence (previous experience)
- Strength of friendship
- Sense of duty
- Moral virtue

#### 4.3.5.1 Empathy/theory of mind

When reflecting on what they might do if witnessing unkind behaviour, or when remembering how they reacted in the past when confronted with unkind behaviour, it seemed that more than half of the children were using empathy or theory of mind (the ability to anticipate the thoughts of others) as a guide for defending behaviour. Many of the children spoke about feeling uncomfortable when witnessing acts of unkindness, as they could empathise with the feelings of the victim, and as a result they felt the victim's pain in a sense. Even children

who had been peer nominated for bullying or assisting showed empathy in their responses at times, as illustrated by John (assisting) and Jonathan (reinforcing) in the following comments:

> *Interviewer: What would you say if you saw something like this happening?*
> *John: 'Let him out now'. If he didn't let him out I'd just beat him up. I'd beat the kid up. It's a bit unfair like, locking someone in the toilet [...] if anyone did that to me...*
> *Jonathan: like, I'd be like, 'don't lock him in because he could get really worried'*
> *(Interview 8, p. 9)*

Some of the children (including those who had been peer nominated for defending) seemed to use their own previous experience of victimisation as a motivator for intervention. Having been victims of unkind behaviour themselves in the past, these children seemed to experience significant empathy for the victim's plight. Georgia spoke about how she had been bullied in her old school, and so since she moved to her current school she had made a concerted effort to stand up for herself and to encourage others to do the same.

#### 4.3.5.2 Agency/competence

Some of the children who reported intervening to defend others in school seemed to demonstrate a sense of personal agency and competence which in turn seemed to help them feel confident about their own ability to intervene effectively. Two girls spoke about their numerous previous successes at helping younger children resolve arguments in the playground and this seemed to help them feel assured of their own defending competence. Some children who reported an intention to intervene seemed characterised by a sense of optimism and confidence. They appeared to have the confidence to try to intervene in the first instance and to persist even if their efforts were unsuccessful. Lisa in particular seemed self-assured in this respect:

*Interviewer: Ok. And so how do you - - how can you tell if sorting it out will make it better or worse?*
*Lisa: You can't tell really. But em, it's worth a try.*
*[...]*
*Interviewer: What would make you say something, when other people don't?*
*Lisa: Because I find - and a lot of other people find - that em, that I'm confident with things like that and I'm good with sorting out things [...]it's just the way I've been brought up like, really confident.*
*(Interview 14, p. 5)*

In general, children who reported defending seemed to be risk takers to a certain extent. They appeared willing to put themselves at personal physical risk, they risked getting reprimanded by teachers and they risked being targeted themselves.

4.3.5.3 Strength of friendship

When reflecting on previous episodes of defending some of the children referred to the supportive presence of their friends. Children seemed encouraged to defend if they knew that their friends would support their decision and if they were assured that their friends would provide back up if necessary – as Adam explains *‘ I would get involved and my friends wouldn't mind either. They'd just help...’ (Interview 10, p.10).*

Some children also seemed confident that their friends would see things in the same way, i.e., their friends would also perceive the unkindness as unjust and would be keen to intervene as well. For some children peer nominated for perpetrating, this support from friends seemed to be in a physically aggressive form at times:

*Robert (perpetrating): I would beat them up.*
*Interviewer: Would your friends help you, do you think, Robert?*
*Robert: Yeah.*
*Interviewer: Yeah?*
*Robert: Definitely.*
*(Interview 10, p. 15)*

#### 4.3.5.4 Sense of duty

Six children referred to a feeling of sense of duty to protect which appeared to guide their decision to defend. At times children seemed to feel that if they did not intervene then no-one else would either and the injustice would continue. Patrick spoke about how he usually preferred to stay out of arguments; however on one occasion when his friend had been repeatedly targeted in a physically aggressive manner, he described how he intervened physically himself, secure in the knowledge that he was bigger than the child perpetrating and therefore probably physically stronger. From his account it seems that the other children were intimidated by the size of the child perpetrating, and as Patrick was physically strong himself he felt a duty to intervene in this instance.

*Interviewer: And so, even though your friends didn't want to get involved you still thought that is was the right thing to do?*
*Patrick: I think they wanted to get involved but they didn't want to get hurt. That was the problem. [...] So I had to be brave and do it for my friend.[...] Because....I felt that, that person wouldn't be - - if he tried to hurt me, he wouldn't - - I felt he wouldn't be able to like, hurt me a lot. [...]He wouldn't go fight me, because I'm bigger than him.*
*(Interview 14, p. 13)*

#### 4.3.5.5 Moral Virtue

See section 4.3.3.2.

### ***4.3.6 Teasing – 'Break your Sticks and Bones'***

This theme was raised 56 times. It was raised by 23 children. Interviews revealed little of substantial interest relative to this theme and therefore it is not discussed here but findings are outlined in Appendix 28.

# Chapter 5: Discussion

## 5.1 Overview

The aim of this mixed methods study was to examine children's experiences of defending against unkind behaviour amongst peers. This chapter will discuss the main findings, make links to existing literature, highlight implications and suggest avenues for future research. The primary research question posed in the study was 'are there common factors which seem associated with defending?' As this was an over-arching question all sections of the following discussion relate to it. More specific research questions are addressed in turn in the relevant sections.

## 5.2 Participant Role Theory

Much of the research in relation to bullying in recent years has been based on the understanding that children can behave in different ways in a bullying situation. It has been thought that children adopt different roles and that these roles characterise how the children behave (for example, bully, victim, assistant, reinforcer, defender and outsider) (Salmivalli, 1996). It seems to be assumed in the literature that these roles are generally fixed and some of the roles are seen as being mutually exclusive (for example a child who is a bully would not typically be considered a defender). Indeed, much of the research conducted in recent years has aimed to identify particular traits in children on the basis of their role (e.g. Gini, Albiero, Benelli and Altoè (2008)). However, as discussed in the literature review, attempts to isolate traits which are specific to particular 'roles' have not been successful.

The current study initially intended to explore defending based on the understanding that children who defend are a distinct group. However, early on in the quantitative data analysis stage it transpired that children who were nominated by their peers as defenders, were also nominated for other

participant roles as well. It did not seem that defenders formed a distinct group, but rather that 'defending' was a behavioural tendency rather than trait, which was displayed by children to varying degrees; and defending behaviour did not seem to be the only behaviour which any one child tended to adopt (as rated by their peers). For example, correlations in the current study indicated that many children who were peer nominated for defending were also peer nominated for remaining distanced from unkind behaviour as well. Reinforcing and assisting seemed correlated with perpetrating – with children perhaps switching from one behavioural tendency to another depending on context. Interestingly, the negative correlations between defending and perpetrating were small – so defending and perpetrating may not necessarily be completely incompatible behaviours. During interviews, some children who had been peer nominated for perpetrating recounted instances of previous defending, but it seemed that their methods of intervention tended to be aggressive in nature and so could be construed as 'unkind' by others. In sum, it seemed that 'roles' were not fixed and instead children tended to engage to varying degrees in multiple types of behaviour, and these types were not necessarily mutually exclusive.

This distinction between 'roles' or categories and 'tendencies' was not something which the current study originally intended to explore. Indeed, it was not something which was highlighted as being a flaw in the research evidence base. However, on the basis of the findings of this study it could be suggested that the tendency in the bullying literature to view children as falling into specific behavioural role categories should perhaps be reconsidered. Children do not seem to fit into neat categories. They seem to display indicators of multiple behavioural types. Perhaps this is why studies to date which have attempted to identify specific traits which are unique to bullies, defenders and outsiders have often been unsuccessful. Based on the findings of the current study, it may be useful to move beyond this conceptualisation of bully roles/categories and instead focus on the factors which may lead a child to adopt a particular behavioural style at any given time.

## 5.3 Behavioural Tendencies and Attitudes towards Teasing and Unkindness

*Research Questions:*

- *Is there a relationship between defending and attitudes towards teasing?*
- *Is there a relationship between perpetrating unkind behaviour and attitudes towards teasing?*
- *Is there a relationship between assisting with unkind behaviour and attitudes towards teasing?*

The current study aimed to explore children's attitudes towards teasing and unkind behaviour and to investigate whether particular attitudes were associated with specific behavioural tendencies. From the review of the literature it was expected that children who tended to defend would be more likely to have attitudes in favour of morally good behaviour (Eisenberg and Mussen, 1990; Thornberg, 2010) and therefore these children might be more likely to disapprove of unkind behaviour. Results from the current study were generally in line with previous research. Correlations indicated that children whose primary behavioural tendencies seemed oriented towards defending or remaining distanced from unkind behaviour seemed to be generally disapproving of unkind behaviour towards others. Indeed, disapproval of unkind behaviour was found to be a main predictor of defending. However; it is noteworthy that like previous research the overall regression model accounted for only a moderate amount of the variance in defending, indicating that there is much that is not accounted for.

Crick and Dodge (1996) suggest that proactive aggressive children are likely to view aggression positively, to use aggression in a calculated manner and to see it as an effective means of obtaining social goals. Based on these ideas, it was expected in the current study that children who tended to perpetrate unkind behaviour would be more likely to hold attitudes which were approving of unkind behaviour. Findings in the current study seemed to support previous research in some respects. Perpetration of unkind behaviour and assisting with unkind

behaviour were both negatively correlated with disapproval of unkind behaviour as measured through quantitative self-report of attitudes towards teasing.

Interestingly, many children expressed readiness to defend in cases where the victim was universally disliked across the year group. This was an unexpected finding. Perhaps children who are universally disliked pose no social threat to others and so children do not consider that they have much to lose by defending them. Or perhaps most children (even those who tend to perpetrate unkind behaviour) see complete rejection of another child as something which is morally unacceptable, and so they try to defend against this.

Another interesting finding in relation to the defensive behaviour of children who had been peer nominated for perpetrating or assisting with unkind behaviour was regarding the manner in which they expressed their intention to defend. In some cases it seemed that the defensive behaviour of these children could be construed negatively by others and may have contributed to their reputations as children who tended to be unkind. For instance, some of these children explained that they would intervene to defend a victim by 'beating up' the perpetrator – by intervening in a physically aggressive manner. So it could be argued that the intentions of these children were positive and pro-social, but the manner in which they tended to defend could be perceived as anti-social. As outlined in the literature review chapter Dodge and Crick (1990) present a social information processing model of aggressive behaviour where a child's response to a problematic social stimulus is derived by progressing through five steps of processing: encoding of social cues, interpretation of social cues, response search, response evaluation, and enactment. It could be argued from the findings of the current study that children who were nominated for perpetrating unkindness seemed to encode social cues and interpret social cues appropriately (when witnessing unkind behaviour towards others) however they seemed to deviate from children who may be perceived as pro-social (or tending to defend) at the response search, response evaluation and enactment stages, by resorting to aggressive methods of intervention. Future research could explore this further as the conclusions drawn from the current study could

only be tentative as the interview quotes in question come from a small number of individuals.

## 5.4 Defending and Peer Networks

*Research Question: Is there an association between a child's social position within their peer group and their behaviour when witnessing acts of unkindness?*

The current study aimed to explore whether there was an association between a child's social position within their peer group and their behaviour when witnessing acts of unkindness. Findings from the current study indicated that girls, though not boys, who were peer nominated for defending seemed to be members of smaller friendship groups, therefore supporting Salmivalli, Huttunen and Lagerspetz's (1997) findings.

As reported previously, the same children also tended to report higher friendship quality. Perhaps a smaller friendship group provides more opportunities for children to form secure bonds with one another and thus firmer friendships which may instil more confidence to defend. Or, perhaps a smaller friendship group size means that each child has fewer friends to lose (bearing in mind that friends seem to be a highly valuable resource that children will put themselves at risk to protect). Children who have fewer friends may need to put themselves at risk more often to protect them, as they cannot afford to lose them. It may also be the case that attitudes converge more easily in a smaller friendship group.

Girls and boys who were peer nominated for defending in the current study also seemed to occupy positions of higher centrality within the year group – suggesting that these children were viewed as more salient than others or well recognised or well known by their peers. Indeed, centrality seemed to predict defending even after gender was controlled for. Salmivalli (2010) suggested that defenders tend to be popular children who are well liked by their peers.

Centrality or saliency within the year group does not equate to peer acceptance so it could not be concluded from the current study that children who defend are more liked than others. However, it could be concluded that they are at least well known children within a year group, and as such they are unlikely to be overly shy or introverted children. Future studies may wish to explore whether attempts to increase saliency amongst cohorts (for example through team building activities, mixed groupings between classes for certain activities, or giving less salient children prominent roles such as playground mentors) could be a means of increasing defending.

## 5.5 Associations between Defending and Friendship Quality

*Research Question: Is there an association between defending and friendship quality?*

From the review of the literature it was expected that defending behaviour would be positively associated with friendship quality. Salmivalli (2010) states that defenders are likely to be members of strong social networks, to be well-liked and perceived as popular by their peers. Findings in the current study seemed to support previous research in this respect with defending being positively associated with friendship quality.

Some interesting associations emerged when friendship quality was broken down into its constituent subscales and the association between each subscale and defending was explored in more detail. Defending seemed to be positively associated with 'Help- Aid' suggesting that those children who tended to defend also had expressed more confidence that their friends would offer them support if they needed it. Defending also seemed positively correlated with 'Security Transcending Problems' suggesting that children who tended to defend seemed to have confidence in their ability to successfully negotiate and resolve personal problems between themselves and their own close friends.

Defending also seemed positively associated with 'Security Reliable Alliance' indicating that children who tended to defend seemed confident that their friends were reliable and could be trusted. All of these findings could be seen to support Mendelson and Aboud's (1999) theory that children benefit from the help, reliable alliance and emotional security which can be provided by firm friendships. In light of these findings it could be suggested that helping children develop the quality of their friendships (although it is acknowledged that this may be difficult to achieve in practice) so that they feel secure, so that they trust their friends to offer support when needed, and so that they have the confidence to overcome problems with their friends in an adaptive manner, could potentially increase levels of defending in schools.

Espelage, Green and Polanin (2012) report that greater bullying perpetration within one's peer group was highly predictive of less individual willingness to intervene in bullying episodes for boys. Contrary to these findings, the current study found that the Friendship Quality subscale of Conflict was not associated with perpetrating of unkind behaviour. Children whose friendships were characterised by high conflict did not seem more likely than other children to perpetrate unkind behaviour.

Pozzoli and Gini (2010) found that students who held moderate to high levels of personal responsibility were more likely to defend if they felt that their peers held a positive view of defender behaviour. The current study could be seen to support these findings. It transpired during interviews that some children who were peer nominated for defending described feeling a sense of personal responsibility when witnessing unkind acts perpetrated against others, and it seemed to be this sense of responsibility that spurred the child to defend. In addition, when describing incidents where they had intervened to defend, many of the children expressed certainty that their friends would have supported them if necessary. Some children reported concern that their friends might be apprehensive about intervention in certain cases where the child defending might be at risk of getting hurt or reprimanded, but this apprehension seemed to stem from concern for the welfare of the child defending rather than the friends holding a negative view of defending behaviour in general.

## 5.6 Defending and the Effects of Adults

*Research Question: Does the presence of adults influence a child's expressed intention to defend and if so how?*

Thornberg (2010) described how school rules and teacher expectations can inhibit children from helping others - the expectation is that children should tell an adult rather than getting involved themselves. Unfortunately, the current study found some support for Thornberg's notion of '*institutionalised moral disengagement'*. During qualitative interviews it emerged that children often worried about getting in to trouble themselves for intervening to defend against unkind behaviour. Indeed, 'getting involved' was interpreted negatively by some children. They appeared to view 'getting involved' as being a form of undesirable behaviour which might elicit negative reactions from adults.

Interestingly, the children seemed clear that adults expected them to behave pro-socially, to be kind, well behaved and to refrain from hurting other people's feelings. However, children seemed to have interpreted adult's conceptualisations of good or helpful behaviour as taking a passive or indirect form – good children are those who go to an adult for help when they see unkind behaviour being perpetrated. This could imply that children who do not go directly to an adult for help (those children who try to intervene themselves to defend) are behaving 'badly' - it is perceived as being the *adult's* job to sort such issues out, not the child's. Indeed one child described being reprimanded by an adult on a previous occasion for intervening to try to stop an argument, and she explained that as a result of this she has not tried to intervene since.

Such findings could be seen as supporting Thornberg's (2010) moral construction of the good student where 'good' students are conceptualised as those who are well behaved and who follow school and classroom rules. Many of the children in the current study seemed to feel that by 'getting involved' and trying to defend against unkind behaviour they could in fact be going against the wishes of adults and as such would be behaving in an undesired (by adults) manner, which in turn could ultimately lead to them being reprimanded.

Some of the children also reported concern that should they get involved to defend against unkind behaviour the perpetrators might manipulate the truth in an attempt to convince the adult that the child defending had done something wrong. This could be seen as consistent with Sutton et al's. (1999) idea of bullies being skilled social manipulators. In the current study it seemed that some of the children who had tried to defend in the past had been victims themselves of skilful social manipulation of the adults by the perpetrators of unkind behaviour.

Salmivalli (2010) suggests that children who defend are likely to be empathetic and cognitively skilled. Indeed, it could be argued that just like Sutton et al.'s (1999) socially skilled bullies who perform well on theory of mind tasks, children who defend successfully are likely to be competent in relation to considering the perspectives of others. The findings of the current study suggest that sophisticated perspective taking and a high level of cognitive skill are hugely important when it comes to successful defending. Children who defend not only need to consider the perspectives of the victim and weigh up the risk of their own potential victimisation by the perpetrator, they also need to use their cognitive skills competently to try to anticipate how adults would like them to act. On the other hand, children who are less competent in perspective taking may still try to defend, but they may be less successful in their attempts, and the manner in which they defend may be perceived as anti-social or aggressive by others.

During interviews children described a process of interpreting conflicting messages from adults. In some cases they felt that adults would expect them to get involved to help, for instance in cases of minor disputes between friends or in minor disputes between younger children. However it seemed that the boundaries of expected intervention were not always clear. Some children reported being reprimanded by adults in the past for attempting to resolve disputes between friends. On the other hand, children also reported being reprimanded on other occasions by adults for not trying to sort things out

themselves. One child explained how it often depends on who the adult is and what mood they are in, as this may influence the adult's likely response.

It seemed from the qualitative information gathered in the current study that children who opt to defend need to be able to anticipate how their intervention will be construed by adults, to evaluate the adult's mood, to judge the severity of the situation (as children reported that adults generally disapprove of intervention to defend against physical aggression) and to interpret these cues in light of their previous history with that adult (some adults may have reprimanded them in the past for intervention whereas others may have expected the child to sort it out by themselves). Children also seemed aware that the ethos within their school promoted kind behaviour towards others, but such school values seemed to be contradicted by adult reactions to defending in an interactive social context. It seems like a significantly complex process of cognitive evaluation and abstract thinking is at play, and children who defend need to be highly skilled in these areas in order to both protect themselves from reprimand and be sufficiently confident in their decision to intervene.

As mentioned in the literature review chapter, Poyhonen and Salmivalli (2012) explored the role that outcome expectations and outcome values can play in relation to bystander responses. They argued that expected outcomes are important, but children also seem to base their decisions to intervene on a consideration of the value they place on a particular outcome. In the current study it seemed that children often expected that adults would disapprove of their defending. It could be argued that children who tend to defend are likely to be pro-social and fitting the moral frame of the 'good' student, and that these children would place a high value on being approved of by adults. Perhaps the value some students place on being regarded as well behaved surpasses the value they place on defending in some instances.

Adler and Adler (1995) describe how the values of adolescent cliques are often distinct from and at times at odds with those of adults. Behaviour which is determined to be pro-social by adults (such as telling a teacher about episodes of bullying) can often be seen as socially undesirable by adolescents and could

in fact provoke rejection by the peer group. Findings from the current study suggest that such trends are evident in younger children too. Children in the current study were pre-adolescents, yet they still seemed highly aware of the risks they were taking when choosing to tell an adult about an incident of unkind behaviour. Children seemed aware that telling an adult could incur retaliation from the child who had perpetrated the original unkind act, leading to the child who had intervened to defend (by telling the adult) becoming a victim of unkind behaviour themselves.

In sum, while some children expressed concern about the potential risks of defending in terms of retaliation by the child perpetrating, it seemed that many of the children in the current study also worried that they would be reprimanded by adults for getting involved themselves. In some cases, children felt that adults would even prefer them to ignore unkind behaviour if they saw it happening, as it is perceived as not the child's business to become involved in such matters. In this sense, children's views of what the adults in school wanted them to do often seemed synonymous with inaction or passivity (i.e., deferring to the adult for help rather than attempting to help themselves). This could be seen as fuel for Furedi's (2002) concerns about the trend towards pathologisation of children's interpersonal interactions and increasing micromanagement of children by adults. Future research could explore whether decreasing adult tendencies to micromanage children's interpersonal interactions and solve disputes on their behalf could facilitate an increase in the sense of personal agency of children and an associated increase in defending.

