Doctorate in Professional Educational, Child and Adolescent Psychology

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Capturing the educational experiences of deaf learners in mainstream secondary: Using their voices to inform practice

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Declaration

I, Stefanie Prior, confirm that the work presented in this thesis is my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated in the thesis.

Signed: ████████████

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Impact statement

This research provides an important contribution with it being the first known Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis study conducted by a deaf researcher exploring the lived experiences of deaf mainstream secondary school students in England. Additionally, it is one of few known studies to consider the role of educational psychologists (EPs) in relation to the academic and social inclusion of deaf students at school. The research illustrated deaf students require better support than they are receiving due to a lack of understanding and awareness of deafness in schools. Implications demonstrated the utility of self-determination theory within inclusive education, with emphasis on the access to appropriate co-produced support, as well as the celebration of difference and supporting sense of belonging.

Implications for schools:

- Schools should provide ongoing training for all teaching staff on effective support strategies to ensure the academic and social inclusion of deaf students.

- Schools should provide more in-depth training for those that teach deaf students.

- Schools should provide deaf awareness sessions for all school staff and hearing students which covers understanding deafness and its heterogeneity and the lived experiences of deaf students, including their emotional wellbeing.

- Schools should provide a flexible curriculum to deaf students in which they have autonomy over learning subjects that may be difficult such as foreign

languages as well as opportunities for any appropriate additional interventions or wellbeing support.

- Schools should provide deaf students with regular opportunities to meet with a key staff member e.g. form tutor or SENCO to check in with them and discuss their support.

- Schools should provide deaf students with opportunities to meet with deaf peers and deaf adult role models.

Implications for EPs:

- EPs are well placed to support schools with designing and delivering training for school staff on deaf awareness and supporting deaf students. This must be co-produced with deaf students and adults in the school community and in collaboration with Teachers of the Deaf (ToD).

- EPs should support schools in working with deaf students to support them in exploring and developing their deaf identity. This should include opportunities to meet with deaf peers and deaf adult role models to support their need for relatedness, autonomy and competence.

- EPs should support schools to promote an ethos of acceptance and difference. EPs are well placed to act as a supportive 'critical friend' to schools in the development of a more inclusive environment whilst navigating the social-political educational context.

Wider implications:

- There is an urgent need for clear government guidance for secondary mainstream schools in relation to inclusive education and importantly supporting deaf students. Schools, initial teacher training institutions and

educational professionals need clear guidance on developing awareness, relatedness, ethos and examples of good practice.

- Initial teacher training courses and other educational professional training courses should include training to support understanding of working with deaf students.

- There is a clear need for educational professional training courses to recruit and support the training of deaf adults. This will help to provide an increasing number of deaf adult role models within educational settings.

Abstract

Deafness is complex and profoundly misunderstood due to the heterogeneity of the deaf population and the dominant hearing society that we inhabit. Most deaf children and young people in the UK attend mainstream schools, yet they are arguably ill-served by the current ideology of inclusive education, and their voices are rarely heard. Research demonstrates that deaf students are at risk of academic and social exclusion at school, impacting their wellbeing and school experience. Few studies have elicited the perspectives of deaf students in mainstream secondary schools in relation to both academic and social inclusion in England. Additionally, there is limited research conducted by deaf researchers in the field of educational psychology. As a deaf researcher myself, the aim of this research was to explore deaf students' lived experiences of barriers and facilitators to academic and social inclusion in mainstream secondary schools in England. Whilst focusing on deaf students' individual stories of their lived experiences the aim was to generate rich understandings and provide implications for educational psychologists, school staff and other professionals. Using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis semi-structured interviews were carried out with 5 deaf students in different mainstream secondary schools within Greater London. Five Group Experiential Themes were generated: effective support and strategies, experiences of difficulties and barriers, difficulties with difference and relatedness, building a positive deaf identity and self-concept, developing deaf awareness and advocacy through co-production. Self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000) was a useful psychological construct to use as a theoretical lens to frame the facilitation of inclusion of deaf students at school. The findings illustrate that inclusive education for deaf students requires an emphasis on the access to appropriate co-produced support, in order to minimise

barriers to academic and social inclusion. As well as the celebration of diversity and difference and supporting sense of belonging.

Contents

List of abbreviations

BSL   British Sign Language

CRIDE   Consortium for Research into Deaf Education

DECP   Division of Educational and Child Psychology

EP   Educational Psychologist

FM   Frequency Modulated

GET   Group Experiential Theme

IPA   Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis

LA   Local Authority

NDCS   National Deaf Children's Society

PET   Personal Experiential Theme

SENCO   Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator

SEND   Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

SEND CoP   Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Code of Practice

TA   Teaching Assistant

TEP   Trainee Educational Psychologist

ToD   Teacher of the Deaf

UCL   University College London

UK   United Kingdom

US   United States

Chapter 1: Introduction

This research project aimed to capture the educational experiences of deaf children and young people in mainstream secondary schools in order to inform future inclusive practice in education. This introductory chapter presents background information on deafness and inclusive education, describes the context of this project, summarises the relevance of this research to educational psychology and presents the rationale.