It could be argued that school is a microcosm of wider society. If passivity is (perhaps unwittingly) promoted by adults in school then those children may grow up to be passive adults, who keep to themselves rather than intervening to protect someone they see being victimised. The costs of intervention may be perceived as too high, thus contributing to an increasingly insular society where social connections are diminished and the needs of the individual are prioritised over the needs of the group. It could be interesting for future research to explore defending in collectivist cultures. It may be that the individualistic culture in the United Kingdom (and Western society in general) may actually be inhibiting

defending. If we want children to grow up to be socially engaged and connected, schools may need to take an active stance on promoting such socially conscious behaviours from an early age.

## 5.7 Characteristics of the Child Defending

Eisenberg and Mussen (1990) state that pro-social children are likely to have supportive and nurturing parents who model pro-social acts and encourage moral thinking and behaviour. Findings from the current study seemed to support this theory with some students referring to adults expectations of them to be kind and to intervene to stand up for others and to do the right thing. Some children referred to the expectations they felt that their parents would have of them in relation to defending and these perceived expectations seemed to guide their responses at times.

A qualitative observation noted by the researcher in the current study related to the apparent verbal ability of the children who had been peer nominated for defending. These children appeared to be highly verbally competent – skilled at putting their thoughts and feelings into words and using their verbal skills to persuade others (both children and adults). This might be consistent with the finding in the current study that defending was positively associated with security transcending problems. Verbally able children may be better verbal negotiators when it comes to solving peer disputes. Such verbal skills may be important when persuading others to behave kindly, but also when explaining the incident to adults and thus avoiding possible reprimand. Children who are less verbally skilled may find it more difficult to persuade other children to change their behaviour, and they may also find it more difficult to express their side of the story to adults (especially in emotionally charged/high pressure situations). This could lead such children to tend to intervene in less pro-social ways (i.e., through physical rather than verbal means) or to avoid intervening in the first instance. However, it must be acknowledged that verbal ability was not measured in the current study, and as such this observation could only be considered very tentative at present but future research could explore the

relationship between verbal ability and defending in more detail. It may be the case the interventions to develop verbal ability in less socially confident children may contribute to an increase in defending.

## 5.8 Characteristics of the Child being Victimised

*Research Question: Do the characteristics of the child who [...] is being victimised influence a child's expressed intention to defend (and manner of defending) against teasing or unkind behaviour?*

Eisenberg and Mussen (1990) point out that the characteristics of the recipient will influence pro-social behaviour and explain that children are more likely to help if they like the recipient, if the recipient has an attractive personality or if they have previously helped the recipient. The current study seemed to support this theory to a certain extent. Children generally expressed more willingness to intervene to help a well liked child such as a friend. This trend seemed evidenced across all of the behavioural tendencies. Many children also expressed an intention to defend even if the victim was someone who was unknown to them, although in such instances their chosen method of defence often seemed indirect, for instance many children reported that they would probably help by getting an adult rather than intervening to confront the perpetrator directly. It seemed that the value placed on defending a 'neutral' child was not always high enough to warrant the risk of personal harm. However, in situations where it was a *friend* being victimised, children seemed to express more readiness to intervene directly and to confront the perpetrator in person. Increasing children's sense of connection to other children who may not be in their immediate friendship group could be a viable means of increasing defending behaviour.

In relation to defending disliked children, responses seemed more mixed. A number of children expressed an intention to intervene to protect a child, even if that child was disliked by them. Such children reported that defending was the morally right thing to do, regardless of their personal history with the victim. On

the other hand, some children stated that they would not intervene to defend someone whom they personally disliked. Children who had been peer nominated for perpetrating, assisting, reinforcing or remaining distanced / outside seemed more likely to adopt this view than those who had been peer nominated for defending. It may have been the case that the sense of moral virtue derived from intervening to defend a disliked victim did not seem sufficient to warrant intervention for these children. Or perhaps the potential costs of defending (i.e., possible retaliation by the child perpetrating or reprimand by an adult) outweighed the benefits in terms of feeling like one had done the morally virtuous thing.

Interestingly, when asked whether they would intervene to defend a child who was disliked by all of the other children in the year group, there was almost universal consensus expressed across the children interviewed that defending would be warranted. Their reasoning for this seemed varied. Some children seemed to base their decision on moral virtue explaining that it is not fair if someone has no friends and so they should be helped. Children seemed very aware of the importance of friendship and seemed to express the view that every child has the right to have friends. So in cases where the victim was described as being universally disliked, children seemed to be guided by a sense of fairness and moral duty to intervene. It may also be the case that children who are viewed as universally disliked are perceived as being less of a threat – they are unlikely to have the social power to turn other children against the child defending and so the risks of intervention may be lower. In such cases, children also expressed more intention to intervene directly (rather than indirectly by fetching an adult). Perhaps universally disliked children are viewed by other children as safe individuals on whom conflict resolution skills can be practised.

## 5.9 Characteristics of the Child Perpetrating

*Research Question: Do the characteristics of the child who is perpetrating [...] influence a child's expressed intention to defend (and manner of defending) against teasing or unkind behaviour?*

Sutton et al. (1999) suggest that some bullies can be conceptualised as skilled social manipulators who are more than capable of coercively controlling social power and resources and using their skills in processing social information to their advantage. The current study found some evidence in support of this theory based on the interviewees' perceptions of the kinds of children who might perpetrate unkind behaviour. Some of the children interviewed expressed concern that should they intervene to defend, the child perpetrating might manipulate the truth thus leading to the child defending being seen as culpable in some way by the adult. In this sense, it seemed that some of the interviewees had fallen victim to this kind of skilled social manipulation in the past.

Some of the children also seemed wary of the social power of popular children, and how this power could be used in a negative manner to turn other children against the child defending, thus suggesting that children are aware of relational aggression and weigh up the risk of being victims themselves of relational aggression should they decide to confront a popular perpetrator. Interestingly, both boys and girls seemed aware of the negative effects of relational aggression. Previous research has suggested that relational aggression seems more common amongst girls whereas physical aggression is more common amongst boys (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995). Some findings in the current study indicate that boys are not unaware of the dangers of relational aggression. More recent research has indicated that both boys and girls experience relational aggression (Juvonen & Graham, 2014) and the findings of the current study could be seen as supportive of this.

The shared history between the child defending and the child perpetrating also seemed to influence the likelihood of intervention. Children seemed to express

more readiness to intervene in situations where the perpetrator was known to them as being (relatively) non-aggressive, or if they had been successful in confronting the perpetrator in the past. However, in cases where the child perpetrating was generally viewed as being aggressive, understandably children expressed more reluctance to intervene. In situations where children reported defending against aggressive perpetrators, it seemed that they were usually intervening to protect friends rather than neutral or disliked children. It appears that the risks of confronting an aggressive perpetrator are outweighed by the social benefits of having a friend. Some of the children seemed aware that by not intervening to defend their friend, they might run the risk of losing that friend and this seemed to be something they were very keen to avoid. Friends seemed to be a valuable resource and children appeared willing to put themselves at risk to defend them.

Some children expressed reluctance to intervene to defend in cases where the child perpetrating was a friend. In such circumstances children seemed deterred by the risk of losing the perpetrator as a friend (again, friends were seen as a highly valuable resource). It also seemed that witnessing a friend perpetrate unkind behaviour appeared to lead to a state of cognitive dissonance in some cases. One child explained how his friend can perpetrate unkindness by getting into arguments, but then rationalised this by describing his friend as ‘a really good boy usually’. Mendelson and Aboud (1999) state that friendship serves the function of self –validation and Adler and Adler (1995) explain how membership in a friendship group can provide opportunities for the evolvement of a sense of self and identity. It may be that children view their friends as a reflection of themselves and in cases where their friends behave in socially undesirable ways, children may take steps to reduce this uncomfortable cognitive dissonance through rationalisation. This would be important to bear in mind as it could explain to some degree how children may become drawn into perpetrating unkindness. On the one hand a child may view an unkind act as less severe if it is perpetrated by a friend as they conceive of their friend as a good person who would be unlikely to do something really unkind. If the child views the unkind act (of their friend) as less severe or neutral they may be more inclined to join in with it. On the other hand, if the act was perpetrated by

someone the child did not identify with, they may be more likely to disapprove of it.

As such, children who associate with others who tend to behave unkindly may be more likely to behave unkindly themselves because they do not view the unkind act as severe when it is committed by a friend and because they may fear losing their friends if they oppose them. On the contrary the reverse may also be the case. Children who associate with others who tend to defend may be more likely to behave pro-socially themselves. A sense of personal identification with the child defending (as a friend) may lead to increased approval of the act of defending. As such defending could spread amongst friendship groups.

## 5.10 Distinguishing Unkind Behaviour from (Kind) Teasing

*Research Question: Do children discriminate between behaviours which could be considered light-hearted teasing and more negative unkind behaviours and if so, what reflections do children have on this discrimination process?*

The current study set out to explore whether children discriminate between behaviours which could be considered light-hearted teasing and more negative unkind behaviours. As discussed previously, Crozier and Dimmock (1999) explain how teasing can increase social cohesion, enjoyment in interaction and a sense of social inclusion, but alternatively it can be used as an expression of aggression and social exclusion. Children in the current study seemed to discriminate between kind and unkind teasing giving multiple examples of occasions when they had experienced teasing being used positively to lift mood, to reduce tension and to reinforce social bonds. It seemed that such forms of teasing were often used amongst friends in the current study. On the other hand, children also seemed aware of how teasing could be used with negative intent, for example to ridicule another child, to reinforce alliances between friends at another child's expense by teasing or mocking them behind

their back or to cause deliberate upset by teasing about sensitive subjects such as family.

Crozier and Dimmock (1999) also refer to the ambiguous nature of teasing and state that the consequences can sometimes be difficult to identify. Children in the current study seemed aware of the less obvious consequences of negative teasing such as hurt feelings, which may not always be immediately observable in context.

## 5.11 Limitations

As with any research study there are certain limitations in the current study which need to be acknowledged. Firstly, the decision was taken to conduct paired interviews in an attempt to help children feel more at ease and to generate discussion. However, it may be the case that this paired format could have led to a narrowing of scope of responses, as children may have adapted their views to seem more in line with the views of their partner, or children may have suppressed certain views out of fear that these views would be interpreted negatively by their partner. However, on the whole it was felt that the advantages of paired interviewing (in terms of increased discussion and children seeming more at ease) outweighed the disadvantages.

In addition, due to the sensitive nature of the subject, children's responses may have been subject to social desirability bias. Children may have inflated their experiences of defending and behaving kindly as they felt that this is the sort of response that the adult researcher wanted to hear. Furthermore, as children were asked a number of questions about the vignettes which were similar in nature, they may have varied their responses deliberately, again perhaps being of the view that a varied response was what the researcher was looking for.

Furthermore, the current study focused on exploring the views of children at the expense of including adult views (e.g., parents and teachers). Future studies may be strengthened by including such additional perspectives if possible.

An additional limitation which must be acknowledged in relation to interviews pertains to the lack of a comparative examination of defending across individuals with different perceived behavioural tendencies. The current study did not conduct separate thematic analyses according to behavioural tendency and instead the contributions of all children (regardless of peer nominated behavioural tendency) were analysed together. Therefore it was not possible to systematically compare groups. Although some interesting differences seemed to emerge (for instance children who had been peer nominated for perpetrating seemed to rely more on aggressive methods of intervention than those who had been peer nominated for defending) these conclusions can only be very tentatively drawn from the findings of the current study. Future studies may wish to systematically compare groups according to behavioural tendency in order to draw firmer conclusions in relation to group differences.

## 5.12 Implications for the Practice of Educational Psychologists and Professionals

Educational Psychologists (EPs) tend to adopt a systemic approach when working with children, schools and families to address perceived problems. It could be argued that the problem of unkind behaviour between children in schools is often viewed from a within-child perspective – certain children are perceived as being 'perpetrators' whereas others are perceived as being 'defenders' and so on. Based on the findings of the current study it could be suggested that a role of the EP could be to support schools to move past this within-child view to begin to consider 'perpetrating' or 'defending' as being different types of behaviour on an individual child's repertoire. Any one child may engage in perpetrating, defending, assisting, reinforcing or remaining distanced depending on the context. It seems that contextual factors are key when it comes to behaviour in relation to unkindness, and to think of children as fitting into categories or specific role types seems overly simplistic based on the findings of the current study. A key role of the EP could be to help schools view behaviour as a tendency rather than a type or role, and to help them identify

factors which may encourage children to tend to behave in one way over another in any given situation.

In working systemically with schools, EPs could assist in identifying factors which may be influencing a child's behaviour. In recent years, bullying research has begun to focus on factors within the wider systems surrounding the child (such as family values, school ethos, classroom norms, peer group attitudes) in an attempt to increase understanding of the subject. Based on the findings of the current study it seems that the potential influence of adults on a child's defending behaviour is significant, and this is an area which does not seem to have received much research attention to date. Based on the views expressed by children in the current study it appears that adults often paradoxically inhibit children from defending, either by actively encouraging children to remain uninvolved or to seek adult support rather than becoming involved, or by reprimanding children who do become involved. As a result, many of the children who could potentially defend a child who is being victimised may not; perhaps driven through fear of reprimand and a desire to please adults and abide by school rules. School staff would need to be aware of the influence of their own reactions to defending on children's behaviour, to ensure that they are not unwittingly fostering passivity. EPs could help adults in schools think systemically about the influence they have on a child's behaviour and assist with the design of systems which could actively promote defending rather than (inadvertently) discouraging it.

In addition to helping adults think about how systems within schools could be designed to promote defending, there is also a role for EPs in facilitating schools to think about how the wider social and political systems may be influencing how they approach defending. Some authors (e.g. Furedi, 2002) have criticised the increasing societal tendency to micromanage children's behaviour – to protect them from harm at all costs. This in turn could contribute towards increasing passivity in children and impeding the development of their independence. EPs could help schools to reflect on how such micromanagement could be avoided and how children could be encouraged to

develop their own independence skills in relation to solving disputes amongst peers.

There is also a role for EPs in facilitating thinking about how government policies may be impacting on the day to day experience of children in schools. In recent years there has been an increasing government focus on how schools can regain control of children's behaviour (which tends to be perceived as being in a state of decline) (DfE, 2010b). As a result of behaviour initiatives at the governmental level it seems that schools are coming under increasing pressure to manage the behaviour of children in an attempt to seem like adults have firm control. Again, such a focus on the micromanagement of children's experience could be disadvantaging the very children it is supposed to protect. It could be argued that children who are not allowed to experience risk or failure, who are protected from harm at all costs, who are prevented from interacting freely with their peers (having disputes, resolving conflict for themselves) and who are discouraged from defending others against harm, may find themselves lacking in the personal, social and emotional skills needed to lead successful adult lives once they leave school. Taking risks and experiencing failure are key parts of the learning experience. It could be suggested that in micromanaging children's experience to the point where they never have the opportunity to take such risks, we may be ultimately inhibiting them from learning. Schools would need to be aware of this and to take steps to provide children with opportunities to take social risks as this may ultimately promote the development of social competence.

It seems from the current study that the quality of children's friendships can be associated with defending behaviour. Schools should consider how friendships between children can be developed so that more children feel secure enough within their own friendship groups that they have the social confidence to tackle unkind behaviour if they see it happening. It seems also that the ability to transcend problems within one's own friendship group can be associated with defending. Again, there is a role for EPs here in supporting schools to facilitate opportunities for children to practise their conflict mediation skills within their

own friendship groups with a view to helping them generalise those skills to other contexts.

Attitudes seem to play an important role in determining a child's response to unkind behaviour. In the current study, disapproval of unkind behaviour was predictive of defending. Schools should ensure that disapproval of unkindness is ingrained in their ethos and that this filters through all levels of school life. While increasing whole school awareness through assemblies and mission statements is likely to be important, it would also be important that attitudes which are disapproving of unkindness are reinforced at the classroom level (through classroom interactions, norms and adult modelling) and at the child level by publicly rewarding those children who attempt to confront perpetrators. Close communication between all adults in school (leadership teams, management, teaching staff, learning support assistants and midday playground assistants) will be necessary to ensure that defending is encouraged and rewarded at all levels, and EPs could help facilitate the design of such open communication systems.

## 5.13 Conclusion

### ***5.13.1 Overall Model of Defending***

On the basis of the quantitative and qualitative data collected an overall ecosystemic model of defending is proposed. See Figure 5.1. It is suggested that at the individual child and microsystem levels, disapproval of unkind behaviour should be encouraged, empathy and perspective taking ability should be developed and a sense of duty to protect vulnerable individuals should be cultivated. In addition, it is proposed that children will need to be taught effective conflict resolution skills so that they develop the confidence and ability to successfully transcend problems within their own friendship groups with a view to applying these skills more generally with less familiar children in time. It is also proposed that secure friendships should be promoted between children, as having the confidence that friends will provide protection and support seems

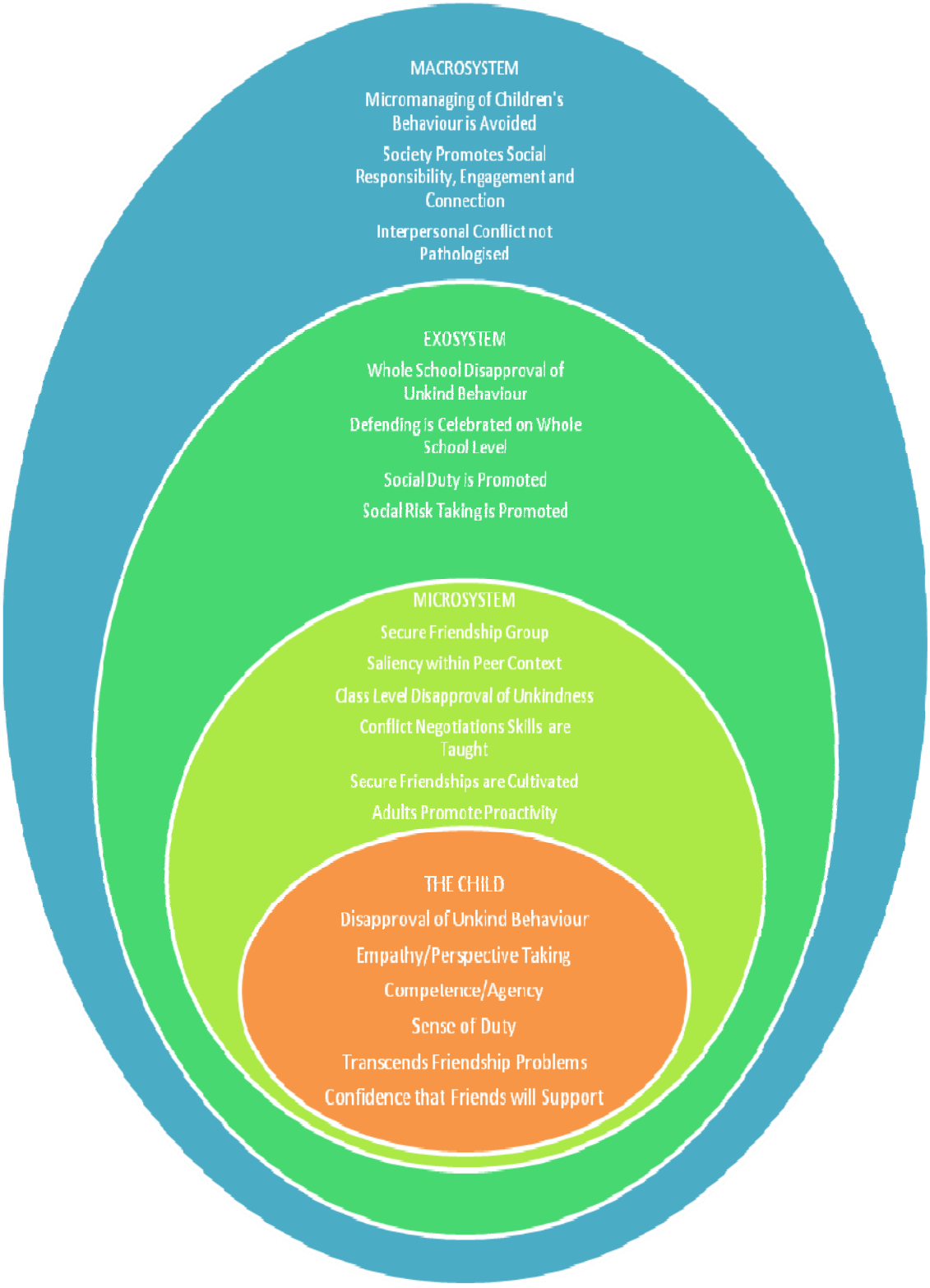
related to children's expressed intentions to defend. Fostering closer friendships and helping children develop connections with others in their year group (increasing saliency of all children) may ultimately increase defending behaviour. Future research could explore the design of interventions to develop these skills and resiliencies. Collaboration between home and school may be important as both classroom based intervention and adult modelling may play a role in equipping children with the skills and confidence to intervene.