1.1 Deafness and education

A person who is not able to hear as well as someone with normal hearing is said to be deaf. Deafness may be described as mild, moderate, severe, or profound. Most teaching and learning takes place through hearing, with 70% of deaf learners in England being taught orally (Powers, 2002), subsequently deaf children and young people may face particular challenges. Deaf learners as a population do not do as well as hearing children and young people at all examination test stages, suggesting that the education system may struggle to meet fully the needs of many deaf children and young people (Hendar & O'Neill, 2016). However, all deaf learners have the potential to attain and in many cases are already achieving as much as any other children and young people with the same cognitive ability, if they are given the right levels of support and access to the curriculum (National Deaf Children's Society, 2020b).

Deafness happens when one or more parts of the ear aren't working effectively. The National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS) provides some information on the main types of deafness (National Deaf Children's Society, n.d.). Sensorineural is deafness in the inner ear, which is permanent. Conductive deafness means that sound can't

pass efficiently through the outer and middle ear into the inner ear. Conductive deafness is usually temporary, but it can be permanent in some cases. Mixed deafness is when people have a combination of sensorineural and conductive. Deafness in one ear only is known as unilateral and in both ears is known as bilateral. Very few deaf children and young people have no useful hearing, most can hear some sounds at certain frequencies and loudness, and with the use of hearing aids or cochlear implants they are often able to hear more sounds. The challenges of communication have been at the heart of considering the needs of deaf children and young people, ensuring practices are inclusive in order for them to access learning and social interaction.

Hearing is measured in decibels, the level of a person's deafness can be described in terms of their decibel hearing level or by the terms mild, moderate, severe or profound. Based on the British Society of Audiology (1988) definitions of deafness, this is the decibel hearing level range each of these terms refer to: mild (21–40 dB), moderate (41–70 dB), severe (71–95 dB), profound (95 dB). There is often confusion over the terms hearing impaired, hard of hearing and deaf. Many individuals prefer the terms deaf and hard of hearing, because they are considered to be more positive, and it is the individual's choice which term they choose to use (National Association of the Deaf (NAD), n.d.). In this thesis research I will use the term 'deaf' when discussing literature and research regarding deaf children and young people, including when describing my participants. Deaf with a capital D refers to people who identify as a member of the Deaf community, sometimes referred to as Deaf culture. These individuals tend to use sign language such as British Sign Language (BSL) or

Irish Sign Language (ISL). Deaf individuals may choose to use assistive listening devices, read lips, use sign language and/or captioning.

Recent changes in communication and hearing technologies have had a significant impact on the demographics of deaf children and young people, and consequently on their needs. The challenges of communication have been at the forefront of considering the needs and inclusion of deaf children and young people. The impact of technology such as cochlear implants has enabled some of those who have a profound deafness to function as those who have a mild or moderate deafness (Archbold, 2015), therefore it is important to understand each individual's deafness to support them effectively. It is also important to understand and respect each deaf individual's experiences and preferences as some deaf individuals will choose not to use or wear assistive listening devices, preferring for example to use British Sign Language.

The Consortium for Research into Deaf Education (CRIDE) is a consortium bringing together a range of organisations and individuals with a common interest in using research to improve the educational outcomes achieved by deaf children and young people. CRIDE reports on its annual surveys of local authority specialist educational services for deaf children and young people. According to the CRIDE (2022b) United Kingdom (UK) wide summary, there are at least 52,798 deaf children and young people (including all types and levels of deafness) aged 0-19 across the UK. 77% of school-aged deaf children and young people are reported by CRIDE (2022b) to

attend mainstream schools, with 6% attending resource provisions in mainstream schools. This figure is hugely important for the rationale of this research project, due to the high percentage of deaf children and young people being educated in mainstream settings, and in all likelihood who are experiencing challenges in accessing learning and social interaction.

The deaf population is very diverse and there is a growing heterogeneity, due to differences in deafness, language acquisition and use, for example British Sign Language (BSL) and spoken English. In the UK, 88% of deaf children and young people mainly communicate using spoken language within the school setting, with 2% using British or Irish Sign Language. In addition, 7% use spoken language alongside signed support and the remaining 3% use another combination (CRIDE, 2021). Each language links to different cultural constructions and beliefs about who deaf children and young people are in relation to hearing majorities (Graham & Horejes, 2017). For example, those who are part of the Deaf community may view BSL as one of the main characteristics that differentiates Deaf and hearing people, thus two separate cultures the 'hearing world' and the 'Deaf community'. In addition, within the Deaf community, deaf children and young people may be understood to complement human diversity, with differences being accepted, accommodated and celebrated. Alternatively, deaf children and young people may be understood by some, mostly hearing people to be disabled, defined by their differences and seen as inferior to the non-disabled. These different perspectives on deafness can create very different educational experiences for deaf children and young people, impacting both their learning and social experiences at school (Nikolaraizi & Hadjikakou, 2006).

Most hearing people have little or no experience of deafness, which can make those who are deaf feel isolated. A recent literature review by the National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS) (2020a) found that studies vary in the reported prevalence of emotional wellbeing difficulties in deaf children and young people with variations from 11% to 63%, often reporting a higher rate of prevalence in comparison to hearing peers. Due to the heterogeneity of the deaf population, these results are difficult to generalise to the wider population. There is also limited, quality research in the area of mental health in deaf children and young people, mainly because previous studies are studying heterogenous samples with research measures that are not fit for use with such samples (Roberts et al., 2015). The NDCS literature review (2020a) reports that emotional wellbeing difficulties are caused by a range of factors that may or may not be related to deafness. For example, degree of hearing loss and language ability are related to deafness, but having an additional need and gender are external to deafness. Across the papers reviewed, emotional wellbeing difficulties in deaf children and young people were consistently associated with having an additional need. Studies reviewed frequently associated language with emotional wellbeing, some suggesting that a reduced language ability (signed or spoken) was associated with emotional wellbeing difficulties. There were also suggestions that a communication match between parents and children and young people is important for emotional wellbeing, this provides implications for parents in becoming proficient signers. Professionals need to consider how factors may vary for each individual deaf child and young person and the support needed.