According to the model proposed, at the exosystemic level attitudes disapproving of unkind behaviour will need to be promoted by adults and reinforced on a wider level by publicly celebrating children who express disapproval of unkindness and who intervene to defend those who are treated unfairly. It is suggested that creating an ethos within schools (and in the home) where social responsibility is seen as a duty rather than a choice will be important, and children will need to be confident that any attempts they make to defend will be supported by adults – they will need to be secure in the knowledge that they will not be reprimanded for trying to act pro-socially. Future research may wish to explore how such a whole school ethos could be developed and how anti-bullying policies could be designed to promote defending on an individual, class and whole school level.

Finally, it is suggested that on a wider societal (macrosystemic) level there needs to be a shift in attitudes towards viewing children as capable problem solvers and towards viewing occasional conflict as a normal part of human relationships. It is proposed that children need to learn how to manage their own interpersonal conflicts - they need to be taught the skills to negotiate conflict and to be allowed opportunities to practise these skills in real-life interactive settings. It is also suggested that children may need to be allowed to fail in their attempts at times so that they can learn from their mistakes – the tendency for adults to micromanage and solve children's conflicts for them should be reduced. Future research may wish to explore how policies can be designed to promote the independence of children in relation to conflict resolution. There may also be research opportunities for the design of training packages targeted at adults in schools, focused on empowering children to

successfully negotiate their own conflicts and shifting the focus away from behaviour ‘management’. On a wider political level, social responsibility both in schools and in society could be promoted. It may be useful to shift educational policy focus away from regaining control of child behaviour through behaviour management, to instead focus on empowering children to regulate their own interpersonal interactions and become socially conscious individuals.

Figure 5.1 *Ecosystemic Model of Defending*



### ***5.13.2 Summary***

It seems that defending is associated with membership of a small secure friendship group where the quality of friendships within the group is good. Children who tend to defend seem confident that their friends will support them and they also seem confident in their own ability to transcend interpersonal conflicts. Children who tend to defend seem to be more salient individuals within their year groups – they may be well known by the other children in the year and perhaps are unlikely to be overly introverted or socially isolated. Defending seems associated with empathy, a sense of problem solving competence and a sense of duty to protect individuals in need. Children who defend also seem to be risk takers to a certain extent – they run the risk of being victimised themselves or being reprimanded by adults, yet they appear confident enough to take these risks - perhaps driven by a sense of compassion for the child being victimised. The desire to protect friends also seems associated with defending, suggesting that friends are a valuable social resource that children are willing to put themselves at risk to protect. Adults may unwittingly inhibit defending by discouraging children from getting involved in situations of interpersonal conflict. Defending may be fostered in contexts where it is actively encouraged by adults and where defending behaviour is consistently rewarded.

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**Appendix 1**

**Unkind Behaviour Questionnaire**

Boy ☐ Girl ☐

Class: ……

---

**Sometimes unkind behaviour happens in schools. Teasing, pushing, calling someone names or leaving someone out of a game can all be types of unkind behaviour. 'Victim' means someone who is treated unkindly.**

**If unkind behaviour happens children can behave in different ways.**

**Can you think of someone in your class who might behave like this? Write the person's name on the line. You can write more than one name if you like. If there is no-one in your class who behaves like this you do not have to write a name.**

1. Someone who <u>does not</u> get involved with unkind behaviour.

……

2. Someone who starts the unkind behaviour.

……

3. Someone who would go to tell the teacher if they saw unkind behaviour happening.

……

4. Someone who makes other children join in the unkind behaviour.

……

5. Someone who is treated unkindly by other children.

……

6. Someone who laughs when they see someone being treated unkindly.

……

7. Someone who tells the other children: "Don't join in. It's not kind!"

……

8. Someone who tries to cheer the victim up.

……

9. Someone who other children laugh at.

……

10. Someone who calls the other children to come and watch the unkind behaviour.

……

11. Someone who goes to play somewhere else if they see unkind behaviour starting.

……

12. Someone who never takes sides.

……

13. Someone who always thinks of new ways to make fun of the victim.

……

14. Someone who comes to look at what is going on.

……

15. Someone who tries to stop the unkind behaviour.

……

**Appendix 2**

**Name:**..... **Class:**.....
**Age:**..... **Boy ☐ Girl ☐**

**Friendship Questionnaire**

These questions are about your close friendship group in school. Think about your 3 closest friends in school – the 3 people you hang around with the most.

Write their names here:

..... ..... .....

When you are answering the questions make sure you think about these 3 people.

**After each sentence there is a scale that goes from 1 to 4.**

Put a circle around the number you think is right for you and your friends.
REMEMBER TO ANSWER THE QUESTIONS ON THE BACK OF THE PAGE TOO!

| | | Not True 1 | Sometimes True 2 | Usually True 3 | Always True 4 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | My friends and I help each other. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 2. | Even if we had an argument we would still be friends. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 3. | If other children were bothering me, my friends would help me. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 4. | I can trust my friends. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 5. | There is nothing that would stop my friends and me from being friends. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 6. | My friends can hurt my feelings when we argue. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 7. | If somebody tried to push me around, my friends would help me. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 8. | I argue with my friends. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 9. | My friends would stick up for me if another child was causing me trouble. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **10** | If I have a problem at school or at home I can talk to my friends about it. | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** |
| **11** | Even though I ask them not to, my friends can annoy me sometimes. | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** |
| **12** | Even if I said I was sorry after I had a fight with my friends, they would stay angry at me. | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** |
| **13** | Even if other children stopped liking me, my friends would still be my friends. | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** |
| **14** | My friends help me if I need help. | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** |
| **15** | If there is something bothering me I can tell my friends about it. | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** |
| **16** | When I have to do something that is hard I know my friends will help me. | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** |
| **17** | My friends and I disagree about lots of things. | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** |
| **18** | If we have a fight or argument we can say "I'm sorry" and everything will be alright. | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** |

| Scale | Subscale | Item Number |
|---|---|---|
| **Conflict** | | 6, 8, 11, 17 |
| **Help** | Aid | 1, 14, 16 |
| | Protection from victimisation | 3, 7, 9 |
| **Security** | Transcending problems | 2, 5, 12, 18 |
| | Reliable alliance | 4, 10, 13, 15 |

**Appendix 3 – Social Cognitive Map**

Name:..... Age:.....

Class:..... Boy ☐ Girl ☐

In the playground there are lots of children that often hang around together in groups.

Please tell me about the children in Year 6 that play and hang around together a lot.

Each box stands for one group of children. Write the names of all the children who hang around together as a group in the box.

<u>Don't forget to write your own name in a box too!</u>

**Appendix 4 Teasing Questionnaire**

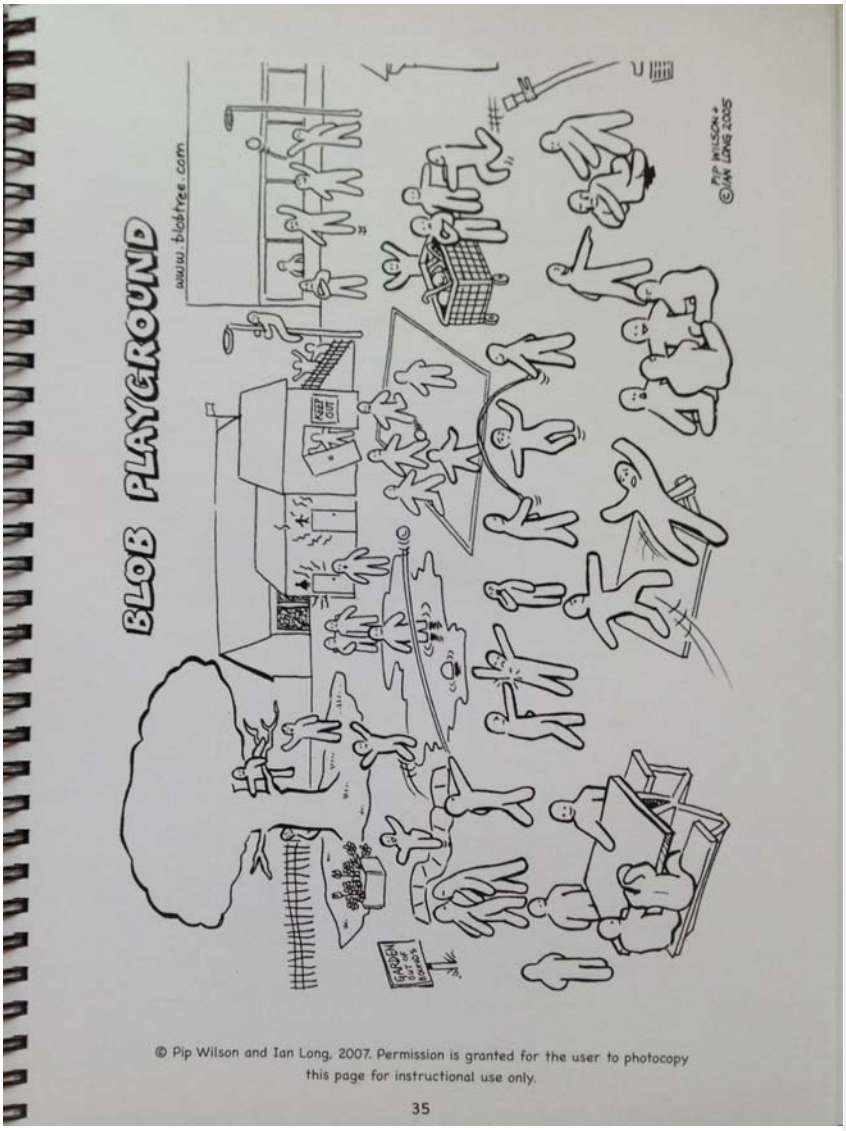
| Class | | Boy☐ | | | Girl☐ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **This questionnaire is about how children get along with one another. Put a circle around the number which you think is true for each sentence.** | | | | | |
| | | Not True 1 | Sometimes True 2 | Usually True 3 | Always True 4 |
| 1. | It is ok to tease people to make them smile. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 2. | You should try to help someone who is being teased unkindly. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 3. | I tease other people to let them know I like them. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 4. | Slapping and pushing someone is just a way of joking. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 5. | If a person is sad I use teasing to cheer them up. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 6. | It is alright to be unfriendly to someone who says unkind things to you. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 7. | Making up unkind stories about someone who is rude is ok. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 8. | Children don't mind being teased because it makes them feel part of the group. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 9. | You should tell a teacher if someone is being teased. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 10 | Being teased can make a person feel happy. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 11 | It is alright to fight someone if they are unkind to your friends. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 12 | I only make fun of someone if I know they will find it funny. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **13** | It is ok to be unkind to someone if everyone else is doing it too. | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** |
| **14** | I tease my friends about silly things they have done. | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** |
| **15** | It is not that bad if you laugh when someone is being teased. | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** |
| **16** | I don't tease someone if I think it will make them feel embarrassed. | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** |

Thank you for answering my questions!

| Scale | Item Number |
|---|---|
| **Teasing (prosocial)** | 1,3,5,12,14,16 |
| **Moral Disengagement** | 4,6,7,11,13 |
| **Anti Teasing Attitude** | 2,8,9,10,15 |

**Appendix 5 – Blob Playground Scene**



**Appendix 6 - Semi Structured Interview Questions**

**Blob People Picture Stimulus**

1. **Which one would you say is most like you?**
2. **Which one would you say is least like you?**
3. **Which one would you say is like you when you are with your friends?**
4. **Which one would you say is like you when you have to sort out an argument?**
5. **Which one do you think is being teased?**

   Why do you think children tease one another?
6. **Which one do you think is being unkind?**

   Have you ever seen anyone being unkind to another child? What happened?

   Did you get involved in any way? (If not can you think of a time when you did get involved to try and stop the unkind behaviour?)

   How did you feel when you saw the unkind behaviour happening?

   What did you think when you saw this happening?

   What did your friends do when this was happening?

   What did your friends say when you got involved?

   Did you worry that you might get picked on if you got involved?

   Were there any adults (teachers) around when this was happening? Do you think an adult would want you to get involved? Why/why not?

   Why do you think children often don't tell teachers about teasing?
7. **Which one can see unkind behaviour but is not getting involved?**

   Why do you think he's not getting involved?

   Have there ever been situations of unkindness where you thought it wasn't worth getting involved? What happened?

8. **Which one is really popular?**

   What would you do if you saw someone who was really popular being unkind to someone else?

9. **Which one is unpopular?**

   What would you do if you saw someone who was not popular being unkind to someone else?

10. **Which one is teasing their friends?**

    Do your friends ever tease one another?

    Do you think children are ever unkind to their friends?

11. **What is your favourite thing to do with your friends?**

## Appendix 7 – Parental Opt-Out Consent


25th April 2013

Dear Parent(s)/Carer(s),

I am writing to ask for permission for your child to participate in an Institute of Education research project on friendship and social relationships amongst children. These areas are thought to influence the process of child development. I would like to find out how children feel about their friendships and how they might respond to unkind behaviour (if they were ever faced with it). This research is being undertaken by me (Sorcha Ennis) in collaboration with Dr Ed Baines and Dr Karen Majors. The research builds on ongoing research on friendships and social relationships undertaken at the Institute of Education.

Children will be asked to complete three questionnaires about friendship and social behaviours. Children will also be asked about the different friendship groups within their class. I will be present along with their class teacher to help them if they have any questions. They will not be asked to share their responses with anyone else in the class. They will also be free to skip any questions they do not wish to answer. Any children who are not participating will be allowed to complete an alternative quiet activity of their choice. Some children may be asked if they would mind being interviewed at a later point. If this is the case for your child then I will contact you about this separately and at a later stage.

All children's answers will be confidential and individual children's responses will not be shared with school staff. However, general information based on the results of the whole group of children may be provided. Only children who have parental/carer permission and who themselves agree to participate, will be involved in the study. Also, children or parents/carers may withdraw their permission at any time during the study.

I would like to assure you that this study has received ethics clearance from the Research Ethics Committee at the Institute of Education. In addition, it has the support of the head teacher at your child's school. However, the final decision about participation is yours. Should you have any concerns or comments resulting from your child's participation in this study, please contact Sorcha Ennis at sennis@ioe.ac.uk or telephone me on 01702 212947.

If you **DO NOT** want your child to participate please complete the attached form and return it to the school before .... If you do not sign and return the form it will be assumed that you are happy for your child to participate in this research. I would appreciate it if you would permit your child to participate in this project, as I believe it will contribute to furthering our understanding about children's development and will help schools manage friendships and unkind behaviour between children.

Many thanks for your help with this matter,

Sorcha Ennis

Trainee Educational Psychologist

.....

I **do not** want my child to participate in this study.

Child's Name (please print):.....

Parent/Carer Signature:.....

Date:..... Please return this form to the school before...

**Appendix 8 – Children's Information Sheet**

Hi!

I'm doing a research project on friendship. I would like to find out what children think about friendship. I would also like to know what children think about teasing and what they might do if they ever saw unkind behaviour happening.

To help me with my project I would like you to answer some questions about friends, teasing and unkind behaviour. You will not have to tell anyone in school about your answers. I will be here with your teacher to explain exactly what you need to do and to help you with any parts you might find tricky.

It would be great if you would help me with my project, but if you don't want to that's fine too! Just tell me or your teacher if you would prefer not to answer the questions.

Thanks ☺

## Appendix 9 – Parental Opt-In Consent


July 2013

Dear Parent(s)/Carer(s),

I previously wrote to you asking for permission for your child to participate in an Institute of Education research project on friendship and social relationships amongst children. This project is being undertaken by me (Sorcha Ennis) in collaboration with Dr Ed Baines and Dr Karen Majors. The project builds upon ongoing research on friendships and social relationships undertaken at the Institute of Education.

Children have already completed questionnaires about social relationships in school. I would now like to further explore children's ideas about friendship and responses to unkind behaviour by speaking to some children individually.

Each interview will be conducted by me (Sorcha Ennis) and the responses will be audio recorded. These recordings will be anonymised, stored securely and then destroyed when the research is complete. Questions will focus on how children react if they see unkind behaviour happening. Each interview is expected to last for no more than thirty minutes.

All children's answers will be confidential and individual children's responses will not be shared with school staff. However, general information based on the results of the whole group of children may be provided. No child will be identified by name. Only children who have parental/carer permission and who themselves agree to participate, will be interviewed. Children or parents/carers may withdraw their permission at any time and any information held in relation to that child will be removed from the study.

This study has received ethics clearance from the Research Ethics Committee at the Institute of Education and has the support of the head teacher at your child's school. Should you have any concerns or comments resulting from your child's participation in this study, please contact Sorcha Ennis at sennis@ioe.ac.uk or telephone me on 01702 212947.

**If you are happy for your child to be interviewed please complete and return** the attached form to the school on or before Friday 5th July 2013. I would appreciate it if you would allow your child to be interviewed as I think it is important to seek children's views about social relationships, friendships and unkind behaviour and to listen carefully to what they have to say.

Many thanks for your help with this matter,

Sorcha Ennis

Trainee Educational Psychologist

.....

**I am happy for my child to be interviewed as part of this research study.**

Child's Name (please print):.....

Parent/Carer Signature:..... Date.....

**Appendix 10 – Revised Ethical Approval Form**

***BPS Ethical Approval Form***

**DEdPsy (Y2)** STUDENT RESEARCH ETHICS APPROVAL FORM
Psychology & Human Development

This form should be completed with reference to the BPS Code of Ethics and Conduct – available online from www.bps.org.uk

On which course are you registered? Doctorate in Professional Educational Child and Adolescent Psychology

Title of project: **Factors influencing children's decisions to defend against teasing or unkind behaviour.**

Name of researcher(s): Sorcha Ennis

Name of supervisor/s (for student research): Ed Baines, Karen Majors

Date: 25.4.13 (revised version 9.9.13) Intended start date of data collection (month and year only): May 2013

1. **Summary of planned research** (please provide the following details: project title, purpose of project, its academic rationale and research questions, a brief description of methods and measurements; participants: recruitment methods, number, age, gender, exclusion/inclusion criteria; estimated start date and duration of project). It's expected that this will take approx. 200–300 words, though you may write more if you feel it is necessary. Please also give further details here if this project been considered by another (external) Research Ethics Committee.

**Title of proposed topic for the thesis:**

**'Factors influencing children's decisions to defend against teasing or unkind behaviour'.**

In recent years addressing bullying has become a major focus in schools both in the UK and internationally. Every year, schools spend a considerable amount of their budgets on interventions designed to tackle problematic behaviour and to promote the use of pro-social behaviour (Viding, McCrory, Blakemore & Frederickson, 2011). Nationwide initiatives such as the SEAL curriculum (DfES, 2005) have been implemented in UK schools with a view to developing children's social and emotional competence and potentially reducing incidences of aggression and bullying. Despite this, bullying remains a prominent concern in the educational sphere.

Research has shown that although most children seem to understand that bullying is wrong and report anti-bullying attitudes, few children actually intervene to stop bullying when they see it happening (Espelage, Green & Polanin, 2012). Anti-bullying interventions incorporating a social and emotional skills development aspect have not always led to a significant reduction in the amount of bullying occurring (Salmivalli, Kaukiainen & Voeten, 2005).

Research has moved beyond looking solely at bullies and victims to consider other roles children may occupy in any bullying situation. Barchia and Bussey (2011) state that research into the important role of student defenders in reducing bullying in schools is still in its infancy. They note that while there is a wide recognition that bystanders can play an important role in influencing peer aggression, little is known about what influences children to move from the position of a bystander or outsider role to actively intervene in defence of peer aggression victims.

This current research will focus on defenders and explore the factors which may influence their decision to defend when they see another student being treated unfairly.

The primary research question posed in this study will be:

***Research Question 1***
***What are the factors which influence a child's decision to defend?***
In an attempt to answer this research question the following secondary questions will also be addressed through both qualitative and quantitative means:

***Research Question 2***
***Do defenders tend to be members of peer groups where prosocial attitudes are strong?***

***Research Question 3***
***Do defenders tend to come from peer groups where the friendship quality is high?***

***Research Question 4***
***How do children decide whether certain behaviours are light-hearted teasing or more negative unkind behaviours?***

***Research Question 5***
***Do the characteristics of the perpetrator and the victim influence a child's decision to defend against teasing or unkind behaviour?***

***Research Question 6***
***Do adults influence a child's decision to defend and if so how?***

Participants

The participants in this study will be from a Year 6 group in a large multinational state school in an independent unitary authority. Consent will be sought in two stages. In the first stage, parents of all children in Year 6 will sent a letter outlining the aims of the study and the procedure that will be followed in terms of administration of questionnaires. Parents will then be given the option of consenting passively (by not communicating further with the researcher) or by actively refusing permission for their child to participate (by returning a signed consent form to the school). During the second stage (once defenders have been identified through the peer nomination method), parents of those children who have been nominated as defenders will be written to and their permission will be actively sought for their children to be interviewed. Parents will need to provide opt-in consent at this stage. Children will also be given the opportunity to opt out of both the questionnaire and the interview stages of the research.