Miller and Katz (2002) defined inclusion as a sense of belonging which involves feeling respected, valued for who you are and feeling a level of support and commitment from others so that you can do your best. Inclusive education requires an emphasis on the access to appropriate support, in order to minimise barriers to participation and learning. As well as the celebration of diversity and supporting children and young people's sense of belonging to the school community (Lambert & Frederickson, 2015). Inclusive education is a complex, multi-dimensional concept, thus there is a lack of clarity around its definition and how it is understood and implemented (Farrell, 2004).

Todorov et al. (2022) present the concept of engagement and suggest that full classroom engagement in school is essential for deaf children and young people to achieve their potential. They describe engagement as a construct consisting of behavioural engagement (e.g. participation in classroom activities), emotional engagement (e.g. sense of belonging to school), and cognitive engagement (e.g. investment in learning). Engagement can be a barrier to deaf children and young people in school due to difficulties accessing the instructions and information when the teacher is talking as well as noisy classroom environments. In addition, teacher training often doesn't equip classroom teachers with the knowledge and skills of inclusive practices (Eriks-Brophy & Whittingham, 2013). For these concepts of engagement to be achieved for deaf children and young people, schools need to ensure they are employing inclusive practices and have an inclusive school ethos. Inclusive education in the UK should be a response to student diversity, encompassing equity and acceptance. This needs to be a process that identifies and

removes barriers to full participation and supports children and young people in achieving their full potential academically and socially (Ainscow, 2020). This multi-dimensional concept of inclusive education includes the social model of disability and socio-political context of education, moreover the conflicts that arise between these and the reality of inclusive education. It is clear that inclusivity for all children and young people in education is not currently accomplished and there is much work to be done to improve this.

It is widely recognised that the Salamanca Statement (UNESCO, 1994) proposed key policy shifts to ensure a commitment to promote the inclusion of children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). Since then, another key milestone is The Education 2030 Framework for Action (UNESCO, 2015). Building on the legacy of the Salamanca Statement, this emphasises inclusion and equity as foundations for quality education. When considering rights-based arguments for education for children and young people with SEND, equity must be combined with reasonable accommodations to help children and young people to achieve their goals. Equity in education means that personal or social circumstances, such as gender or additional needs are not obstacles to achieving educational potential (OECD, 2012). A fully inclusive UK education system is a complex process to achieve, it requires systemic change across educators and educational policy within the socio-political context (Ainscow, 2012). With educators and politicians often perceiving inclusive education differently, this adds to the complexity.

Inclusive education is enmeshed in various contexts, including the classroom, the school, family, local community and wider society, and these interacting contexts can also influence one another (Singal et al., 2017). Through a social constructionist lens, this research views the concept of socially constructed reality as important. With the view that social interactions create norms and institutions, this perspective can help educators and other stakeholders in the education system to consider their social interactions and communication to reflect on whether they are inclusive for some children and young people and exclusive for others (Rapp & Corral-Granados, 2021). Promoting inclusive practices involves social discourse and creating a positive attitude which accounts for student difference, thus engaging and benefiting all children and young people (Singal et al., 2017).

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) (1989) is an international human rights treaty that recognises and protects the human rights of children and young people. Included within the rights of children and young people are the right to an education that enables them to fulfil their potential and the right to express their opinions and be listened to. The aim of this project was to capture the views of deaf children and young people to understand their educational experiences. This will help to ensure their voices are brought to the forefront and their views are embedded in implications for future practice.

1.2 Research context

The Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0-25 years (Department for Education & Department of Health, 2015) (SEND CoP) states that all schools in England have duties under the Equality Act (2010) towards individual

disabled children and young people. They must make reasonable adjustments to prevent them from being at a substantial disadvantage. These duties should be proactive and require thought to be given in advance to what adjustments might need to be made to prevent that disadvantage for these children and young people (Department for Education & Department of Health, 2015). This means tailoring programmes to the needs, interests and aspirations of each individual child and young person, tackling barriers to their participation and learning, and enabling them to achieve their potential. Despite this welcome person-centred approach, the SEND Code of Practice leaves the development and implementation of inclusive education open to interpretation. Furthermore, the UK school system leaves no room for person-centred approaches, with curriculum and assessment being rigidly defined without the incorporation of children and young people's needs, interests and aspirations.

The Equality Act (2010) defines disability as when a person has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term negative effect on their ability to do normal daily activities. This definition lends itself to the medical model of disability, in which disability is seen as a consequence of a health condition (Siebers, 2008). Therefore, the medical model focuses on the audiological state of a person's hearing in terms of decibels and attempts to compensate for the loss of hearing by provision of hearing devices. From this perspective, it can be argued that deaf children and young people are encouraged to conform to hearing norms and the aim is assimilation into hearing society (Graham & Horejes, 2017). My research project does not align with this perspective.