Measures

*Defending Behaviour*
To identify defenders children will complete an adapted version of the peer nomination procedure described by Goossens, Olthof and Dekker (2006) which was itself an adaptation of Salmivalli, Lagerspetz, Bjorkqvist, Osterman and Kaukiainen's (1996) 'Participant Role' procedure. Children will nominate classmates whom they perceive as being likely to intervene in a positive manner if they see another child being treated unfairly.

*Friendship Quality*
An adapted version of Bukowski, Hoza and Boivin's (1994) 'Friendship Qualities Scale' will be used to ascertain a measure of the quality of the friendships within the peer groups which include children who have been nominated as defenders.

*Social Networks*
In attempt to determine the social groupings within the year group as well as each child's social standing in relation to their peers, children will complete a social cognitive map of their year group derived from the techniques used by Cairns, Xie & Leung (1998).

*Potential Influences on Defending*
Children's attitudes towards unkind behaviour will be determined using a scale incorporating items adapted from The Moral Disengagement Scale (MDS) (Pelton, Ground, Forehand & Brody, 2004). The proposed adapted scale in the current study will be supplemented with questions designed to assess anti-bullying attitudes as used by Salmivalli and Voeten (1994).

*Qualitative Interviews*
Qualitative interviews will be conducted with children to determine the nature of the relationships within their peer groups, to explore how conflict is managed within the group and to consider the level of support children may receive from peers if they were to decide to stand up for vulnerable or less popular children. Children's moral reasoning processes and attitudes in relation to unkind behaviour towards peers will also be explored qualitatively. Children's methods of distinguishing between light-hearted teasing and more negative unkind behaviours will also be explored.

The design of the study will be a mixed methods design. Data analysis will consist of correlation, multiple regression and thematic analyses.

It is proposed that the data collection phase will take approximately 1-2 months and the analysis phases will take 3-4 months.

2. **Specific ethical issues** (Please outline the main ethical issues which may arise in the course of this research, and how they will be addressed. It's expected that this will require approx. 200–300 words, though you may write more if you feel it is necessary. You will find information in the notes about answering this question).

In accordance with the British Psychological Society Code of Conduct (BPS, 2000) all participants will be informed of the aims of the study and what will be involved. It will be made clear to participants that they are under no obligation to participate and can withdraw at any time prior to commencement of data analysis. Participants will be assured that any information they submit will be kept confidential. Participants will in no way be identified in the written research by name. It will be explained that any information will be stored in a secure location, and data involving names of participants will not be accessible to anyone but the researcher and the research supervisor.

In relation to informed consent, participants will be informed of all aspects of the research that might affect their willingness to participate. Permission will be sought from the school to include the pupils in the study.

Parents/guardians and students will receive information sheets along with an opt-out consent form (stage one) and an opt-in consent for (stage two). All information sheets will outline the advantages and disadvantages that may be involved in participation. They will also make clear that no-one is under any obligation to participate. Participation will be entirely voluntary and participants will be free to withdraw at any time prior to commencement of data analysis.

Children will be reminded in advance by their class teachers that the study will be taking place. The type of questions within the measures will be explained to them and they will be shown some examples. It will be reiterated that they are under no obligation to participate. An alternative activity will be on hand for students who do not wish to participate.

Class teachers and TAs will be on hand to speak to any children who may become upset as a result of the questions asked. However, as the children speak about emotions, friendship and bullying as part of their regular PSHCE curriculum it is not anticipated that this study should cause significant difficulties for the majority of children. There is a possibility that some children may become distressed by the Participant Roles Scale as it specifically addresses experiences of unkindness. If children have been involved in unkindness in the past they may find it difficult to answer some of these questions. If any children do become distressed they will be withdrawn from the study immediately, and an adult with whom they are familiar will be on hand to speak to them. Children will also be informed that they can omit answers if they wish. In addition, teachers will address issues in a follow-up whole class PSHCE session if appropriate.

General trends in the data will be discussed at the school's/parents' request but no reference to specific pupil scores will be made. School will be provided with a copy of the completed report.

**Update September 2013**

**I started collecting data in July 2013 and distributed stage one consent forms to 64 children. Stage 2 consent forms were distributed**

**to 30 children. Out of the 30 stage 2 letters that were distributed, 3 parents replied consenting for their children to be interviewed. This was an unexpectedly low response rate.**

**I feel that the distribution of two separate letters (on two different dates) was perhaps confusing for parents and this could have contributed to the low response rate. I also feel that the socio-economically deprived demographic of the school catchment area could be associated with literacy difficulties in the parental population. If this is the case, I feel that distributing two consent letters might be confusing for some parents who may be struggling with literacy difficulties themselves.**

**In an attempt to improve the response rate and increase the power of my study I propose to make the following changes to my methodology:**

1. **Instead of distributing two separate consent forms to parents (stage one – opt-out and stage 2 opt-in) I propose to combine the two stages into one. One letter will be sent to parents outlining the research process and seeking their consent for their child to complete questionnaires and be interviewed. Parents will be given the option of opting out of the study entirely or opting out of particular elements of it. A copy of the revised letter is included with this ethics proposal.**

2. **In order to increase the size of my sample I propose to administer questionnaires and interviews in a second Year 6 cohort in a different school.**

### 3. Further details

**Please answer the following questions.**

| | | YES | NO | N/A |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Will you describe the exactly what is involved in the research to participants in advance, so that they are informed about what to expect? | ✓ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 2 | Will you tell participants that their participation is voluntary? | ✓ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 3 | Will you obtain written consent for participation? | ✓ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 4 | If the research is observational, will you ask participants for their consent to being observed? | ☐ | ☐ | ✓ |
| 5 | Will you tell participants that they may withdraw from the research at any time and for any reason? | ✓ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 6 | With questionnaires, will you give participants the option of omitting questions they do not want to answer? | ✓ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 7 | Will you tell participants that their data will be treated with full confidentiality and that, if published, it will not be identifiable as theirs? | ✓ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 8 | Will you debrief participants at the end of their participation (i.e. give them a brief explanation of the study)? | ✓ | ☐ | ☐ |

If you have ticked **No** to any of Q1-8, please ensure further details are given in section 2 above.

| | | YES | NO | N/A |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 9 | Will your project involve deliberately misleading participants in any way? | ☐ | ✓ | ☐ |
| 10 | Is there any realistic risk of any participants experiencing either physical or psychological distress or discomfort? If **Yes**, give details on a separate sheet and state what you will tell them to do if they should experience any problems (e.g. who they can contact for help). | ✓ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 11 | Will your project involve human participants as a secondary source of data (e.g. using existing data sets) | ☐ | ✓ | ☐ |

If you have ticked **Yes** to any of 9 - 11, please provide a full explanation in section 2 above.

| | | YES | NO | N/A |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 12 | Does your project involve working with any of the following special groups? | | | |
| | • Animals | ☐ | ✓ | ☐ |
| | • School age children (under 16 years of age) | ✓ | ☐ | ☐ |
| | • Young people of 17-18 years of age | ☐ | ✓ | ☐ |
| | • People with learning or communication difficulties | ☐ | ✓ | ☐ |
| | • Patients | ☐ | ✓ | ☐ |
| | • People in custody | ☐ | ✓ | ☐ |
| | • People engaged in illegal activities (e.g. drug-taking) | ☐ | ✓ | ☐ |

If you have ticked Yes to 12, please refer to BPS guidelines, and provide full details in sections 1 and 2 above. **Note that you may also need to obtain satisfactory CRB clearance (or equivalent for overseas students).**

**There is an obligation on the Student and their advisory panel to bring to the attention of the Faculty Research Ethics Committee any issues with ethical implications not clearly covered by the above checklist.**

**4. Attachments**

Please attach the following items to this form:

Approval letter from external Research Ethics Committee, if applicable

Where available, information sheets, consent forms and other materials to be used to inform potential participants about the research.

**5. Declaration**

*This form (and any attachments) should be signed by the Trainee, Academic and EP Supervisors and then* ***submitted to Lorraine Fernandes in the Programme Office****. You will be informed when it has been approved. If there are concerns that this research may not meet BPS ethical guidelines then it will be considered by the Faculty Research Ethics Committee.* ***If your application is incomplete, it will be returned to you.***

***For completion by students***

I am familiar with the BPS Guidelines for ethical practices in psychological research (and have discussed them in relation to my specific project with members of my advisory panel). I confirm that to the best of my knowledge this is a full description of the ethical issues that may arise in the course of this project.

Signed 

Print Name Sorcha Ennis

Date 25.4.13 (Version 1) 9.9.13 (Version 2)

## Appendix 11 – Parental Combined Consent

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

Dear Parent(s)/Carer(s),

I am writing to ask for permission for your child to participate in an Institute of Education research project on friendship and social relationships amongst children. I would like to find out how children feel about their friendships and how they might respond to unkind behaviour (if they were ever faced with it). This research is being undertaken by me (Sorcha Ennis) in collaboration with Dr Ed Baines and Dr Karen Majors. The research builds on ongoing research on friendships and social relationships undertaken at the Institute of Education.

Children will be asked to complete a questionnaire about friendship and social behaviours. I will be present along with their class teacher to help them if they have any questions. They will be free to skip any questions they do not wish to answer. Any children not participating will be allowed to complete an alternative quiet activity of their choice.

At a later point some children will be invited to talk further about their friendships and the unkind behaviour of others. Each child will be interviewed along with another classmate from their year group. Each interview will be conducted by me (Sorcha Ennis) and will be audio recorded. These recordings will be anonymised, stored securely and then destroyed when the research is complete. Questions will focus on how children react if they see unkind behaviour happening. Each interview is expected to last for around twenty minutes.

All children's answers will be confidential and individual children's responses will not be shared with school staff. However, general information based on the results of the whole group of children may be provided. Only children who have parental/carer permission and who themselves agree to participate, will be involved in the study. Also, children or parents/carers may withdraw their permission at any time during the study.

I would like to assure you that this study has received ethics clearance from the Research Ethics Committee at the Institute of Education. Should you have any concerns or comments resulting from your child's participation in this study, please contact Sorcha Ennis at sennis@ioe.ac.uk or telephone me on 01702 212947.

If you are happy for your child to complete questionnaire and be interviewed **there is no need to** sign and return the form. However, if you **DO NOT** want your child to complete questionnaires and/or be interviewed please complete the attached form and return it to the school before …. . I would appreciate it if you would permit your child to participate in this project, as I believe it will contribute to furthering our understanding about children's development and will help schools manage friendships and unkind behaviour between children in the future.

Many thanks for your help with this matter,

Sorcha Ennis

Trainee Educational Psychologist

---

If you are happy for your child to complete the questionnaire and be interviewed do not return this form.

If you would rather your child was not involved in the study Please tick one or both options below:

1. I do not want my child **to complete the questionnaire** ☐
2. I **do not** want my child to be interviewed ☐

Child's Name (please print):.....

Parent/Carer Signature:..... Date:.....

**Appendix 12 – Child Consent Form**

Name.....

Class.....

I would like to talk to you about what you think and do if you see unkind behaviour happening. Is it ok if I ask you some questions about this?

Yes I will talk to you ☐

No I would prefer not to talk to you ☐

**Appendix 13 - Vignettes**

Boys' Vignettes

1. Simon and his gang of friends leave Jacob out from all the playground games of football even though Jacob really wants to play. Simon says he doesn't want Jacob to play as there are too many on the team.

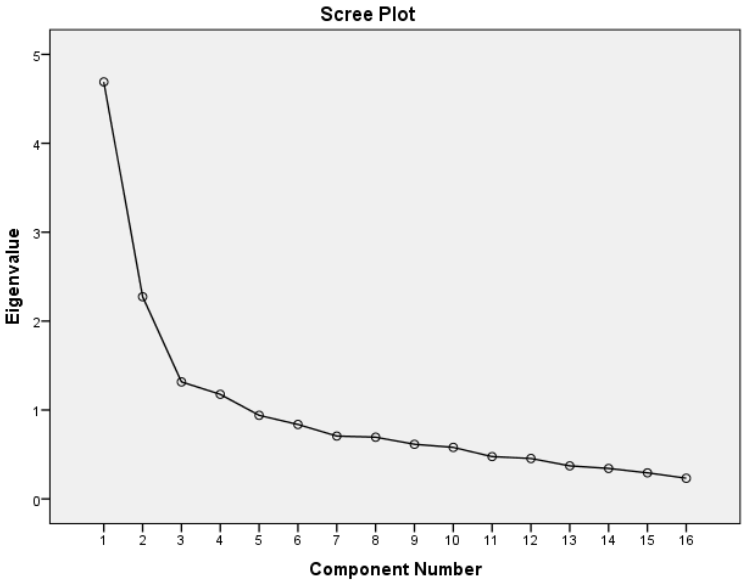
2. In the school toilets you see 2 boys holding the door so that another boy can't get out. The boys holding the door are laughing.

Girls' Vignettes

1. Ruth and her gang of friends leave Sarah out from all the playground games even though Sarah really wants to play. Ruth says she doesn't want Sarah to play as there are too many playing already.

2. In the school toilets you see 2 girls holding the door so that another girl can't get out. The girls holding the door are laughing.

**Appendix 14 - Scree Plot**



## Appendix 15 - Pattern Coefficients, Structure Coefficients and Communalities

| Item | Pattern Coefficients | | | Structure Coefficients | | | Communalities |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Component1 | Component 2 | Component 3 | Component 1 | Component 2 | Component 3 | |
| 1. It is ok to tease people to make them smile | **0.68** | 0.121 | -0.309 | **0.718** | -0.053 | -0.404 | 0.607 |
| 2. You should try and help someone who is being teased unkindly | -0.095 | 0.089 | **0.515** | -0.202 | 0.226 | **0.554** | 0.324 |
| 3. I tease other people to let them know I like them | **0.645** | -0.158 | -0.148 | **0.695** | -0.288 | -0.304 | 0.539 |
| 4. Slapping and pushing someone is just a way of joking | **0.413** | -0.038 | -0.382 | **0.488** | -0.19 | -0.467 | 0.387 |
| 5. If a person is sad I use teasing to cheer them up | **0.803** | 0.087 | -0.099 | **0.808** | -0.053 | -0.224 | 0.666 |
| 6. It is alright to be unfriendly to someone who says unkind things to you | -0.04 | -0.319 | **-0.567** | 0.11 | -0.449 | **-0.636** | 0.5 |
| 7. Making up unkind stories about someone who is rude is ok | 0.01 | **-0.66** | -0.208 | 0.144 | **-0.712** | -0.368 | 0.548 |
| 8. Children don't mind being teased because it makes them feel part of the group | **0.752** | -0.206 | 0.054 | **0.772** | -0.302 | -0.132 | 0.636 |
| 9. You should tell a teacher is someone is being teased | 0.094 | -0.137 | **0.727** | -0.019 | 0.024 | **0.677** | 0.488 |
| 10. Being teased can make a person feel happy | **0.745** | 0.145 | 0.134 | **0.699** | 0.068 | 0.033 | 0.535 |
| 11. It is alright to fight someone if they are unkind to your friends | -0.209 | **-0.629** | -0.295 | -0.064 | **-0.669** | -0.408 | 0.554 |
| 12. I only make fun of someone if I know they will find it funny | **0.637** | -0.016 | 0.086 | **0.624** | -0.088 | -0.034 | 0.396 |
| 13. It is ok to be unkind to someone if everyone else is doing it too | 0.367 | **-0.714** | 0.273 | 0.422 | **-0.702** | 0.035 | 0.666 |
| 14. I tease my friends about silly things that they have done | 0.205 | -0.074 | **-0.711** | 0.346 | -0.274 | **-0.767** | 0.637 |
| 15. It is not that bad if you laugh when someone is being teased | 0.175 | **-0.57** | -0.29 | 0.311 | **-0.665** | -0.458 | 0.567 |
| 16. I don't tease someone if I think it will make them feel embarrassed | 0.073 | **0.469** | -0.087 | 0.02 | **0.438** | 0.012 | 0.206 |

Note: Major loadings for each item are bolded.

## Appendix 16 - Unrotated Factor Loadings

**Component Matrix[a]**

| | Component | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 3. I tease other people to let them know I like them | .701 | .213 | .037 |
| 8. Children don't mind being teased because it makes them feel part of the group | .690 | .349 | .196 |
| 1. It is ok to tease people to make them smile | .675 | .313 | -.231 |
| 5. If a person is sad I use teasing to cheer them up | .664 | .469 | -.075 |
| 14. I tease my friends about silly things that they have done | .645 | -.272 | -.383 |
| 15. It is not that bad if you laugh when someone is being teased | .634 | -.364 | .180 |
| 4. Slapping and pushing someone is just a way of joking | .591 | .031 | -.192 |
| 7. Making up unkind stories about someone who is rude is ok | .500 | -.471 | .277 |
| 6. It is alright to be unfriendly to someone who says unkind things to you | .492 | -.483 | -.156 |
| 12. I only make fun of someone if I know they will find it funny | .472 | .405 | .094 |
| 2. You should try and help someone who is being teased unkindly | -.443 | .248 | .258 |
| 11. It is alright to fight someone if they are unkind to your friends | .358 | -.624 | .193 |
| 10. Being teased can make a person feel happy | .442 | .582 | .031 |
| 13. It is ok to be unkind to someone if everyone else is doing it too | .523 | -.056 | .624 |
| 9. You should tell a teacher is someone is being teased | -.297 | .335 | .536 |
| 16. I don't tease someone if I think it will make them feel embarrassed | -.145 | .266 | -.338 |

a. 3 components extracted.

**Appendix 17 – Subthemes and Codes**

Forms of defending
Defending by means of aggression
Defending by means of removing the victim from the situation
Defending by means of verbal persuasion/getting other children to play with victim
Verbal logical reasoning/compromise/warning
Defending by means of inducing empathy in perpetrator
Defending by means of getting an adult
Defending by means of comforting the victim after episode/offering practical assistance
Defending when victim is a friend
Defending when victim is not a friend
Defending when victim is neutral
Defending when a victim is disliked by defender
Defending when victim is disliked by all
Defending when victim is aggressive
Defending when victim is in some way weaker
Refusing to defend when victim is disliked
Defending directly and confronting perpetrator (non-aggressively)
Defending directly when perpetrator is disliked/unpopular
Defending indirectly without confronting the perpetrator
Defending directly when perpetrator is popular
Defending indirectly when perpetrator is popular
Not defending when perpetrator is popular
Defending when the perpetrator is a friend
Not defending when perpetrator is a friend
Defending when perpetrator is known to be aggressive
Not defending when perpetrator is known to be aggressive
Defending when supported by friends
Defending when alone
Defending using task as a vehicle
Shared history influences defending response
You might even get a friend out of this/practical advantage

Adults
Telling a teacher makes you look weak
Telling a teacher makes things worse/can lead to trouble
Telling a teacher is the good thing to do
Adults discourage getting involved
Adults can be tricked by the perpetrator
Adults can sort things out more quickly
Adults want us to try and solve low level problems
Adults don't want us to approach physical incidents
Adults don't sort things out properly/fully
Some adults are better than others at sorting things out – hierarchy of adult efficacy
Adults think it's naughty for us to get involved
Adults don't want us to get hurt
Child has had negative previous experience of teacher intervention
Adults think children getting involved just messes things up
Adults can impose sanctions
I might lose a friend if I tell on them
Conflicting messages from adults
Teachers can misinterpret the situation
Teachers shouldn't stop you from defending
Adults promote prosocial behaviour
Deference to adult when adult in proximity
It's the adult's job

We can't sort it out by ourselves

Teasing
Teasing is the same as being unkind
Teasing is different to being unkind
Teasing is verbal
Unkind behaviour is physical
Teasing hurts – 'words can hurt me more than punches'
Teasing makes you popular
Teasing is for the effect of an audience
Teasing is targeted specifically at a weaker person
People tease to look funny in front of their friends
People tease to form social bonds/lift mood
People tease to oust someone from the group
It depends on how the person interprets it
Tone of voice/facial expression determines whether teasing is kind/unkind
Teasing can relieve tension
Unkind teasing involves negative intent
Teasing out of jealousy/revenge
Teasing (kind/unkind)determined by shared understanding
Teasing is funny

Popular People
Popular people are subject to the same rules as everyone else
Popular people don't intimidate me
Popular people are mean/nasty/uncaring
Popular people think that they are 'all that'
Popular people kick you out of the group
Never join in with popular people
Popular people will spread unkindness
Popular people are too powerful to confront

Witnessing Victimisation
Child feels angry at perpetrator
Feels angry at the audience for reinforcing/notices bystanding and disapproves
It's not fair/morally right
Don't want to stick my nose in/permission
Child feels that it is their duty to help
Child remembers their own previous victimisation
Child notices a power imbalance
Child fears things will get worse if they don't intervene
Child does not want to become a target themselves
Getting involved can make things worse/can lead to trouble
Child feels embarrassed
Child feels guilty
Empathy/theory of mind
'They probably wouldn't listen to me'
Sometimes unkindness is justified
Child fears reprimand

Characteristics of perpetrator
Perpetrator has a previous history of aggression/violence
Perpetrator has friends with them
Perpetrators can get you into trouble deliberately

Characteristics of Defender
Has confidence that friends will back them up
Has confidence to keep trying even if people don't listen
Sees self as morally good person
Feels proud of themselves for defending
Feels guilty if they don't defend
Feel that they have to do something (even if it doesn't work)
Sees other people as inherently good
Treat other people as you want to be treated
Acts in a teacher/mothering role
Child feels sense of agency and competence
Optimism/confidence

Upon Defending
Fears that the perpetrator may manipulate the truth
Feels like they have done the right thing
Severity of unkind act influences defending response
Graded response to defending
History of success at defending
History of lack of success at defending

Values
Child values fairness/kindness
On some occasions it is justified to be unkind to people
It is never ok to be unkind to someone
A true friend sticks up for people
Values importance of standing up for self
Survival of the fittest
Defending gets you respect
Treat others as you would like to be treated
Parental values influence behaviour
Defending gets you respect/makes you well liked

**Appendix 18 – Interview Transcript**

**Maria (defending) and Louise (defending)**

Interviewer: Ok, so this is...this is Maria and Louise. Ok, so, I'm going to show you a scenario and you have to tell me what you think you'd do if you saw something like this happen. Ok, so Ruth and her gang of friends, leave Sarah out from all the playground games, even though Sarah really wants to play. Ruth says she doesn't want Sarah to play, as there are too many playing already.
What do you think you'd do if you saw that happening? Would you get involved and try to sort things out? Or would you not get involved at all?