Not all people who are deaf would consider themselves to have a disability (Lane, 2002). In addition, deafness is not a learning disability, although 23% of deaf children and young people are recorded as having some form of additional need (CRIDE, 2021). The social model sees disability as a socially created problem and a matter of the full integration of individuals into society (Oliver, 1996), therefore, a person's activities are limited by the environment rather than by the condition. It has been theorised that if human rights legislation was amended, societies could be constructed so that inclusiveness was factored in from the start (Ladd, 2003). The cultural construction of deafness sees deafness as a difference, not a disability, because deaf people see themselves as already whole. People who are deaf are viewed as members of a discrete community with their own language (in the UK, British Sign Language – BSL, and Irish Sign Language - ISL), history and culture (Ladd, 2003). This research project was conducted from a social constructionist ontology and epistemology (as will be discussed fully in Chapter 3). As a deaf researcher myself, I see deafness as a positive construction, viewing society as disabling or disadvantaging to deaf children and young people, thus aligning with the social model of disability.

This research was conducted in Local Authorities (LAs) in Greater London. When children are deaf or at risk of deafness, local authorities act as gatekeepers to financial support, practical support and local support and advice such as through sensory support services (National Deaf Children's Society, 2016). Sensory support services work with children and young people when a visual or hearing difficulty is

identified, a hearing team normally consists of Teachers of the Deaf (ToD) whose aim is to support the educational and social-emotional outcomes for children and young people. The teams work in partnership with families, children and young people, education settings, audiologists and other professionals including educational psychologists (EPs). These partnerships can support the participation of children and young people in decision making around their deafness and education. However, there is still a risk of negative constructions of deafness within local authorities when they are working in partnership with medical professionals who often view deafness as a deficit, and this is evident when the teams use terms such as 'impairment'. The difficulty for local authorities and professionals is they are working within the national mainstream context and are guided by government legislation that still requires deaf children and young people to acknowledge and classify themselves as having a disability in order to receive any support (Lane, 2002).

1.3 Relevance to Educational Psychology practice

Educational Psychology (EP) practice is underpinned by inclusion, with educational psychologists (EPs) frequently involved with issues concerning inclusive education. EPs can support schools in the process of becoming more inclusive, for example by highlighting the environmental and systemic factors that can contribute to a child and young person's needs, supporting a move away from a within child, deficit model (Division of Educational and Child Psychology (DECP), 2022). EPs play an important part in advocating for children and young people and empowering the systems around them. The majority of EPs strive to work systemically, moving away from only engaging in individual work with children and young people. Instead, focusing on the

interactions children and young people have with the systems around them such as family and school, focusing on attempting to alter the situation and promote inclusivity. Professionals working in schools can sometimes view the EP role primarily as completing individual cognitive assessments rather than whole school systemic work, thus creating a barrier to EPs working systemically (Pellegrini, 2009). To counter this view, it is important that EPs foster good relationships with their schools and other professionals, opening avenues to bring about change.

Fallon et al. (2010) suggest that the EP role has remained consistent throughout the years of the profession, however it is the socio-political context surrounding the profession that has determined how EPs skills are operationalised. Therefore, some local authority structures and government legislation place restrictions on the EP role and how EP services are delivered. The education system in the UK has shifted towards a market model of education which accentuates educational outcomes as accountability measures (Anderson & Boyle, 2020). Thus, this is perceived as a barrier to inclusive education as children and young people with SEND may be considered non-marketable (Anderson & Boyle, 2020). In the current socio-political context the government has placed responsibility for the implementation of inclusive education on schools, without considering the need for systemic socio-political reforms for productive change to happen (Anderson et al., 2020). Consequently, EPs face challenges in supporting schools with inclusion within the constraints of the socio-political context.

This project gathered views on inclusive education from deaf children and young people in mainstream secondary schools in order to inform future educational psychology practice. As mentioned, there is limited research in education by deaf researchers, therefore this project was a valuable contribution to the evidence base. There is also limited research on deaf children and young people in the field of educational psychology, which this project contributes to as part of an educational psychology doctoral thesis. It was important to take the findings from this project and provide recommendations for EPs to put into action when working with deaf children and young people. It will also be integral for EPs to work collaboratively with other professionals such as school staff and Teachers of the Deaf (ToD). This project provides recommendations for working with children and young people and training for school staff. There is also the consideration that this project could help to inform policies and beliefs at a wider level. For example, EPs have a role in supporting schools with school improvement and change focused on inclusive education. Three interconnected dimensions to consider when developing learning and participation are creating inclusive cultures, producing inclusive policies and evolving inclusive practices. This includes establishing inclusive values and developing the school for all (Booth & Ainscow, 2002).

1.4 Rationale

The rationale for this project was that 77% of deaf children and young people attend mainstream settings in the UK, as noted in the CRIDE (2022b) survey. Deaf children and young people are arguably ill-served by the current ideology of inclusive education, and their voices are rarely heard. There are a range of factors to consider around inclusive education for deaf children and young people in mainstream settings, most importantly inclusion in learning and inclusion in their peer group.