Louise: I'd get involved.

**Commented [S1]:** Defending when victim is neutral (Louise, D, N-G, N-I)

Maria: I'd definitely get involved.

**Commented [S2]:** Defending when victim is neutral (Maria, D, N-G, N-I)

Interviewer: You'd definitely get involved? And you'd get involved?
Ok, tell me why you think you'd get involved.

Maria: Because it isn't exactly fair that they'd, that they're, they're playing the game, and as she was saying, there's too many people. So if there's too many people, why wouldn't see just let, em, Sarah eh, join in and also em, because....it's just not fair on Sarah, that she doesn't get to play with the other children. Because she has the right to play with anyone and well, those people do - they do have the right not to play with someone. But it isn't fair.

**Commented [S3]:** Child feels that moral code has been violated (Maria, D, N-G, N-I)

Interviewer: Ok, so you think it wouldn't be fair?

Maria: Yeah.

Interviewer: If you saw something like this happening. What do you think you'd do?

Louise: Yeah. I think that's really unfair as well, because you don't just leave someone out and then play with loads of other people. It's only one more

people - person. It doesn't make a difference - it's just another person, added to the game.

Commented [S4]: Child feels that moral code has been violated (Louise, D, N-G, N-I)

Interviewer: So you think it wouldn't be a - - that much of a difference to let her play? So what would you say or do to try and help?

Maria: Em, I wouldn't start arguing, I'd probably just say to Ruth that it can - - can she just join in because it doesn't make a diff - - as Louise was saying, it doesn't make a difference if one person is just joining in. Because she was saying that there's too many people playing, so it doesn't really make a difference if one more person is going into the game.

Commented [S5]: Defending by means of verbal persuasion/getting other children to play with victim (Maria, D, N-G, N-I)

Verbal logical reasoning/compromise/warning (Maria, D, N-G, N-I)

Defending directly and confronting perpetrator (non-aggressively) (Maria, D, N-G, N-I)

Interviewer: Ok. What do you think you'd do or say?

Louise: I'd say that it's not really fair, you should always let people play with you.

Interviewer: You'd say that to Ruth?

Louise: Yeah.

Interviewer: Ok, em what about if Sarah was one of your best friends, and she was being left out? What do you think you'd do then?

Louise: If they weren't letting her play, I'd let her play with us. And if she really wanted to play that game, we'd play the same game.

Commented [S6]: Defending when victim is a friend (Louise, D, N-G, N-I)

Defending indirectly without confronting the perpetrator (Louise, D, N-G, N-I)

Defending by means of verbal persuasion/getting other children to play with victim (Louise, D, N-G, N-I)

Interviewer: Ok, so you'd go with all of your friends and play the same game somewhere else?

Louise: Yeah, so she doesn't feel left out. So she can play the same game.

Interviewer: Ok. What would you do if Sarah was one of your good friends?

Maria: Well, if she was one of my good friends then I'd em.... I'm going to say,

stick up for her and actually em, let her play what she wants to play and as Louise was saying, I'd try to play the same game as she was, but if she wants to go with them, then I'd definitely, again go with them and say that - - 'can we please join in as well', so it's all of us and it's...

Interviewer: Ok. And what about if you didn't really like Sarah? And you saw her being left out? What do you think you'd do then?

Maria: Em...even if I didn't really like Sarah, I wouldn't show that I didn't like her... I wouldn't take sides,
I'd still go and em, speak to Ruth about it, and then em.... and then I wouldn't - - even if I didn't like her, I would play with her. And then if she wasn't, like, staying with me or if she was being mean, then I'd just ask her that - - 'ok, what do you want to do then? Because if you're not going to be - - if you're not going to, em...do the right thing and you're not going to em, stay with us because we're trying to pl - - we're trying to em, not let you feel left out', then I'd just...

Interviewer: Ok, and what do you think you'd do if you saw Sarah being left out, but you didn't really like Sarah? But she was being left out? What do you think you'd do?

Louise: I'd still help her because it doesn't matter if you don't like someone, they still need someone to play with. You can't leave someone on their own. And as Maria said, if they were getting bossy with me,
I'd just say, 'we've tried to help you, if you don't want to play with Ruth, but we've tried and if you want to, you can play with us' but.

Interviewer: So you'd - - even if you didn't like her, you'd still give her the chance to come and play with you and your friends.

Louise: Yeah.

Interviewer: what about if nobody in the class liked Sarah? What do you think you'd do then?

**Commented [S7]:** Defending when victim is a friend (Maria, D, N-G, N-I)

Defending indirectly without confronting the perpetrator (Maria, D, N-G, N-I)

Defending by means of verbal persuasion/getting other children to play with victim (Maria, D, N-G, N-I)

**Commented [S8]:** Defending directly and confronting perpetrator (non-aggressively) (Maria, D, N-G, N-I)

Defending when a victim is disliked by defender (Maria, D, N-G, N-I)

**Commented [S9]:** It's not fair/morally right (Louise, D, N-G, N-I)

Defending when victim is disliked by defender (Louise, D, N-G, N-I)

Maria: Em... I would try and sort it out. And I'd maybe take her to, em... I might take her to some of my friends and em, just kind of see if they got on well with her. And if they don't then I would ask her to - - ask her what she wants to do, who she wants to play with and then I would try to, ask those people, just for today can you please stay with her and be kind to her.

**Commented [S10]:** Defending when victim is disliked by all (Maria, D, N-G, N-I)

Defending by means of verbal persuasion/getting other children to play with victim (Maria, D, N-G, N-I)

Interviewer: Ok, and what do you think you'd do if nobody in the class likes Sarah?

Louise: I'd still try to let her play with us. Or if she - - I'd ask her who she wanted to play with until - like Maria said to try and sort out someone to st - - for her to play with.

**Commented [S11]:** Defending when victim is disliked by all (Louise, D, N-G, N-I)

Defending by means of verbal persuasion/getting other children to play with victim (Louise, D, N-G, N-I)

Interviewer: Ok. So you'd still try to help even if nobody really liked her. Em, what about if Ruth was a really popular girl, what do you think you'd do then?

Louise: Well it doesn't really matter if you're popular or not, you can still play with anyone. She - - if Sarah wants to play with her, then Ruth should let her play with her.

**Commented [S12]:** Popular people are subject to the same rules as everyone else (Louise, D, N-G, N-I)

Maria: Yeah, I think I would ask her that, 'Ok, on some days can you play with your friends, and some days can you play with Ruth' because eh, if she's popular, then she must have a lot of em, people that she, em, likes to play with, so eh, I would just ask her that. 'Can you kind of sort it out? And can you some days, even if it's just at break times or something, em, stay with Ruth just to not make her feel left out?'

**Commented [S13]:**
Defending by means of verbal persuasion/getting other children to play with victim (Maria, D, N-G, N-I)

Verbal logical reasoning/compromise/warning (Maria, D, N-G, N-I)

Defending by means of inducing empathy in perpetrator (Maria, D, N-G, N-I)

Defending directly and confronting perpetrator (non-aggressively) (Maria, D, N-G, N-I)

Interviewer: Stay with Sarah? The gi - -

Maria: Oh! Sarah, sorry, sorry! Yeah.

Interviewer: To make her not feel left out? Ok yeah. What about if Ruth - so the girl who won't let Sarah play - what about if Ruth was unpopular? What do you think you'd do then?

Louise: Then she does - - then she doesn't have any excuse not to play with Sarah. If she's unpopular and doesn't have any friends, then it's someone she can actually play with.

Commented [S14]:
You might even get a friend out of this (Louise, D, N-G, N-I)

Maria: Yeah, so I would actually help her - - not help her but it would give her peop - - it would kind of give her, em... a kind of like, hope, that someone does like her if she's an unpopular - - so that - - so people would actually - - she might like be, em - - kind of have this, em - - I don't know how to explain it, but she might think that someone does actually like her, and she might start playing with her, so she might... So it would be an opportunity for her to make a friend.

Maria: Yeah.

Interviewer: Maybe? What would you say to her, do you think? What would you say to Ruth?

Louise: 'You don't have any right to say that she can't play with you if you don't have anyone else to play with'. That it's someone that you can play with, you might as well take the opportunity. It might be a friend that you've found that will be a lifetime friend.

Commented [S15]: You might even get a friend out of this. (Louise, D, N-G, N-I)

It's not fair/morally right (Louise, D, N-G, N-I)

Interviewer: And what would you say to her?

Maria: Yeah. I'd say something similar to Louise. But I would probably say that you don't have an excuse not to play with her. Not in like, a rude way, but I'd just say to her it's an - an opportunity in gaining a friend. Because you don't - - if you're not popular, and you don't have anyone to play with, it's - - she does have the right to play with you, if she doesn't have anyone to play with and you don't, because it will - as Louise was saying - it will be an opportunity and she might be your best friends for life.

Commented [S16]: You might even get a friend out of this. (Maria, D, N-G, N-I)

Interviewer: What about if there was a grown up nearby? What would you do then?

Louise: I'd help... I'd help Sarah out first, and if Ruth still wasn't allowing Sarah

to play, and Sarah didn't want to play with us, I'd go over to a teacher and ask them for help. And maybe get them to ask Ruth if they could play with her.

Commented [S17]:
Graded response (Louise, D, N-G, N-I)

Interviewer: Ok, and what would you do?

Maria: Em, I wouldn't talk to the teacher about the situation without, em, Sarah's em - I'm going to Sarah permission, but I would talk to her and - - first I'd st - - I'd try to sort it out, but if no one was like....em....going with what I was saying, then I'd, em, I'd go to the teacher and ask them... that, 'this isn't working well. Can you please try to sort this out, because they won't listen to me' or whatever is happening.

Commented [S18]: Has confidence to keep trying even if people don't listen (Maria, D, N-G, N-I)

Don't want to stick my nose in/permission (Maria, D, N-G, N-I)

Interviewer: So, you'd try yourself first - -

Maria: Yeah.

Interviewer: and then if it didn't work, you'd go and ask for the adults help?

Maria: Yeah.

Interviewer: Ok. What about this one. So it's a bit different. In the school toilets, you see two girls holding the door so that another girl can't get out - so she can't get out of the cubicle. The girls holding the door are laughing. What do you think you'd do if you saw something like that happening?

Maria: Em...

Interviewer: would you get involved? Or would you not get involved?

Maria: I'd kind - -

Louise: I'd get involved.

Maria: I'd kind of do both. I wouldn't get involved with them, but I - I would get involved and I would talk to someone - eh the teacher about it,

So that they would sort it out, because I would not be able to sort that out by myself - -

Commented [S19]: Defending by means of getting an adult (Maria, D, N-G, N-I)

Interviewer: Em, why - why would you not try and get involved with this one yourself? Why do you think you wouldn't be able to sort that one out?

Maria: Em... Because if there's two girls, two against one wouldn't help.

Interviewer: Oh, ok.

Maria: But - - and obviously if two - - both of them have, going to say more Strength than me, so they might start letting if out of me and I wouldn't want that but... I would definitely get involved and tell someone about it. I em, so that - - because it's not fair on the girl that's actually, em. being kind of locked up. So...

Interviewer: Ok, so you'd go and tell an adult, you think? And what would you do Louise?

Louise: Go over to the two girls that were... em,
Holding the door so that the other person couldn't get out and say, 'why are you doing this?' And, 'what's the reason? There is no reason that you should be doing this'.

Commented [S20]: Verbal logical reasoning/compromise/warning (Louise, D, N-G, N-I)

Interviewer: So, you'd go and try and talk to them, you think? And try and sort it out?

Louise: And try and get out of them what they're trying to do.

Interviewer: Ok, and what about if em.. If the - the person who was inside - the person who was locked in - was not a popular person?

Maria: Em... I would go to the girls holding the door. I would say to them if that was you inside, locked and you could hear them laughing at you, em... I would...I would definitely, em... Try to tell them that it wouldn't be fair if you were there in that situation and I bet you wouldn't like it and so I would try and talk - -

Commented [S21]: Empathy/theory of mind (Maria, D, N-G, N-I)

Defending by means of inducing empathy in perpetrator (Maria, D, N-G, N-I)

to make them understand that it isn't exactly a fair thing, because say you were unpopular, it wouldn't be nice, everyone taking - - teasing you about it and em...

Interviewer: Yeah. And what about if the two girls holding the door were really popular people? What do you think you'd do?

Maria: It doesn't... It doesn't matter if they're popular or not popular. They don't have any reason they should be doing it.

**Commented [S22]:**
Popular people are subject to the same rules as everyone else (Maria, D, N-G, N-I)

Interviewer: So you think - - would you still do the same?

Louise & Maria: Yeah.

Interviewer: You'd still do the same thing?

Maria: I think that if they're unpopular, or even if you're popular, you're equal so - - because actually the people that are more popular are the ones that aren't responsible about any - -

Louise: The ones that are sometimes not very nice.

Maria: Yeah. So... Because they - - I'm not talking - - I'm not saying this about everything, but they might think they're all em, bright and this and that and they might think that eh, everyone's going to be joining in with them, but really people don't like it and they wouldn't want to see that.

**Commented [S23]:**
Popular people think they are all that (Maria, D, N-G, N-I)

Interviewer: Ok. Em, have you ever seen anyone being unkind to somebody else? You don't have to say any names. Have you ever seen anyone being unkind to someone else, and you got involved to try and sort it out?

Louise: Yes.

Maria: Yes.

Interviewer: What did you see happening first?

Louise: Em, I think they were - - it was - - it's mainly calling names.

Interviewer: Ok.

Louise: Sometimes.

Interviewer: And what did you do to try and sort it out?

Louise: I think I went over to them and said, 'why are you calling this person, eh, there's no reason that you should be doing this, they haven't done anything wrong to you'.

**Commented [S24]:** Defending directly and confronting perpetrator (non-aggressively) (Louise, D, N-G, N-I)

Verbal logical reasoning/compromise/warning (Louise, D, N-G, N-I)

Interviewer: Yeah. And did - - were you able to sort it out ok? In the end?

Louise: Yeah, I think so. Em, I got a teacher and I think the person realised what sh - - they were doing wasn't right.

Interviewer: Ok, so you tried by yourself first? Did that not work when you tried by yourself first?

Louise: Well... they just went, 'why should I listen to you?'

Interviewer: Ok, and then you went and got the teacher?

Louise: Yeah.

Interviewer: And it was sorted out? Ok.

Maria: Em...

Interviewer: What did you see happening?

Maria: I think it was actually - - someone was getting involved with a fight and everyone was cheering them on and as soon as I saw it,

I backed off and I got a friend to stay there to make sure what was happening, and I literally ran to the teacher and eh, em...em...and I think I did get it sorted out in the end, and em...by the time I went it stopped so it wasn't really any point, but em...I kind of felt a bit - - eh, not proud, but I kind of felt that I did the right thing. And I did go to the teacher...em, because I did get it sorted out and it was ok in the end, so...

**Commented [S25]:**
Feels like they have done the right thing (Maria, D, N-G, N-I)

Interviewer: So when you saw a fight happening, you did try to get involved yourself?

Maria: No.

Interviewer: You went and got the teacher?

Maria: Yeah.

Interviewer: Ok. Em, what did you think when you saw the name calling?

Louise: Em, I thought, 'why are they doing that. They shouldn't be doing that, they know they shouldn't be doing it and that person hasn't done anything to them to make them call them names'.

**Commented [S26]:** Verbal logical reasoning/compromise/warning (Louise, D, N-G, N-I)

It's not fair/morally right (Louise, D, N-G, N-I)

Interviewer: Ok, and what did you think when you saw the fight?

Maria: I felt really embarrassed that - - well not embarrassed, but I felt really guilty about it. That I was standing there and I didn't even try to help, em stop them from even starting the fight. But then I felt kind of a bit em... I felt really,really angry at the people that started it. Because - - I felt angry at the people that were cheering them on, because I was thinking that, again, if it was them in that situation they wouldn't be laughing and they wouldn't be cheering people on. So...

**Commented [S27]:** Feels angry at the audience for reinforcing (Maria, D, N-G, N-I)

Child feels angry at perpetrator (Maria, D, N-G, N-I)

Empathy/theory of mind (Maria, D, N-G, N-I)

Interviewer: Ok, and em...what did you feel when you saw the name calling?

Louise: I felt really angry at the person, and I felt really sorry for the person who

they were calling names.

Interviewer: And did you worry about anything? When you got involved to try and help?

Louise: I was a bit worried, that they might start calling me names and start having a go at me.

Interviewer: But you still got involved? So what made you brave enough to still get involved?

Louise: Well, I felt like, if that person was in that situation they wouldn't like it. So they don't really have the right to do it. So... I felt like I should do something, because it's not right for them to do that.

Interviewer: Ok, and did you worrying about anything - -

Maria: Em..

Interviewer: when you go involved?

Maria: I was seriously, very worried. Because I was scared that if they might see me going to the teacher, they might start em, having a fight with me, and I wouldn't be able to do anything about it. But em...

Interviewer: But you were still brave enough - -

Maria: Yeah.

Interviewer: to go and get the teacher - -

Maria: Beca - -

Interviewer: what made you brave enough to do that?

**Commented [S28]:** Child feels angry at perpetrator (Louise, D, N-G, N-I)

Empathy/theory of mind (Louise, D, N-G, N-I)

**Commented [S29]:** Getting involved can make things worse (Louise, D, N-G, N-I)

Fears that they will get hurt if they intervene (Louise, D, N-G, N-I)

**Commented [S30]:** Empathy/theory of mind (Louise, D, N-G, N-I)

It's not fair/morally right (Louise, D, N-G, N-I)

**Commented [S31]:** Getting involved can make things worse (Maria, D, N-G, N-I)

Fears that they will get hurt if they intervene (Maria, D, N-G, N-I)

Maria: I thought that, 'I don't care if they start to have a go at me, because I should help the person that they're trying to have the fight with' and em... If someone would, would - - if they they would start fighting with me, I would hope that someone would actually think about it and they would go and help me, so...

**Commented [S32]:**
Thinks 'I'd want someone to do the same for me. (Maria, D, N-G, N-I)

Treat others as you would like to be treated (Maria, D, N-G, N-I)

Interviewer: So, you'd hope that somebody would do the same, if you were in that situation? Ok, em do you think an adult would want you to get involved to try and help if you saw something unkind happening?

Louise: Well, if it was a fight then I think they wouldn't probably want us to start - - to go over there and start getting into it and say, 'why are you doing this? Why are you doing this?
Stop! Stop!' Because they like - - not get involved and start cheering other people on. Because they might think that they should just go, and that we should just get the teacher and sort it out. Because, like.they don't want the other people to be getting hurt.

**Commented [S33]:** Adults discourage getting involved (Louise, D, N-G, N-I)

Adults don't want us to approach physical incidents (Louise, D, N-G, N-I)

Adults don't want us to get hurt (Louise, D, N-G, N-I)

Interviewer: Yeah, ok. Do you think an adult would want you to get involved?

Maria: It really depends who is it. Because if it's one of your really close friends, then the teacher would want you to kind of calm them down, and talk to them about it. But then of they're somebody that you completely don't know, they might not because em, I mean - - I did - - em I tried to help somebody out and a teacher did try to blame it all on, and I did get told off for it, so it really depends who the teacher is. Because some teachers would want you to do it. But then some teachers would prefer you to stay out of it and let them sort it out.

**Commented [S34]:** Adults want us to try and solve low level problems (Maria, D, N-G, N-I)

Conflicting messages from adults (Maria, D, N-G, N-I)

Child has had negative previous experience of teacher intervention (Maria, D, N-G, N-I)

Interviewer: Ok, so it depends on the teacher?

Maria: Yeah.

Interviewer: Ok and you said that that time you got blamed for - even though you tried to help, you still kind of got blamed? But would you still try to help now?

Maria: Yes, definitely.

Interviewer: Why would you still help even though you got blamed one time?

Maria:  Because I, I would hope that, em they would actually not be selfish and think about it. That they helped me and they got the blame for it, so.. We shouldn't actually..we should stop this, and we should not do this because em - - I would, I would still carry on because em, I wouldn't want people to feel that no one cares for them. Because I would want to help people and sort it out. Also, they say that you should treat other people as you want to be treated. So...

**Commented [S35]:** Treat other people as you want to be treated (Maria, D, N-G, N-I)

Interviewer: So you'd do that?

Maria: Yeah.

Interviewer: Ok. Em, is teasing the same as being unkind, do you think?

Maria: In some cases - -

Louise: It is, yeah.

Maria: if you're with your, like - - if I'm - - if I'm with Louise I sometimes - - I don't tease her in a mean way, but I kind of, em...

Louise: Joke around.

Maria: Yeah. Joke around. Like...em, like - - but some teasing is really horrible and it is the same as being unkind because some people tease people for em, what they do, how they do it. If they forget something, or if they made mistake. But then like, some people - like my sister - she jokes around with me for really silly mistakes I did, and that isn't something you should take seriously, but some people do take it seriously, so again - it depends on who it is. Because some people always take some things seriously and some people would take it as a joke.

**Commented [S36]:** It depends on how the person interprets it (Maria, D, N-G, N-I)

Interviewer: Ok, so it depends on the person?

Louise: I think that...when you're being unkind - fighting can be included in that - but teasing isn't fighting.

Interviewer: Ok.

Louise: Teasing is... I think teasing is words and unkindness is... all types of being rude.

Commented [S37]: Teasing is different to being unkind (Louise, D, N-G, N-I)

Interviewer: Ok, em how can you - - how can you tell if teasing is kind teasing, or unkind teasing?

Maria: You can tell in the sou - - in the way they say it. Because if they...if they be doing it in a horrible way, then they would em, be doing it in a kind of more different tone, to what they would be doing - to what they would be doing if it was a joke. Like if my sister teases me, she doesn't do it em - - she would already say to me that, em, 'I don't mean it'. So - - and it's kind of in their tone. Because if they, say it in an - - em - - em - - you can kind of tell if they are saying it in a really, em...jokey way, or if they are really meaning it.

Commented [S38]: Tone of voice/facial expression determines whether teasing is kind/unkind (Maria, D, N-G, N-I)

Louise: Yeah.

Interviewer: Can you tell by their tone.

Louise: Because if...like if it was nice - - if it was unkind teasing, like, if they said, 'you're stupid' they'd say like, 'YOURE STUPID' in a really attitudey way, but if it was like a nice way, it would be like, 'oh you're so stupid sometimes!' So I feel it's like, the tone of voice that they use.

Commented [S39]: Tone of voice/facial expression determines whether teasing is kind/unkind (Louise, D, N-G, N-I)

Interviewer: And that's - that's what makes the difference?

Louise: Yeah.

Interviewer: Ok, em, why do you think children sometimes tease on another?

Louise: In a nice way or an unkind way?

Interviewer: Em, we can do both. In a nice way first. Why do you think children tease one another in a nice way?

Maria: Em, I sometimes do it if she's like upset or if she's hurt herself, so I did it to her yesterday because she fell - - I was thinking of making her forget about it and so I was like saying to her, 'oh you're so silly sometimes, you shouldn't have some that' and stuff like that. But then em... Some people do it just because they're like that and they like making people laugh. But then it's always - - sometimes lead to bad situation because as I was saying - - some people take it seriously, some people don't.

**Commented [S40]:**
Teasing can relieve tension/lift mood (Maria, D, N-G, N-I)

Interviewer: Ok. And em - - so why do you think children sometimes tease each other in an unkind way?

Louise: Because sometimes people are like that I think. Some people are that way and they feel like they're, they're the - - they're really big headed and they feel like they're the best and they're never going to get into trouble for anything they say and I - - they could say whatever they want. They - - I think they feel like that, and they feel like, 'oh, I won't get in trouble for saying that' - -

Maria: All - -

Louise: ' it's just a silly little word'

Maria: Also, can I just add that, some people do it because they've had it done to themselves, so they feel that, 'if I got it done to myself, why should I...why should I let people be happy and let - - what - - because I felt like that, so why should I make other people feel like that?' Because some people - as Louise was saying - they're just like that and they won't get into trouble and it's just a little word. And if - - just by saying it it won't make a difference, but they don't know how bi - - how much of a big difference it does make

**Commented [S41]:**
Teasing out of jealousy/revenge (Maria, D, N-G, N-I)

**Appendix 19 - Skewness, Kurtosis and Kolmogorov-Smirnov Values for Unkind Behaviour Scale Scores**

*Tests of Normality for Behavioural Tendency as Measured by the Unkind Behaviour Questionnaire*

| Behavioural Tendency | Mean | SD | Skewness | Std. Error of Skewness | Kurtosis | Std. Error of Kurtosis | Kolmogorov -Smirnov |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Assisting the Perpetrator | 3.86 | 7.37 | 2.67 | 0.23 | 8.04 | 0.45 | 0.00 |
| Defending | 6.09 | 5.60 | 1.15 | 0.23 | 1.30 | 0.45 | 0.00 |
| Perpetrating Unkind Behaviour | 4.57 | 9.00 | 3.08 | 0.23 | 10.73 | 0.45 | 0.00 |
| Reinforcing the Unkind Behaviour | 4.50 | 5.22 | 1.52 | 0.23 | 2.32 | 0.45 | 0.00 |
| Remaining Distanced/Outside | 5.55 | 5.50 | 1.63 | 0.23 | 4.21 | 0.45 | 0.00 |
| Being Victimised | 4.29 | 6.33 | 2.08 | 0.23 | 4.79 | 0.45 | 0.00 |

## Appendix 20 Non-Parametric Correlations between Behavioural Tendencies

*Spearman Correlations between Behavioural Tendencies*

| | Remaining Distanced/Outside | Defending | Perpetrator of Unkind Behaviour | Being Victimised | Reinforcing the Unkind Behaviour | Assisting the Perpetrator |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Remaining Distanced/Outside | - | .692** | -.372** | -.245** | -.307** | -.440** |
| Defending | | - | -.243** | -.188* | -.125 | -.328** |
| Perpetrating Unkind Behaviour | | | - | .242** | .618** | .705** |
| Being Victimised | | | | - | .133 | .309** |
| Reinforcing the Unkind Behaviour | | | | | - | .604** |
| Assisting the Perpetrator | | | | | | - |

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

## Appendix 21 – Gender Specific Correlations for Unkind Behavioural Tendencies

*Pearson Correlations between Behavioural Tendencies according to Gender*

| Gender | | Remaining Distanced/Outside | Defending | Perpetrating Unkind Behaviour | Being Victimised | Reinforcing the Unkind Behaviour | Assisting the Perpetrator |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Boy | Remaining Distanced/Outside | - | .655** | -.310* | -0.185 | -.300* | -.332** |
| | Defending | | - | -0.187 | -0.062 | -0.061 | -0.2 |
| | Perpetrating Unkind Behaviour | | | - | .304* | .751** | .906** |
| | Being Victimised | | | | - | 0.221 | .317** |
| | Reinforcing the Unkind Behaviour | | | | | - | .765** |
| | Assisting the Perpetrator | | | | | | - |
| Girl | Remaining Distanced/Outside | - | .656** | -.301* | -0.262 | -0.256 | -.339* |
| | Defending | | - | -0.231 | -0.172 | -0.153 | -.357* |
| | Perpetrating Unkind Behaviour | | | - | -0.107 | .643** | .557** |
| | Being Victimised | | | | - | -0.128 | 0.168 |
| | Reinforcing the Unkind Behaviour | | | | | - | .555** |
| | Assisting the Perpetrator | | | | | | - |

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

*Spearman Correlations between Behavioural Tendencies according to Gender*

| Gender | | Remaining Distanced/Outside | Defending | Perpetrating Unkind Behaviour | Being Victimised | Reinforcing the Unkind Behaviour | Assisting the Perpetrator |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Boy | Remaining Distanced/Outside | - | .635** | -.347** | -0.167 | -.359** | -.389** |
| | Defending | | - | -0.207 | -0.049 | -0.12 | -0.198 |
| | Perpetrating Unkind Behaviour | | | - | .362** | .646** | .727** |
| | Being Victimised | | | | - | 0.225 | .444** |
| | Reinforcing the Unkind Behaviour | | | | | - | .608** |
| | Assisting the Perpetrator | | | | | | - |
| Girl | Remaining Distanced/Outside | - | .630** | -.342* | -0.244 | -0.186 | -.404** |
| | Defending | | - | -0.171 | -0.164 | -0.107 | -.374** |
| | Perpetrating Unkind Behaviour | | | - | 0 | .566** | .672** |
| | Being Victimised | | | | - | -0.039 | 0.09 |
| | Reinforcing the Unkind Behaviour | | | | | - | .574** |
| | Assisting the Perpetrator | | | | | | - |

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

## Appendix 22- Spearman Correlations Between Measures of Unkind Behavioural Tendency, Friendship Quality, Teasing Attitudes and Social Positioning across all Participants

*Spearman Correlations Between Measures of Unkind Behavioural Tendency, Friendship Quality, Teasing Attitudes and Social Positioning across all Participants*

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **1. Group Size** | - | -0.179 | -.250** | 0.141 | 0.092 | 0.076 | .225* | 0.116 | -.201* | -0.044 | -0.144 | -0.143 | -.191* | -0.184 | 0.075 | -.215* |
| **2. Remaining Distanced/Outside** | | - | .692** | -.372** | -.245** | -.307** | -.440** | 0.119 | 0.138 | 0.099 | .231* | .189* | .191* | .227* | 0.058 | .435** |
| **3. Defending** | | | - | -.243** | -.188* | -0.125 | -.328** | .255** | .239* | 0.094 | .344** | .247** | 0.129 | .274** | -0.02 | .429** |
| **4. Perpetrating Unkind Behaviour** | | | | - | .242** | .618** | .705** | 0 | -0.087 | 0.009 | -0.043 | -0.037 | -0.122 | -0.071 | 0.006 | -.276** |
| **5. Being Victimised** | | | | | - | 0.133 | .309** | -.194* | -0.045 | -0.131 | -.218* | 0.016 | -0.049 | -0.086 | 0.003 | -.242* |
| **6. Reinforcing Unkind Behaviour** | | | | | | - | .604** | 0.111 | -0.091 | 0.058 | -0.023 | -0.127 | -0.122 | -0.078 | -0.023 | -.215* |
| **7. Assisting the Perpetrator** | | | | | | | - | -0.071 | -0.034 | 0.039 | -0.042 | 0.055 | -0.127 | -0.019 | -0.007 | -.365** |
| **8. Percent Nominations (Centrality)** | | | | | | | | - | 0.075 | -0.082 | -0.036 | 0.049 | -0.04 | -0.041 | 0.003 | 0.086 |
| **9. Help-Aid** | | | | | | | | | - | .552** | .615** | .714** | .346** | .818** | -.241* | .331** |
| **10. Help - Protection** | | | | | | | | | | - | .462** | .553** | .315** | .716** | -.217* | .226* |
| **11. Security - Transcending Problems** | | | | | | | | | | | - | .524** | .439** | .784** | -0.129 | .313** |
| **12. Security - Reliable Alliance** | | | | | | | | | | | | - | .350** | .809** | -.238* | 0.184 |
| **13. Conflict** | | | | | | | | | | | | | - | .642** | -.291** | .276** |
| **14. Global Friendship Quality** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | - | -.265** | .307** |
| **15. Prosocial Teasing** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | - | -0.184 |
| **16. Disapproval of Unkind Behaviour** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | - |

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

## Appendix 23 – Gender Specific Spearman Correlations

*Spearman Correlations Between Measures of Unkind Behavioural Tendency, Friendship Quality, Teasing Attitudes in Boys (above the diagonal) and Girls (below the diagonal)*

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **1. Group Size** | - | 0.034 | 0.128 | 0 | -0.128 | 0.04 | 0.093 | .364** | 0.029 | 0.137 | 0.037 | 0.103 | -0.027 | 0.065 | 0 | 0.087 |
| **2. Remaining Distanced/Outside** | -.348* | - | .635** | -.347** | -0.167 | -.359** | -.389** | 0.008 | 0.101 | 0.07 | 0.215 | 0.108 | 0.12 | 0.151 | 0.172 | .342** |
| **3. Defending** | -.358* | .630** | - | -0.207 | -0.049 | -0.12 | -0.198 | 0.027 | .244* | 0.143 | .308* | 0.186 | -0.022 | 0.215 | 0.15 | .399** |
| **4. Perpetrating Unkind Behaviour** | 0.121 | -.342* | -0.171 | - | .362** | .646** | .727** | 0.239 | -0.029 | -0.063 | -0.143 | -0.061 | -0.169 | -0.136 | 0.066 | -.366** |
| **5. Being Victimised** | 0.205 | -0.244 | -0.164 | 0 | - | 0.225 | .444** | -.294* | -0.016 | -0.141 | -0.121 | -0.034 | -0.141 | -0.098 | 0.014 | -0.228 |
| **6. Reinforcing Unkind Behaviour** | -0.141 | -0.186 | -0.107 | .566** | -0.039 | - | .608** | .323** | -0.089 | -0.029 | -0.077 | -0.125 | -0.135 | -0.115 | -0.057 | -.321* |
| **7. Assisting the Perpetrator** | 0.278 | -.404** | -.374** | .672** | 0.09 | .574** | - | 0.08 | 0.07 | -0.012 | -0.023 | 0.077 | -0.136 | 0.001 | 0.016 | -.437** |
| **8. Percent Nominations (Centrality)** | -.293* | 0.215 | .413** | -.288* | -0.003 | -0.143 | -0.282 | - | -0.078 | 0.021 | -0.053 | -0.068 | -0.086 | -0.096 | -0.019 | 0.119 |
| **9. Help-Aid** | -0.148 | -0.041 | 0.033 | -0.099 | 0.034 | -0.033 | -0.156 | 0.249 | - | .616** | .696** | .764** | .287* | .851** | -0.117 | .319* |
| **10. Help - Protection** | -0.013 | 0.01 | -0.056 | 0.218 | -0.092 | 0.258 | 0.18 | -0.264 | .318* | - | .561** | .705** | .258* | .785** | -0.114 | 0.161 |
| **11. Security - Transcending Problems** | -0.059 | -0.063 | 0.149 | .303* | -0.245 | 0.171 | 0.076 | -0.124 | .357* | 0.235 | - | .707** | .361** | .847** | 0.077 | .254* |
| **12. Security - Reliable Alliance** | -0.085 | 0.15 | 0.203 | 0.08 | 0.231 | -0.048 | 0.095 | 0.251 | .580** | 0.191 | 0.112 | - | .314* | .883** | -0.034 | 0.142 |
| **13. Conflict** | 0.113 | 0.016 | -0.063 | 0.105 | 0.147 | 0.045 | -0.026 | -0.034 | 0.097 | 0.229 | .324* | 0.104 | - | .534** | -0.193 | 0.068 |
| **14. Global Friendship Quality** | -0.075 | 0.088 | 0.126 | 0.183 | 0.032 | 0.099 | 0.068 | -0.01 | .676** | .566** | .630** | .633** | .567** | - | -0.074 | 0.207 |
| **15. Prosocial Teasing** | -0.125 | 0.028 | -0.021 | -0.137 | -0.077 | 0.006 | -0.142 | 0.036 | -0.294 | -0.224 | -0.26 | -.377* | -0.249 | -.370* | - | -0.069 |
| **16. Disapproval of Unkind Behaviour** | -0.213 | .333* | 0.238 | -0.039 | -0.003 | -0.014 | -0.127 | -0.05 | 0.087 | 0.14 | 0.099 | 0.052 | .377* | 0.217 | -0.244 | - |

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

## Appendix 24 – Regressions Output

**Model Summary[c]**

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate | Change Statistics | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | R Square Change | F Change | df1 | df2 | Sig. F Change |
| 1 | .357[a] | .128 | .120 | 5.25041 | .128 | 15.963 | 1 | 109 | .000 |
| 2 | .507[b] | .257 | .229 | 4.91382 | .129 | 6.148 | 3 | 106 | .001 |

a. Predictors: (Constant), Gender

b. Predictors: (Constant), Gender, Percent_nominations_per_yeargroup, Global Friendship Quality, Group_size

c. Dependent Variable: Percent_Defender

**ANOVA[a]**

| Model | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Regression | 440.052 | 1 | 440.052 | 15.963 | .000[b] |
| | Residual | 3004.787 | 109 | 27.567 | | |
| | Total | 3444.838 | 110 | | | |
| 2 | Regression | 885.397 | 4 | 221.349 | 9.167 | .000[c] |
| | Residual | 2559.441 | 106 | 24.146 | | |
| | Total | 3444.838 | 110 | | | |

a. Dependent Variable: Percent_Defender

b. Predictors: (Constant), Gender

c. Predictors: (Constant), Gender, Percent_nominations_per_yeargroup, Global Friendship Quality, Group_size

**Coefficients[a]**

| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. | Correlations | | | Collinearity Statistics | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | | | Zero-order | Partial | Part | Tolerance | VIF |
| 1 | (Constant) | .370 | 1.516 | | .244 | .808 | | | | | |
| | Gender | 4.040 | 1.011 | .357 | 3.995 | .000 | .357 | .357 | .357 | 1.000 | 1.000 |
| 2 | (Constant) | -4.906 | 3.684 | | -1.332 | .186 | | | | | |
| | Gender | 2.224 | 1.176 | .197 | 1.891 | .061 | .357 | .181 | .158 | .648 | 1.544 |
| | Group_size | -.236 | .134 | -.169 | -1.756 | .082 | -.266 | -.168 | -.147 | .758 | 1.319 |
| | Percent_nominations_per_yeargroup | 1.919 | .498 | .326 | 3.855 | .000 | .324 | .351 | .323 | .981 | 1.020 |
| | Global Friendship Quality | .316 | .207 | .142 | 1.532 | .128 | .255 | .147 | .128 | .821 | 1.218 |

a. Dependent Variable: Percent_Defender

**Excluded Variables[a]**

| Model | | Beta In | t | Sig. | Partial Correlation | Collinearity Statistics | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | Tolerance | VIF | Minimum Tolerance |
| 1 | Group_size | -.123[b] | -1.204 | .231 | -.115 | .769 | 1.300 | .769 |
| | Percent_nominations_per_yeargroup | .304[b] | 3.566 | .001 | .325 | .996 | 1.004 | .996 |
| | Global Friendship Quality | .127[b] | 1.289 | .200 | .123 | .822 | 1.216 | .822 |

a. Dependent Variable: Percent_Defender

b. Predictors in the Model: (Constant), Gender

**Collinearity Diagnostics[a]**

| Model | Dimension | Eigenvalue | Condition Index | Variance Proportions | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | (Constant) | Gender | Group_size | Percent_nominations_per_yeargroup | Global Friendship Quality |
| 1 | 1 | 1.944 | 1.000 | .03 | .03 | | | |
| | 2 | .056 | 5.915 | .97 | .97 | | | |
| 2 | 1 | 4.615 | 1.000 | .00 | .00 | .01 | .01 | .00 |
| | 2 | .232 | 4.458 | .00 | .09 | .42 | .00 | .00 |
| | 3 | .109 | 6.506 | .00 | .05 | .06 | .94 | .01 |
| | 4 | .034 | 11.600 | .09 | .85 | .44 | .01 | .15 |
| | 5 | .010 | 21.571 | .90 | .00 | .07 | .04 | .83 |

a. Dependent Variable: Percent_Defender

**Residuals Statistics[a]**

| | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation | N |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Predicted Value | -.7662 | 11.8207 | 6.0597 | 2.84775 | 111 |
| Std. Predicted Value | -2.417 | 2.020 | -.011 | 1.004 | 111 |
| Standard Error of Predicted Value | .635 | 1.833 | 1.019 | .233 | 111 |
| Adjusted Predicted Value | -2.0132 | 11.2213 | 6.0398 | 2.87979 | 111 |
| Residual | -9.98429 | 15.02932 | .06544 | 4.81712 | 111 |
| Std. Residual | -2.032 | 3.059 | .013 | .980 | 111 |
| Stud. Residual | -2.064 | 3.138 | .015 | 1.004 | 111 |
| Deleted Residual | -10.29864 | 15.82161 | .08533 | 5.04912 | 111 |
| Stud. Deleted Residual | -2.096 | 3.279 | .019 | 1.016 | 111 |
| Mahal. Distance | .845 | 14.309 | 3.981 | 2.457 | 111 |
| Cook's Distance | .000 | .107 | .010 | .018 | 111 |
| Centered Leverage Value | .008 | .130 | .036 | .022 | 111 |

a. Dependent Variable: Percent_Defender

**Model Summary[b]**

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | .482[a] | .232 | .210 | 4.97261 |

a. Predictors: (Constant), Global Friendship Quality, Percent_nominations_per_yeargroup, Group_size

b. Dependent Variable: Defending

**ANOVA[a]**

| Model | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Regression | 799.062 | 3 | 266.354 | 10.772 | .000[b] |
| | Residual | 2645.776 | 107 | 24.727 | | |
| | Total | 3444.838 | 110 | | | |

a. Dependent Variable: Defending

b. Predictors: (Constant), Global Friendship Quality, Percent_nominations_per_yeargroup, Group_size