There is limited research conducted by deaf researchers on children and young people's views on inclusion in mainstream education settings. Being a deaf researcher myself, I believe deaf children and young people's views are paramount to understanding issues in inclusive education and planning for future EP practice. EPs can play an important part in advocating for children and young people and supporting the systems around them to create and ensure an inclusive ethos; for example, by supporting services to incorporate the views of deaf children and young people in the planning of provision. As the SEND Code of Practice (Department for Education & Department of Health, 2015) highlights, children and young people must be supported in participating in decision making and having a choice in the support they receive. Taking deaf children and young people's experiences and views into account will help to ensure high quality provision to meet their needs.

Chapter 2: Literature review

This chapter begins by discussing the history of deaf research and considering the literature highlighting the needs of deaf children and young people, before presenting a critique of the research literature available related to the experiences of deaf children and young people in mainstream schools. Lastly, the research aims of my project will be shared.

2.1 History of deaf research

Research in deaf education for the first 60 years of the twentieth century focused on mental measurement, with the general conclusion that deaf individuals were intellectually inferior (Cawthon & Garberoglio, 2017). The growth of research in the middle of the twentieth century resulted in findings that deaf children and young people tended to be behind academically, as measured by standardised tests normed on hearing children and young people. These findings were often utilised without a consideration of factors related to teaching and learning of deaf children and young people (Cawthon & Garberoglio, 2017). Historically research in deaf education has not considered perspectives of deaf individuals or the social, emotional and mental wellbeing of these individuals.

2.2 Needs of deaf children and young people

A major impact of deafness on children and young people is the difficulty in acquiring their chosen language in order to learn, express themselves, communicate with others and develop relationships. Spoken language is usually acquired through hearing through interaction with parents/carers, subsequently, when a child or young person is deaf from birth or early in life, this process is disrupted. Over 95% of deaf children and young people are born to hearing families where the home language is

spoken not signed (Mitchell & Karchmer, 2004), hence deaf children and young people who rely on sign have difficulty in acquiring language essential to participation in everyday communication and education. In addition to the home environment, deaf children and young people most often are not effectively supported in mainstream schools (World Federation of the Deaf, 2018), therefore impacting their access to learning and social interaction in school.

As described by the CRIDE report (2021) and noted in Chapter 1, the deaf population has diverse communication preferences, with 88% of children and young people in the UK communicating orally within the school setting, 2% using British or Irish Sign Language, 7% using a mix of both signed support and spoken language and 3% using another combination. Due to progress and improvements with newborn hearing screening, hearing technology and early intervention there have been vast improvements in language development for deaf children and young people (Hall et al., 2019). And yet, despite early identification and intervention, the deaf population are still underperforming on standardised assessments of spoken language (Hall et al., 2019). Consequently, it is concerning that deaf children and young people continue to have limited access to signed language in the home and education setting when exposure to signed language could benefit their language mastery and subsequently their cognitive development and learning.

Children and young people diagnosed and receiving cochlear implants early in life are acquiring and using spoken language and are attending mainstream schools. Although these children and young people may have access to greater levels of spoken language through hearing, they still require support as learners in the

classroom. In addition, some deaf children and young people experience sufficient exposure from birth to spoken language, signed language, or both to support the development of their first-language (Hall et al., 2019). In summary, all deaf learners require support in the education setting whatever their language modality and/or use of assistive listening devices.

2.3 Literature search

An overview of the systematic search, terminology used to identify relevant articles and inclusion and exclusion criteria can be found in Appendix A.

2.4 Analysis of the body of research

The systematic literature search generated literature that was organised under four different headings. The findings of each study were used to construct themes that link to the aims of this study and are summarised under the following headings:

- Academic inclusion of deaf learners in mainstream education
- Social inclusion of deaf learners in mainstream education
- Educators' approach to inclusive education for deaf learners
- Educational psychologists' approach to inclusion for deaf leaners

2.5 Academic inclusion of deaf learners in mainstream education

As mentioned in Chapter 1, 77% of school aged deaf children and young people attend mainstream schools in the UK. Arguments supporting the integration of deaf children and young people in mainstream schools are often based on possible cognitive gains. This focus suggests an emphasis on academic attainment within schools, consequently, creating an environment that is not inclusive for those such as deaf students who may need support in accessing learning to achieve their potential academically. Several of the research studies identified from the systematic literature search highlighted that deaf students have both positive and negative

experiences accessing learning in the classroom. The literature also provides practical recommendations for supporting inclusion in learning in the classroom.

Whilst reviewing the literature it became clear that deaf students experience a range of barriers to learning within the classroom, such as background noise (Iantaffi et al., 2003; Todorov et al., 2022). Iantaffi et al. (2003) explored deaf student's views of inclusion in mainstream secondary schools in the UK. This qualitative study facilitated focus groups and interviews with 83 pupils studying at Key Stage 3, 61 of whom were deaf and 22 hearing. The range of hearing loss amongst the deaf students was moderate to profound, with 27 of the deaf students choosing to sign and 34 communicating orally. The deaf students in Iantaffi et al.'s study identified other students talking or teachers shouting as the main source of background noise in the classroom, describing finding the background noise distracting and therefore finding it difficult to focus on the learning tasks. This is a useful finding, however Iantaffi et al.'s reasoning behind the inclusion of hearing students in the study is not clear, with no sufficient detail as to how their views were incorporated and why. Furthermore, this may have caused deaf students to feel less comfortable to be open and honest in the focus groups alongside their hearing peers.

In Chapter 1, Todorov et al.'s (2022) study was introduced with regards to their focus on engagement as a way of exploring inclusion of deaf students. The deaf students in Todorov et al.'s study were in grade 3-6 and all had a bilateral hearing loss of a moderate degree or greater. All participants communicated using spoken English at school. These deaf students in Todorov et al.'s study highlighted the presence of background noise in the classroom, yet they also described background noise from

outside the classroom being disruptive and creating difficulties hearing others and accessing learning activities. Additionally, the deaf students in Todorov et al.'s study noted that group work was difficult due to trying to hear with the noise from multiple group discussions. These findings are important as they raise the need to ensure deaf students are in classrooms away from external background noise and that managing the noise level in the classroom is key to facilitating the engagement and inclusion of deaf students in learning. Some students in Todorov et al.'s study used assistive listening devices such as a radio aid to support access to speech. The findings demonstrating the difficulties background noise creates on accessing speech evidences the need for teachers to ensure they are consistently using assistive listening devices such as radio aids with the appropriate students. Todorov et al.'s qualitative study is current and had aims similar to my research project, although it involved primary mainstream classrooms and was conducted in Australia. Despite this, Todorov et al.'s findings and implications are relevant because the Australian education system is a similar set up to UK education system and there are some similarities in experiences learning in primary and secondary schools. For example, deaf students will experience difficulties with background noise in both primary and secondary classrooms. However, background noise may be more prevalent in secondary schools due to the building size and number of students and classrooms, thus indicating the need for research into the inclusion of deaf students in mainstream secondary schools. A limitation of Todorov et al.'s study is that the majority of participants attended mainstream schools with a deaf facility, with only one participant attending a school with visiting ToD support, thus it is not as representative of deaf student's experiences in the latter model.

The importance of using assistive listening devices consistently to support deaf students to access learning was identified in the literature (Todorov et al., 2022), however several studies within the literature also identified assistive listening devices as a barrier to learning when used incorrectly by teachers (Dalton, 2013; Iantaffi et al., 2003; Todorov et al., 2022). Assistive listening devices that are commonly used by deaf students at school are hearing aids, cochlear implants and radio aids. Radio aids allow teachers to wear a microphone that is connected to deaf students hearing aids or cochlear implants, which amplifies the teacher's voice however far they are from the student. Assistive devices such as the radio aid not being used correctly or not being used at all evidently creates a barrier to learning for the deaf students that use it (Todorov et al., 2022). Additionally, some deaf students in Iantaffi et al.'s (2003) study felt it was embarrassing when school staff did not know how to work assistive equipment such as radio aids. Iantaffi et al.'s finding highlights the importance and value of listening to deaf students' experiences in order to understand the difficulties they face and their experiences of these difficulties. It is suggested that schools should provide teachers with appropriate training in using assistive listening devices effectively (Todorov et al., 2022). It is also important to note that assistive listening devices are not a cure, as reported by deaf students in Dalton's (2013) study. Therefore, it is apparent from the research that deaf students need access to a range of support strategies to facilitate their inclusion in learning.

Dalton (2013) explored the inclusion of students with mild and moderate hearing loss from their perspective via interviews with 3 deaf students aged 18-21, reflecting on their experiences at secondary school. When reviewing the literature, it became clear that there are few known studies conducted by deaf researchers on the

inclusion of deaf students in mainstream secondary schools. Therefore, being a deaf researcher myself, this study by Dalton is of great relevance because they are also a deaf adult. Dalton's participants suggested that deaf students using assistive listening devices will likely also need the teacher to be facing them when talking so they can lip read, a strategy that was noted as a facilitator to inclusion for deaf students in some of the literature (Todorov et al., 2022). These findings align with the implication that deaf students benefit from sitting at the front of the classroom to be near the teacher in order to hear better and be able to lip read more effectively (Todorov et al., 2022).

Several studies identified when reviewing the literature illustrated the importance of visual support for deaf students in facilitating their access to learning (Dalton, 2013; Salehomoum, 2020; Todorov et al., 2022). The recent qualitative study by Salehomoum (2020) in the United States looked at the inclusion of signing deaf students, exploring their access to classroom communication. Salehomoum recruited two mainstream classes with 3 deaf students who differed in their hearing levels, hearing devices and preferred communication choice. The deaf students in Salehomoum's study relied on sign interpreters to access instruction and used signed communication to communicate at school. One of the key findings reported by Salehomoum's study was that access to classroom communication through visual resources was integral for deaf students. For example, whiteboards, smart projector boards, laptops, textbooks and sign language interpreter. Key information and tasks were displayed visually, additionally teachers were reported to record hearing students' spoken contributions on the board. This finding of Salehomoum's is important as Todorov et al.'s (2022) participants expressed the need for teachers to

repeat what other students had said. Whether it is repeated verbally or provided visually, Salehomoum highlighted how these strategies are beneficial for all students both hearing and deaf yet is integral for deaf students to support their access to learning. Salehomoum's study was quite small scale with only 3 deaf students and two of the deaf students declined to be interviewed, therefore most findings were based on observations limiting the contribution of student voice. As stated in Chapter 1, despite the majority of deaf children and young people in the UK communicating orally (88%) in school, there are 2% using British or Irish Sign Language, 7% using a mix of both signed support and spoken language and 3% using another combination (*CRIDE: 2021 UK Wide Summary*, 2021). My research focuses on deaf students who communicate orally, however Salehomoum's study is significant and provides useful findings even though it is focused on signing deaf students and their access to education in the mainstream setting. Due to the heterogeneity of the deaf population, findings from studies like Salehomoum's with different groups of unique deaf individuals can offer useful implications that benefit a wider and diverse population of deaf students. Additionally, mainstream schools must consider and understand inclusion for all deaf students, regardless of their communication choice.