**Coefficients[a]**

| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. | 95.0% Confidence Interval for B | | Correlations | | | Collinearity Statistics | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | | | Lower Bound | Upper Bound | Zero-order | Partial | Part | Tolerance | VIF |
| 1 | (Constant) | -3.505 | 3.651 | | -.960 | .339 | -10.743 | 3.734 | | | | | |
| | Percent_nominations_per_yeargroup | 2.029 | .500 | .345 | 4.055 | .000 | 1.037 | 3.021 | .324 | .365 | .344 | .994 | 1.006 |
| | Group_size | -.352 | .121 | -.252 | -2.910 | .004 | -.592 | -.112 | -.266 | -.271 | -.247 | .958 | 1.044 |
| | Global Friendship Quality | .467 | .193 | .209 | 2.417 | .017 | .084 | .849 | .255 | .228 | .205 | .963 | 1.038 |

a. Dependent Variable: Defending

**Collinearity Diagnostics[a]**

| Model | Dimension | Eigenvalue | Condition Index | Variance Proportions | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | (Constant) | Percent_nominations_per_yeargroup | Group_size | Global Friendship Quality |
| 1 | 1 | 3.733 | 1.000 | .00 | .01 | .01 | .00 |
| | 2 | .165 | 4.763 | .00 | .14 | .83 | .01 |
| | 3 | .093 | 6.339 | .02 | .82 | .04 | .06 |
| | 4 | .010 | 19.368 | .97 | .04 | .11 | .93 |

a. Dependent Variable: Defending

**Casewise Diagnostics[a]**

| Case Number | Std. Residual | Defending | Predicted Value | Residual |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 79 | 3.122 | 26.85 | 11.3254 | 15.52463 |

a. Dependent Variable: Defending

**Residuals Statistics[a]**

| | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation | N |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Predicted Value | -1.9028 | 11.3254 | 6.0594 | 2.70264 | 111 |
| Std. Predicted Value | -2.966 | 1.942 | -.012 | 1.003 | 111 |
| Standard Error of Predicted Value | .490 | 1.810 | .904 | .281 | 111 |
| Adjusted Predicted Value | -3.1108 | 10.8502 | 6.0375 | 2.73842 | 111 |
| Residual | -9.14199 | 15.52463 | .06575 | 4.88407 | 111 |
| Std. Residual | -1.838 | 3.122 | .013 | .982 | 111 |
| Stud. Residual | -1.859 | 3.198 | .015 | 1.001 | 111 |
| Deleted Residual | -9.35055 | 16.29428 | .08765 | 5.07275 | 111 |
| Stud. Deleted Residual | -1.881 | 3.348 | .019 | 1.013 | 111 |
| Mahal. Distance | .076 | 13.587 | 2.993 | 2.602 | 111 |
| Cook's Distance | .000 | .140 | .010 | .021 | 111 |
| Centered Leverage Value | .001 | .124 | .027 | .024 | 111 |

a. Dependent Variable: Defending

**Model Summary[c]**

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate | Change Statistics | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | R Square Change | F Change | df1 | df2 | Sig. F Change |
| 1 | .357[a] | .128 | .120 | 5.25041 | .128 | 15.963 | 1 | 109 | .000 |
| 2 | .443[b] | .196 | .149 | 5.16103 | .068 | 1.762 | 5 | 104 | .127 |

a. Predictors: (Constant), Gender

b. Predictors: (Constant), Gender, Total_Help_protection_mean, total conflict mean, Total_security_transcending_problems_mean, Total_Help_aid_mean, Total_security_reliable_alliance_mean

c. Dependent Variable: Percent_Defender

**ANOVA[a]**

| Model | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Regression | 440.052 | 1 | 440.052 | 15.963 | .000[b] |
| | Residual | 3004.787 | 109 | 27.567 | | |
| | Total | 3444.838 | 110 | | | |
| 2 | Regression | 674.673 | 6 | 112.445 | 4.222 | .001[c] |
| | Residual | 2770.165 | 104 | 26.636 | | |
| | Total | 3444.838 | 110 | | | |

a. Dependent Variable: Percent_Defender

b. Predictors: (Constant), Gender

c. Predictors: (Constant), Gender, Total_Help_protection_mean, total conflict mean, Total_security_transcending_problems_mean, Total_Help_aid_mean, Total_security_reliable_alliance_mean

**Coefficients[a]**

| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. | Correlations | | | Collinearity Statistics | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | | | Zero-order | Partial | Part | Tolerance | VIF |
| 1 | (Constant) | .370 | 1.516 | | .244 | .808 | | | | | |
| | Gender | 4.040 | 1.011 | .357 | 3.995 | .000 | .357 | .357 | .357 | 1.000 | 1.000 |
| 2 | (Constant) | -1.459 | 3.306 | | -.441 | .660 | | | | | |
| | Gender | 3.502 | 1.114 | .310 | 3.144 | .002 | .357 | .295 | .276 | .796 | 1.256 |
| | Total_Help_aid_mean | -.073 | 1.259 | -.008 | -.058 | .954 | .226 | -.006 | -.005 | .388 | 2.581 |
| | Total_Help_protection_mean | -.972 | 1.099 | -.107 | -.884 | .379 | .126 | -.086 | -.078 | .526 | 1.901 |
| | Total_security_transcending_problems_mean | 2.635 | 1.138 | .306 | 2.316 | .023 | .318 | .221 | .204 | .444 | 2.251 |
| | Total_security_reliable_alliance_mean | .513 | 1.228 | .060 | .418 | .677 | .252 | .041 | .037 | .375 | 2.668 |
| | total conflict mean | -1.411 | .958 | -.150 | -1.472 | .144 | .078 | -.143 | -.129 | .741 | 1.350 |

a. Dependent Variable: Percent_Defender

**Excluded Variables[a]**

| Model | | Beta In | t | Sig. | Partial Correlation | Collinearity Statistics | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | Tolerance | VIF | Minimum Tolerance |
| 1 | Total_Help_aid_mean | .112[b] | 1.170 | .245 | .112 | .871 | 1.149 | .871 |
| | Total_Help_protection_mean | .040[b] | .428 | .669 | .041 | .938 | 1.066 | .938 |
| | Total_security_transcending_problems_mean | .220[b] | 2.355 | .020 | .221 | .879 | 1.138 | .879 |
| | Total_security_reliable_alliance_mean | .138[b] | 1.434 | .154 | .137 | .860 | 1.162 | .860 |
| | total conflict mean | -.050[b] | -.525 | .601 | -.050 | .882 | 1.133 | .882 |

a. Dependent Variable: Percent_Defender

b. Predictors in the Model: (Constant), Gender

**Collinearity Diagnostics[a]**

| Model | Dimension | Eigenvalue | Condition Index | Variance Proportions | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | (Constant) | Gender | Total_Help_aid_mean | Total_Help_protection_mean | Total_security_transcending_problems_mean | Total_security_reliable_alliance_mean | total conflict mean |
| 1 | 1 | 1.944 | 1.000 | .03 | .03 | | | | | |
| | 2 | .056 | 5.915 | .97 | .97 | | | | | |
| 2 | 1 | 6.836 | 1.000 | .00 | .00 | .00 | .00 | .00 | .00 | .00 |
| | 2 | .078 | 9.375 | .01 | .94 | .00 | .01 | .00 | .00 | .00 |
| | 3 | .031 | 14.739 | .05 | .01 | .03 | .02 | .01 | .06 | .61 |
| | 4 | .020 | 18.560 | .61 | .02 | .01 | .05 | .21 | .01 | .17 |
| | 5 | .014 | 22.463 | .33 | .00 | .00 | .56 | .34 | .01 | .15 |
| | 6 | .012 | 23.869 | .00 | .02 | .29 | .33 | .43 | .20 | .05 |
| | 7 | .010 | 26.699 | .00 | .00 | .66 | .02 | .00 | .72 | .01 |

a. Dependent Variable: Percent_Defender

**Residuals Statistics[a]**

| | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation | N |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Predicted Value | .3568 | 10.8201 | 6.0851 | 2.47594 | 111 |
| Std. Predicted Value | -2.315 | 1.910 | -.002 | 1.000 | 111 |
| Standard Error of Predicted Value | .677 | 2.549 | 1.257 | .316 | 111 |
| Adjusted Predicted Value | -.1235 | 12.2233 | 6.0950 | 2.52285 | 111 |
| Residual | -10.82008 | 18.00055 | .04000 | 5.04658 | 111 |
| Std. Residual | -2.096 | 3.488 | .008 | .978 | 111 |
| Stud. Residual | -2.228 | 3.542 | .007 | 1.006 | 111 |
| Deleted Residual | -12.22331 | 18.56845 | .03018 | 5.34803 | 111 |
| Stud. Deleted Residual | -2.272 | 3.759 | .011 | 1.024 | 111 |
| Mahal. Distance | .899 | 25.835 | 5.945 | 3.848 | 111 |
| Cook's Distance | .000 | .092 | .009 | .015 | 111 |
| Centered Leverage Value | .008 | .235 | .054 | .035 | 111 |

a. Dependent Variable: Percent_Defender

**Model Summary[b]**

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | .346[a] | .119 | .077 | 5.37495 |

a. Predictors: (Constant), total conflict mean, Total_Help_protection_mean, Total_security_transcending_problems_mean, Total_Help_aid_mean, Total_security_reliable_alliance_mean

b. Dependent Variable: Defending

**ANOVA[a]**

| Model | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Regression | 411.381 | 5 | 82.276 | 2.848 | .019[b] |
| | Residual | 3033.458 | 105 | 28.890 | | |
| | Total | 3444.838 | 110 | | | |

a. Dependent Variable: Defending

b. Predictors: (Constant), total conflict mean, Total_Help_protection_mean, Total_security_transcending_problems_mean, Total_Help_aid_mean, Total_security_reliable_alliance_mean

**Coefficients[a]**

| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. | 95.0% Confidence Interval for B | | Correlations | | | Collinearity Statistics | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | | | Lower Bound | Upper Bound | Zero-order | Partial | Part | Tolerance | VIF |
| 1 | (Constant) | -1.239 | 3.442 | | -.360 | .720 | -8.064 | 5.585 | | | | | |
| | Total_Help_aid_mean | .255 | 1.307 | .029 | .195 | .846 | -2.336 | 2.847 | .226 | .019 | .018 | .390 | 2.563 |
| | Total_Help_protection_mean | -1.172 | 1.143 | -.129 | -1.025 | .308 | -3.438 | 1.094 | .126 | -.100 | -.094 | .528 | 1.894 |
| | Total_security_transcending_problems_mean | 2.814 | 1.183 | .326 | 2.378 | .019 | .467 | 5.160 | .318 | .226 | .218 | .445 | 2.246 |
| | Total_security_reliable_alliance_mean | 1.087 | 1.264 | .127 | .859 | .392 | -1.420 | 3.594 | .252 | .084 | .079 | .383 | 2.609 |
| | total conflict mean | -.778 | .975 | -.083 | -.798 | .427 | -2.712 | 1.156 | .078 | -.078 | -.073 | .775 | 1.291 |

a. Dependent Variable: Defending

**Collinearity Diagnostics[a]**

| Model | Dimension | Eigenvalue | Condition Index | Variance Proportions | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | (Constant) | Total_Help_aid_mean | Total_Help_protection_mean | Total_security_transcending_problems_mean | Total_security_reliable_alliance_mean | total conflict mean |
| 1 | 1 | 5.913 | 1.000 | .00 | .00 | .00 | .00 | .00 | .00 |
| | 2 | .032 | 13.657 | .04 | .03 | .03 | .01 | .06 | .64 |
| | 3 | .020 | 17.111 | .62 | .01 | .07 | .19 | .01 | .15 |
| | 4 | .014 | 20.885 | .34 | .00 | .58 | .32 | .00 | .16 |
| | 5 | .012 | 22.024 | .00 | .26 | .31 | .48 | .21 | .04 |
| | 6 | .010 | 24.796 | .00 | .70 | .02 | .00 | .71 | .01 |

a. Dependent Variable: Defending

**Casewise Diagnostics[a]**

| Case Number | Std. Residual | Defending | Predicted Value | Residual |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 79 | 3.614 | 26.85 | 7.4228 | 19.42723 |

a. Dependent Variable: Defending

**Residuals Statistics[a]**

| | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation | N |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Predicted Value | .5699 | 9.5326 | 6.0905 | 1.93386 | 111 |
| Std. Predicted Value | -2.855 | 1.780 | .000 | 1.000 | 111 |
| Standard Error of Predicted Value | .550 | 2.547 | 1.199 | .355 | 111 |
| Adjusted Predicted Value | .1143 | 9.6097 | 6.0900 | 1.98522 | 111 |
| Residual | -8.03552 | 19.42723 | .03469 | 5.26689 | 111 |
| Std. Residual | -1.495 | 3.614 | .006 | .980 | 111 |
| Stud. Residual | -1.563 | 3.656 | .006 | 1.003 | 111 |
| Deleted Residual | -8.78535 | 19.88160 | .03517 | 5.52607 | 111 |
| Stud. Deleted Residual | -1.574 | 3.895 | .012 | 1.020 | 111 |
| Mahal. Distance | .163 | 23.707 | 4.955 | 3.791 | 111 |
| Cook's Distance | .000 | .067 | .008 | .013 | 111 |
| Centered Leverage Value | .001 | .216 | .045 | .034 | 111 |

a. Dependent Variable: Defending

**Model Summary[c]**

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate | Change Statistics | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | R Square Change | F Change | df1 | df2 | Sig. F Change |
| 1 | .357[a] | .128 | .119 | 5.25156 | .128 | 15.231 | 1 | 104 | .000 |
| 2 | .476[b] | .227 | .204 | 4.99249 | .099 | 6.537 | 2 | 102 | .002 |

a. Predictors: (Constant), Gender

b. Predictors: (Constant), Gender, Tot_mean_prosocial_teasing_factor1, Tot_mean_disapproval_of_unkind_behaviour_factor2

c. Dependent Variable: Percent_Defender

**ANOVA[a]**

| Model | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Regression | 420.050 | 1 | 420.050 | 15.231 | .000[b] |
| | Residual | 2868.205 | 104 | 27.579 | | |
| | Total | 3288.255 | 105 | | | |
| 2 | Regression | 745.907 | 3 | 248.636 | 9.975 | .000[c] |
| | Residual | 2542.348 | 102 | 24.925 | | |
| | Total | 3288.255 | 105 | | | |

a. Dependent Variable: Percent_Defender

b. Predictors: (Constant), Gender

c. Predictors: (Constant), Gender, Tot_mean_prosocial_teasing_factor1, Tot_mean_disapproval_of_unkind_behaviour_factor2

**Coefficients[a]**

| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. | Correlations | | | Collinearity Statistics | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | | | Zero-order | Partial | Part | Tolerance | VIF |
| 1 | (Constant) | .370 | 1.552 | | .238 | .812 | | | | | |
| | Gender | 4.040 | 1.035 | .357 | 3.903 | .000 | .357 | .357 | .357 | 1.000 | 1.000 |
| 2 | (Constant) | -11.207 | 3.700 | | -3.029 | .003 | | | | | |
| | Gender | 2.904 | 1.070 | .257 | 2.715 | .008 | .357 | .260 | .236 | .846 | 1.181 |
| | Tot_mean_prosocial_teasing_factor1 | .995 | .828 | .108 | 1.201 | .233 | -.020 | .118 | .105 | .932 | 1.073 |
| | Tot_mean_disapproval_of_unkind_behaviour_factor2 | 3.284 | .924 | .337 | 3.555 | .001 | .407 | .332 | .309 | .845 | 1.184 |

a. Dependent Variable: Percent_Defender

**Excluded Variables[a]**

| Model | | Beta In | t | Sig. | Partial Correlation | Collinearity Statistics | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | Tolerance | VIF | Minimum Tolerance |
| 1 | Tot_mean_prosocial_teasing_factor1 | .059[b] | .627 | .532 | .062 | .954 | 1.048 | .954 |
| | Tot_mean_disapproval_of_unkind_behaviour_factor2 | .319[b] | 3.403 | .001 | .318 | .865 | 1.156 | .865 |

a. Dependent Variable: Percent_Defender

b. Predictors in the Model: (Constant), Gender

**Collinearity Diagnostics[a]**

| Model | Dimension | Eigenvalue | Condition Index | Variance Proportions | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | (Constant) | Gender | Tot_mean_prosocial_teasing_factor1 | Tot_mean_disapproval_of_unkind_behaviour_factor2 |
| 1 | 1 | 1.944 | 1.000 | .03 | .03 | | |
| | 2 | .056 | 5.916 | .97 | .97 | | |
| 2 | 1 | 3.804 | 1.000 | .00 | .01 | .01 | .00 |
| | 2 | .139 | 5.236 | .00 | .25 | .45 | .00 |
| | 3 | .046 | 9.058 | .06 | .74 | .34 | .15 |
| | 4 | .010 | 19.037 | .94 | .00 | .20 | .85 |

a. Dependent Variable: Percent_Defender

**Residuals Statistics[a]**

| | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation | N |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Predicted Value | -1.8889 | 10.0565 | 6.0880 | 2.66531 | 106 |
| Std. Predicted Value | -2.994 | 1.488 | -.001 | 1.000 | 106 |
| Standard Error of Predicted Value | .639 | 1.920 | .938 | .249 | 106 |
| Adjusted Predicted Value | -2.3316 | 10.1079 | 6.0676 | 2.68708 | 106 |
| Residual | -9.72492 | 17.78825 | .29445 | 4.88640 | 106 |
| Std. Residual | -1.948 | 3.563 | .059 | .979 | 106 |
| Stud. Residual | -1.980 | 3.609 | .061 | .995 | 106 |
| Deleted Residual | -10.04406 | 18.25303 | .31489 | 5.04720 | 106 |
| Stud. Deleted Residual | -2.009 | 3.845 | .066 | 1.014 | 106 |
| Mahal. Distance | .731 | 14.531 | 2.972 | 2.526 | 106 |
| Cook's Distance | .000 | .108 | .008 | .016 | 106 |
| Centered Leverage Value | .007 | .138 | .028 | .024 | 106 |

a. Dependent Variable: Percent_Defender

**Model Summary[b]**

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | .413[a] | .171 | .155 | 5.14460 |

a. Predictors: (Constant), Tot_mean_disapproval_of_unkind_behaviour_factor2, Tot_mean_prosocial_teasing_factor1

b. Dependent Variable: Defending

**ANOVA[a]**

| Model | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Regression | 562.162 | 2 | 281.081 | 10.620 | .000[b] |
| | Residual | 2726.093 | 103 | 26.467 | | |
| | Total | 3288.255 | 105 | | | |

a. Dependent Variable: Defending

b. Predictors: (Constant), Tot_mean_disapproval_of_unkind_behaviour_factor2, Tot_mean_prosocial_teasing_factor1