Participants in both Iantaffi et al.'s (2003) and Todorov et al.'s (2022) studies reported finding their Teacher of the Deaf (ToD) an important and helpful support, noting that they support them to engage in learning through support both in and out of lessons. Although these findings provide insights into the role of ToD in supporting deaf students' inclusion in learning, they are not readily generalisable as the majority of the students in both studies attended mainstream schools with deaf provision units. This set up involves ToD being based on site allowing them to spend time

more frequently in lessons supporting deaf students and being more readily accessible to deaf students outside of lessons. As Iantaffi et al. (2003) noted, deaf participants that had access to a peripatetic ToD (otherwise known as visiting ToD) commented very little on their support. Therefore, indicating perhaps from deaf students' perspective that visiting ToD support is less impactful.

Some of the literature highlighted the strategies that deaf students themselves do to support their access to learning, such as ensuring they ask the teacher for support or adjustments. One recommendation from the authors in Todorov et al.'s (2022) study was that deaf students are offered training in self-advocacy to support them in self-advocating for the support they need in school. This is an important consideration, however the majority of responsibility should perhaps be instead with teachers and adults in providing appropriate support in collaboration with deaf students. Otherwise, deaf students are viewed as the minority population needing skills to support them to fit into the majority population and environment.

Both Dalton (2013) and Todorov et al. (2022) described the need for understanding and empathy for deaf students' lived experiences in supporting their inclusion in learning. For example, deaf students were reported to often struggle with physical effects such as fatigue and headaches, which subsequently made it difficult to concentrate and engage in learning (Dalton, 2013; Todorov et al., 2022). Unsurprisingly, deaf students were reported to feel more motivated to engage in learning when teachers demonstrated understanding and empathy (Dalton, 2013), therefore facilitating their inclusion in the learning environment. The literature illustrates that deaf students can lack confidence in mainstream classroom

environments (Todorov et al., 2022) and often feel a lack of belonging (Dalton, 2013)**.** Iantaffi et al. (2003) reported that participants noted it helped to have other deaf peers to raise their confidence, as well as understanding amongst hearing peers and staff. Dalton (2013) discusses how teachers developing empathetic relationships with deaf students can help promote their confidence in seeking help in the learning environment. Perhaps this relational approach could be more appropriate in supporting deaf students to self-advocate rather than explicit training for deaf students in self-advocacy as suggested by Todorov et al.'s (2022) study.

2.6 Social inclusion of deaf learners in mainstream education

Some research has identified a link between the academic and social inclusion of deaf students, with successful social inclusion supporting successful academic inclusion (Hadjikakou et al., 2008; Iantaffi et al., 2003). Consequently, highlighting the importance of studying both the academic and social inclusion of deaf students in order to provide recommendations to support them as effectively as possible. A relevant example is the participation of deaf students in whole class and peer group activities, with the notion that if there is positive participation of deaf students in these activities this will promote their inclusion in learning. Hadjikakou et al. (2008) conducted a study that was the first of its kind in Cyprus into the inclusion of oral deaf students in mainstream secondary education. Hadjikakou et al.'s quantitative study investigated the perspectives of different stakeholders, including deaf students, their parents, teachers and headteachers. All 69 oral deaf students attending mainstream secondary schools in Cyprus were recruited with 21.7% reporting they feel they can participate in lessons very well, 49.3% quite well and 29% not at all. Interestingly, Hadjikakou et al. report this finding positively by describing that it is positive that only a few students noted their difficulties with classroom participation.

With the importance of the relationship between social and academic inclusion already highlighted, ideally all deaf students would be describing that they feel they can participate in class very well.

Salehomoum's (2020) study explored the extent to which signing deaf students participate in whole class and peer group activities. Salehomoum analysed the data using a participation framework via a socio-cultural lens, which stressed the importance of interaction for learning and development. With regards to deaf students' participation within the classroom, the whole class discussions were reported by Salehomoum to be fast paced with no visual support and inconsistent signed interpretation, and so severely reducing accessibility for the deaf students. Thus, Salehomoum reported that the deaf students were not observed to be participating in whole class discussion and additionally, the class teacher failed to encourage their participation. Dalton (2013) suggests that teachers are well placed to promote deaf students' positive participation by meeting their needs for relatedness through empathetic relationships. This is aligned with findings and recommendations from Hadjikakou et al.'s (2008) study which indicated that successful social outcomes for the deaf students were found to be related to the in-service training of their teachers, thus highlighting the importance of appropriate training for school staff. During peer group activities in Salehomoum's study, the deaf students were observed to be grouped together rather than with hearing peers, which led to limited interaction and experiences with their hearing peers. This is a worrying finding, and it can be assumed that teachers may group deaf students together, particularly signing deaf students due to difficulties hearing students may have in communicating with them effectively. Salehomoum (2020) recommends that

media such as tablets could be utilised in peer activities to support interaction between deaf and hearing students.