**Coefficients[a]**

| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. | 95.0% Confidence Interval for B | | Correlations | | | Collinearity Statistics | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | | | Lower Bound | Upper Bound | Zero-order | Partial | Part | Tolerance | VIF |
| 1 | (Constant) | -9.488 | 3.756 | | -2.526 | .013 | -16.938 | -2.038 | | | | | |
| | Tot_mean_prosocial_teasing_factor1 | .663 | .844 | .072 | .786 | .434 | -1.011 | 2.338 | -.020 | .077 | .070 | .952 | 1.050 |
| | Tot_mean_disapproval_of_unkind_behaviour_factor2 | 4.127 | .896 | .423 | 4.603 | .000 | 2.349 | 5.904 | .407 | .413 | .413 | .952 | 1.050 |

a. Dependent Variable: Defending

**Collinearity Diagnostics[a]**

| Model | Dimension | Eigenvalue | Condition Index | Variance Proportions | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | (Constant) | Tot_mean_prosocial_teasing_factor1 | Tot_mean_disapproval_of_unkind_behaviour_factor2 |
| 1 | 1 | 2.897 | 1.000 | .00 | .01 | .00 |
| | 2 | .092 | 5.604 | .01 | .77 | .07 |
| | 3 | .011 | 16.599 | .98 | .22 | .92 |

a. Dependent Variable: Defending

**Casewise Diagnostics[a]**

| Case Number | Std. Residual | Defending | Predicted Value | Residual |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 79 | 3.683 | 26.85 | 7.9027 | 18.94731 |

a. Dependent Variable: Defending

**Residuals Statistics[a]**

| | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation | N |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Predicted Value | -2.1116 | 8.6767 | 6.0905 | 2.31385 | 106 |
| Std. Predicted Value | -3.545 | 1.118 | .000 | 1.000 | 106 |
| Standard Error of Predicted Value | .507 | 1.977 | .812 | .302 | 106 |
| Adjusted Predicted Value | -2.5894 | 8.6909 | 6.0699 | 2.34016 | 106 |
| Residual | -8.34495 | 18.94731 | .29202 | 5.11738 | 106 |
| Std. Residual | -1.622 | 3.683 | .057 | .995 | 106 |
| Stud. Residual | -1.640 | 3.717 | .059 | 1.005 | 106 |
| Deleted Residual | -8.52753 | 19.29759 | .31262 | 5.22143 | 106 |
| Stud. Deleted Residual | -1.653 | 3.975 | .064 | 1.024 | 106 |
| Mahal. Distance | .028 | 14.518 | 1.981 | 2.736 | 106 |
| Cook's Distance | .000 | .086 | .007 | .013 | 106 |
| Centered Leverage Value | .000 | .138 | .019 | .026 | 106 |

a. Dependent Variable: Defending

## Appendix 25 – Final Regression Model Output

**Model Summary[b]**

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | .542[a] | .294 | .273 | 4.77193 |

a. Predictors: (Constant), Tot_mean_disapproval_of_unkind_behaviour_factor2, Percent_nominations_per_yeargroup, Total_security_transcending_problems_mean

b. Dependent Variable: Defending

**ANOVA[a]**

| Model | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Regression | 948.488 | 3 | 316.163 | 13.884 | .000[b] |
| | Residual | 2277.133 | 100 | 22.771 | | |
| | Total | 3225.621 | 103 | | | |

a. Dependent Variable: Defending

b. Predictors: (Constant), Tot_mean_disapproval_of_unkind_behaviour_factor2, Percent_nominations_per_yeargroup, Total_security_transcending_problems_mean

**Coefficients[a]**

| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. | 95.0% Confidence Interval for B | | Correlations | | | Collinearity Statistics | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | | | Lower Bound | Upper Bound | Zero-order | Partial | Part | Tolerance | VIF |
| 1 | (Constant) | -14.891 | 3.414 | | -4.362 | .000 | -21.663 | -8.118 | | | | | |
| | Percent_nominations_per_yeargroup | 1.790 | .497 | .304 | 3.599 | .000 | .803 | 2.777 | .324 | .339 | .302 | .990 | 1.010 |
| | Total_security_transcending_problems_mean | 1.907 | .771 | .221 | 2.474 | .015 | .378 | 3.437 | .318 | .240 | .208 | .883 | 1.132 |
| | Tot_mean_disapproval_of_unkind_behaviour_factor2 | 2.995 | .875 | .307 | 3.424 | .001 | 1.260 | 4.730 | .407 | .324 | .288 | .877 | 1.140 |

a. Dependent Variable: Defending

**Collinearity Diagnostics[a]**

| Model | Dimension | Eigenvalue | Condition Index | Variance Proportions | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | (Constant) | Percent_nominations_per_yeargroup | Total_security_transcending_problems_mean | Tot_mean_disapproval_of_unkind_behaviour_factor2 |
| 1 | 1 | 3.858 | 1.000 | .00 | .01 | .00 | .00 |
| | 2 | .108 | 5.986 | .01 | .91 | .04 | .01 |
| | 3 | .022 | 13.192 | .08 | .05 | .91 | .31 |
| | 4 | .013 | 17.520 | .91 | .03 | .04 | .67 |

a. Dependent Variable: Defending

**Casewise Diagnostics[a]**

| Case Number | Std. Residual | Defending | Predicted Value | Residual |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 79 | 3.249 | 26.85 | 11.3458 | 15.50417 |

a. Dependent Variable: Defending

**Residuals Statistics[a]**

| | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation | N |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Predicted Value | -2.3093 | 11.3458 | 6.0785 | 3.07120 | 104 |
| Std. Predicted Value | -2.768 | 1.732 | -.004 | 1.012 | 104 |
| Standard Error of Predicted Value | .505 | 1.645 | .904 | .246 | 104 |
| Adjusted Predicted Value | -2.7340 | 11.0491 | 6.0501 | 3.09058 | 104 |
| Residual | -8.78071 | 15.50417 | .34665 | 4.64101 | 104 |
| Std. Residual | -1.840 | 3.249 | .073 | .973 | 104 |
| Stud. Residual | -1.860 | 3.326 | .076 | .991 | 104 |
| Deleted Residual | -8.97640 | 16.24958 | .37502 | 4.82215 | 104 |
| Stud. Deleted Residual | -1.884 | 3.509 | .080 | 1.006 | 104 |
| Mahal. Distance | .162 | 11.247 | 2.974 | 2.297 | 104 |
| Cook's Distance | .000 | .133 | .010 | .019 | 104 |
| Centered Leverage Value | .002 | .109 | .029 | .022 | 104 |

a. Dependent Variable: Defending

## Appendix 26 – Hierarchical Multiple Regression

**Model Summary[c]**

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate | Change Statistics | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | R Square Change | F Change | df1 | df2 | Sig. F Change |
| 1 | .357[a] | .128 | .119 | 5.25205 | .128 | 14.938 | 1 | 102 | .000 |
| 2 | .567[b] | .322 | .294 | 4.70149 | .194 | 9.429 | 3 | 99 | .000 |

a. Predictors: (Constant), Gender

b. Predictors: (Constant), Gender, Percent_nominations_per_yeargroup, Total_security_transcending_problems_mean, Tot_mean_disapproval_of_unkind_behaviour_factor2

c. Dependent Variable: Defending

**ANOVA[a]**

| Model | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Regression | 412.049 | 1 | 412.049 | 14.938 | .000[b] |
| | Residual | 2813.573 | 102 | 27.584 | | |
| | Total | 3225.621 | 103 | | | |
| 2 | Regression | 1037.327 | 4 | 259.332 | 11.732 | .000[c] |
| | Residual | 2188.294 | 99 | 22.104 | | |
| | Total | 3225.621 | 103 | | | |

a. Dependent Variable: Defending

b. Predictors: (Constant), Gender

c. Predictors: (Constant), Gender, Percent_nominations_per_yeargroup, Total_security_transcending_problems_mean, Tot_mean_disapproval_of_unkind_behaviour_factor2

**Coefficients[a]**

| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. | 95.0% Confidence Interval for B | | Correlations | | | Collinearity Statistics | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | | | Lower Bound | Upper Bound | Zero-order | Partial | Part | Tolerance | VIF |
| 1 | (Constant) | .370 | 1.567 | | .236 | .814 | -2.738 | 3.478 | | | | | |
| | Gender | 4.040 | 1.045 | .357 | 3.865 | .000 | 1.967 | 6.113 | .357 | .357 | .357 | 1.000 | 1.000 |
| 2 | (Constant) | -14.671 | 3.365 | | -4.360 | .000 | -21.348 | -7.994 | | | | | |
| | Gender | 2.089 | 1.042 | .185 | 2.005 | .048 | .021 | 4.156 | .357 | .198 | .166 | .807 | 1.240 |
| | Percent_nominations_per_yeargroup | 1.742 | .491 | .296 | 3.551 | .001 | .769 | 2.715 | .324 | .336 | .294 | .988 | 1.013 |
| | Total_security_transcending_problems_mean | 1.501 | .786 | .174 | 1.909 | .059 | -.059 | 3.061 | .318 | .188 | .158 | .824 | 1.213 |
| | Tot_mean_disapproval_of_unkind_behaviour_factor2 | 2.496 | .897 | .256 | 2.782 | .006 | .716 | 4.276 | .407 | .269 | .230 | .810 | 1.235 |

a. Dependent Variable: Defending

**Excluded Variables[a]**

| Model | | Beta In | t | Sig. | Partial Correlation | Collinearity Statistics | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | Tolerance | VIF | Minimum Tolerance |
| 1 | Percent_nominations_per_yeargroup | .304[b] | 3.448 | .001 | .325 | .996 | 1.004 | .996 |
| | Total_security_transcending_problems_mean | .220[b] | 2.277 | .025 | .221 | .879 | 1.138 | .879 |
| | Tot_mean_disapproval_of_unkind_behaviour_factor2 | .319[b] | 3.370 | .001 | .318 | .865 | 1.156 | .865 |

a. Dependent Variable: Defending

b. Predictors in the Model: (Constant), Gender

**Collinearity Diagnostics[a]**

| Model | Dimension | Eigenvalue | Condition Index | Variance Proportions | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | (Constant) | Gender | Percent_nominations_per_yeargroup | Total_security_transcending_problems_mean | Tot_mean_disapproval_of_unkind_behaviour_factor2 |
| 1 | 1 | 1.944 | 1.000 | .03 | .03 | | | |
| | 2 | .056 | 5.917 | .97 | .97 | | | |
| 2 | 1 | 4.779 | 1.000 | .00 | .00 | .01 | .00 | .00 |
| | 2 | .122 | 6.259 | .00 | .14 | .79 | .01 | .00 |
| | 3 | .064 | 8.618 | .04 | .81 | .13 | .06 | .03 |
| | 4 | .022 | 14.688 | .07 | .00 | .05 | .86 | .29 |
| | 5 | .012 | 19.854 | .89 | .04 | .03 | .06 | .68 |

a. Dependent Variable: Defending

**Casewise Diagnostics[a]**

| Case Number | Std. Residual | Defending | Predicted Value | Residual |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 79 | 3.146 | 26.85 | 12.0593 | 14.79069 |

a. Dependent Variable: Defending

**Residuals Statistics[a]**

| | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation | N |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Predicted Value | -1.8978 | 12.0593 | 6.0678 | 3.21507 | 104 |
| Std. Predicted Value | -2.517 | 1.881 | -.007 | 1.013 | 104 |
| Standard Error of Predicted Value | .630 | 1.634 | 1.009 | .209 | 104 |
| Adjusted Predicted Value | -2.2737 | 11.2963 | 6.0357 | 3.22955 | 104 |
| Residual | -9.05320 | 14.79069 | .35728 | 4.51923 | 104 |
| Std. Residual | -1.926 | 3.146 | .076 | .961 | 104 |
| Stud. Residual | -1.958 | 3.230 | .079 | .986 | 104 |
| Deleted Residual | -9.36046 | 15.59547 | .38946 | 4.75402 | 104 |
| Stud. Deleted Residual | -1.987 | 3.398 | .083 | 1.000 | 104 |
| Mahal. Distance | .858 | 11.444 | 3.951 | 2.149 | 104 |
| Cook's Distance | .000 | .114 | .010 | .019 | 104 |
| Centered Leverage Value | .008 | .111 | .038 | .021 | 104 |

a. Dependent Variable: Defending

**Appendix 27 – Table of Overarching Themes, Themes and Illustrative Quotations**

| Overarching Theme | Theme | Number of Times Raised | Number of Children | Illustrative Quotations (with subtheme in brackets) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Internal Aspects of Defending | Emotional Aspects of Defending | 52 | 27 | I felt really embarrassed that - - well not embarrassed, but I felt really guilty about it. That I was standing there and I didn't even try to help, em stop them from even starting the fight. (Maria, Interview 9, p. 10) (guilt)<br><br>I felt really, really angry at the people that started it. Because - - I felt angry at the people that were cheering them on, because I was thinking that, again, if it was them in that situation they wouldn't be laughing and they wouldn't be cheering people on.<br>(Maria, Interview 9, p. 10-11) (anger)<br><br>I think that children sometimes don't tell grown-ups because they're afraid that the grown-ups - - the bullies or the people that hurt them, might actually start to have, like, go and see their weaknesses on them - - they might come back to you and be like, 'what did you tell me off for??' and stuff like...(Catherine, Interview 3, p. 13)(fear) |
| | Defender Characteristics | 150 | 28 | I'd be like, 'don't lock him in because he could get really worried' (John, Interview 8, p.9) (empathy/theory of mind)<br><br>I'm confident with things like that, and I'm good with sorting out things.(Lisa, Interview 14, p.5) (agency/competence)<br><br>I would get involved and my friends wouldn't mind either. They'd just help...(Robert, Interview 10, p.10) (strength of friendship)<br><br>I had to be brave and do it for my friend (Patrick, Interview 14, p.12) (sense of duty) |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | You have to have your friendship and be kind and don't hurt people's feelings (Anthony, interview 5, p.4) (moral virtue) |
| Both Internal and External | Costs/Benefits of Defending | 132 | 30 | ...It's someone that you can play with; you might as well take the opportunity. It might be a friend that you've found that will be a lifetime friend.(Louise, Interview 9, p. 5) (social benefits)<br><br>Me and Kevin were quite good friends...but then we got really good friends - because he had helped me (Mason, Interview 6, p. 11) (social benefits)<br><br>'I knew it was the right choice and the right thing that I should have done'(Caroline, Interview 3, p. 9) (moral virtue)<br><br>'I kind of felt that I did the right thing' (Maria, Interview 9, p. 10) (moral virtue)<br><br>We can't deal about it by ourselves, because we're getting into trouble and they will not be in trouble, because they'll be saying 'no Miss we didn't do nothing', and the boy will be like this 'he did do something', so they'll believe the boys who is holding the door (Anthony, Interview 5, p.6) (adults can reprimand/misinterpret)<br><br>I think that children sometimes don't tell grown-ups because they're afraid that the grown-ups - - the bullies or the people that hurt them, might actually start to have, like, go and see their weaknesses on them - - they might come back to you and be like, 'what did you tell me off for??' and stuff like...(Catherine, Interview 3, p. 13) (telling an adult means people are more unkind to you) |
| External Aspects of Defending | Adult Influences on Defending | 169 | 32 | Sometimes they tell us to em - - 'If you can't sort it out yourself, come and tell us.' But sometimes em, like, if they're in a bad mood, they're like, 'Oh why are you going up? Sort it out yourselves. (Lisa, Interview 14, p.13) (adults give conflicting messages)<br><br>...we can't sort it out by ourselves. We can't say this, 'go to the tunnel, |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | change your card'. If we were a teacher, they'd let us change the cards because we'd be a teacher (Anthony, Interview 5, p.11) (adults have power that children do not)<br><br>I did - - em I tried to help somebody out and a teacher did try to blame it all on, and I did get told off for it, so it really depends who the teacher is (Maria, Interview 9, p.12) (adults can reprimand/misinterpret)<br><br>...sometimes with bullying, they don't tell anyone because, em...they don't want - - they're - they're scared that they're going to be nasty to them - the bully's going to be nasty to them more (Adam, Interview 10, p.17) (telling an adult means people are more unkind to you). |
| | Situational Influences on Defending | 182 | 32 | Well sometimes it depends on the person. If you know them really well and the way they're acting, you can tell. But if you don't really know them, you can't tell. That's why I would go to an adult, because I don't know them, and I don't know what they're doing. So I would go to them. But if it was someone I know really, really well, I would try and sort it out with them. (Susan, Interview 14, p. 8) (shared history)<br><br>Interviewer: ... what about if Jacob was somebody that you didn't really get along with? What would you do then?<br>John: I wouldn't care. I'd walk off.(Interview 8, p. 3) (characteristics of the child being victimised)<br><br>Interviewer: ... Why would you not get involved?<br>Lorraine: Because if she's popular, and she has other friends, ...I wouldn't go - go to her because she'd have a group who are just like, 'oh get away, it's none of your business', and I can't - - if - - but I'm not - - if it's just me then I can't really stand up to a group of people. (Interview 4, p.4) (characteristics of the child perpetrating)<br><br>Interviewer: And do you think adults would ever want you to get involved? If |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | you saw something unkind happening to someone else?<br>Zach: I think in some situations. Not if it's like - - not if it's like physical violence, because then you need to tell a teacher. But if it's just like, em - - I don't know, em ... If it was like, name-calling, or stuff like that. Stuff like, small arguments that you know, don't like, mean anything. But you know, have been taken too seriously. (Interview 7, p.12-13) (nature of the incident)<br><br>Benjamin: If there...was a teacher around, I would tell the adult.<br>Anthony: I would go straight to the teacher.<br>Interviewer: Ok. Why would you go straight to the teacher?<br>Anthony: Because we can't deal about it by ourselves, because we're getting into trouble. (Interview 5, p. 6) (presence/absence of adults) |
| | Teasing | 56 | 23 | Maria: You can tell in the sou - - in the way they say it. Because if they...if they be doing it in a horrible way, then they would em, be doing it in a kind of more different tone, to what they would be doing - to what they would be doing if it was a joke. (Interview 9, p.14) (interpretation)<br><br>...it makes them feel happy and joyful. Instead of being in a grumpy mood' (Interview 5, p. 15) (positive effects of teasing)<br><br>John (assistant): Yeah, teasing can hurt someone really bad.<br>Jonathan: But then it can hurt more inside. Like if you said something - -<br>John: Like, words can hurt me more than punches.<br>(Interview 8, p. 23) (negative effects of teasing) |

**Appendix 28 – Thematic Analysis of Teasing Data**

Teasing – 'break your sticks and bones'

From ideas expressed by children in the interviews it seemed that they discriminated between light-hearted teasing and unkind behaviours. Many children struggled to explain the difference between teasing and unkind behaviour, but very few reported that there was no difference – instead most children chose to distinguish between the two. They seemed to use a range of indicators to help them with this discrimination. Two main indicators (subthemes) were identified:

- interpretation
- the effects of teasing (positive/negative)

*Interpretation*

Many children seemed categorise an act as either (kind) teasing or unkind behaviour depending on how the 'tease' was delivered. In cases where the 'tease' was delivered in a friendly manner (e.g., by a friend, with friendly facial gestures or with friendly intonation) then the tease was perceived as being friendly in intent. For example:

*Lorraine (remaining distanced/outside): Yeah. Because, em...when you tease someone, you're like - - it could be a joke like, 'oh! Look at your hair, it's so long, like Rapunzel'. It's like, fun teasing [...] and being unkind is (alters tone of voice to seem mocking), 'ewww! Your hair is so long and pitiful, like Rapunzel'. They be - - it's a different manner. Because it's your - - when you're teasing, it's a fun tease. It's just like a quick joke or something. But if it's being unkind, then they're actually making your hair sound like it's awful and it's not being nice (Interview 4, p. 11).*

The subject matter of the teasing also seemed to be an important factor. Some children identified areas such as 'family' or 'height' which they felt were sensitive areas for them and so they would be upset if someone teased them

about this. Indeed, one of the boys referred to a shared understanding of vulnerabilities being used as a tool to cause upset, explaining how other children sometimes tease him about his family because they know he is likely to be upset by it. In this sense, shared understanding seemed to be an important determinant of whether the tease was kind or unkind in intent (i.e. a child who did not know him well may tease him in a kind way about his family without realising the negative impact it would have on him).

*The effects of teasing (positive/negative)*

The effects which follow a 'tease' also seem to be used as a sort of retrospective indicator to children as to whether the tease was kind or unkind. Many of the children identified the potentially hurtful impact of teasing and explained how verbal unkindness could be every bit as damaging as physical acts:

*John (assisting): Yeah, teasing can hurt someone really bad.*
*[...]*
*Jonathan (reinforcing): Yeah. It can like, hurt - - like, like people say like - punching, it does hurt - -*
*John: Well obviously it hurts!*
*Jonathan: But then it can hurt more inside. Like if you said something - -*
*John: Like, words can hurt me more than punches.*
*(Interview 8, p. 23)*

Or as expressed by Patrick (remaining distanced/outside) in the following comment:

*Patrick: Em....I think teasing is unkind. I mean there was a saying that, em 'break your sticks and bones' or 'break your bones' - -*
*Matthew: Sticks and stones - -*
*Patrick: ...that won't hurt me. I feel that's not true.*
*(Interview 14, p. 17)*

Children seemed aware that teasing could be used in a negative manner to acquire social dominance or assert one's position in the peer group. One girl

gave an example of how teasing could be used behind someone's back to force that person out of the group and reinforce the remaining alliances within the group. A few children referred to how teasing could be used in a negative way to make people more popular or create a sense of threat or intimidation:

*John: Because they just - some children just like to make themselves look hard and like try to make themselves look all funny and that. But they're really not and then that - - they try tease a person who's not that popular, but then like, really the person who's not that popular is probably more better than them, like. (Interview 8, p. 23)*

In relation to the positive effects of teasing, children also acknowledged that teasing can be used as a positive tool to lift mood or to strengthen relationships between friends – *it makes them feel happy and joyful. Instead of being in a grumpy mood' (Interview 5, p. 15) (*Anthony - perpetrating*)*. Maria (defending) explained how she used teasing strategically to cheer her friend Louise up when Louise had fallen over and hurt herself in the playground and stated *'I did it to her yesterday because she fell - - I was thinking of making her forget about it and so I was like saying to her, 'oh you're so silly sometimes, you shouldn't have some that' and stuff like that' (Interview 9, p. 15).*