Many studies within the identified literature described communication being vital for effective social interaction for deaf students and thus their social inclusion with their hearing peers at school (Edmondson & Howe, 2019; Hadjikakou et al., 2008; Iantaffi et al., 2003; Nunes et al., 2001). Hadjikakou et al.'s (2008) study found that oral deaf students' communication skills were positively related to them making and having friendships with hearing students (Spearman's correlation coefficient = 0.739). Therefore their social inclusion was related to their oral communication skills which enabled acceptance by peers and teachers. This is an interesting finding as this suggests that deaf students are required to fit in with the hearing world rather than the hearing world being inclusive and learning appropriate ways to communicate with deaf students regardless of their communication choices and skills. Similarly, Nunes et al. (2001) explored the social relationships of deaf students in mainstream primary schools in the UK with 9 deaf students in Year 5 and 6, and 62 of their hearing peers. Nunes et al. reported that the peer ratings provided no evidence that the deaf students were at risk of being disliked by their peers any more than hearing peers. However, peer nominations suggested that the deaf students were less likely to have friends in the class than hearing students. The deaf students in Nunes et al.'s study were orally competent, and therefore social interaction with hearing peers is likely more accessible than for deaf students who use sign language. Nunes et al.'s findings suggest there are still concerns in the level of social interaction and friendship building for deaf students, thus supporting the need for schools to be proactive in facilitating communication between deaf and hearing peers in order to

promote the integration of deaf students in social networks in mainstream schools. Notably, the researchers in both Iantaffi et al.'s (2003) and Hadjikakou et al.'s (2008) studies highlighted that with communication being vital for effective social inclusion, it was recommended that schools promote deaf awareness and work with deaf students to address the school ethos around difference.

A recent study that explores the social acceptance of deaf students as well as their friendship groups was conducted by Edmondson and Howe (2019). This is one of the few known studies exploring the inclusion of deaf students to have been conducted by educational psychologists (EPs). Edmondson and Howe felt that previous research has often generalised results across age groups and students with varying degrees of deafness. Therefore, their research used an Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) approach to explore individual experiences of 5 oral Year 9 students with moderate deafness. Despite many of the studies identified and discussed here in my literature review recruiting a range of deaf individuals for their sample, findings and implications are similar across the studies evidencing that these findings have some potential transferability across the diverse deaf population. The deaf students in Edmondson and Howe's study reported being part of supportive friendship groups and didn't report many difficulties communicating with hearing peers. As previously highlighted, oral deaf students with well-developed speech and communication skills find this a facilitative factor in building friendships and their social inclusion in mainstream schools. Oral deaf students in Hadjikakou et al.'s (2008) study reported they were more likely to be friends with their hearing peers than with other deaf students. However, as Hadjikakou et al. and Edmondson and Howe both note, many deaf students are often the only deaf student in their class or

school year and sometimes their entire school. Yet, friendships between deaf students can have advantages such as feeling accepted and less isolated (Edmondson & Howe, 2019; Iantaffi et al., 2003). Of note, Edmondson and Howe's participants all reported they were part of supportive and accepting friendship groups at school, however they also spoke of issues interacting socially with other hearing peers in the school community who seemed to lack acceptance and understanding of deafness. Difficulties interacting with hearing peers can cause deaf students to avoid situations at school which would involve interacting with hearing peers (Dalton, 2013; Edmondson & Howe, 2019). Deaf awareness sessions for hearing peers to support their understanding would help to support deaf students' relatedness with their hearing peers helping them feel a sense of belongingness and promote their social competence at school (Dalton, 2013).

2.7 Educators' approach to inclusive education for deaf learners

Many studies discussed in my literature review evidence a disconnect between inclusive philosophy and exclusive practice for deaf students attending mainstream schools. Evidently there are some examples of good understanding and deaf awareness amongst school staff in mainstream schools, yet there are also many examples of a lack of understanding and awareness that leads to deaf students being excluded from learning as well as socially. School staff's perceptions of deaf students as being different were noted in Salehomoum's (2020) study with some teachers describing hearing students as 'normal' in comparison to deaf students, consequently creating an othering of deaf students. As reported previously, some teachers in Salehomoum's study were reported to group deaf students together for peer activities. This approach may be well intentioned with teachers believing this makes engagement and communication easier for deaf students in group work,

however they are segregating deaf students through a lack of understanding of facilitating communication between deaf and hearing students.

Communication issues in addition to many other difficulties for deaf students have been noted across the research, with the need for better deaf awareness and understanding of deafness through professional development and training for school staff (Dalton, 2013; Iantaffi et al., 2003; Powers, 2001; Salehomoum, 2020; Slobodzian, 2009). Slobodzian (2009) undertook a year-long ethnographic study in the United States, which focused on one elementary (primary equivalent) school and its approach to accommodating the learning and social needs of students. There was a specific focus upon the lived experiences of the teachers and students in one 5th grade classroom which consisted of 2 deaf students and 20 hearing students. Slobodzian's findings illustrated deaf students were often excluded from lessons or social activities due to a lack of deaf awareness and professional development for teachers. One participant in Dalton's (2013) study reported their deafness was identified quite late and described frustrations that school staff had not noticed earlier. Dalton's participant illustrates school staff's lack of deaf awareness and understanding in how deaf students may present and the kinds of difficulties they may experience. A participant in Edmondson and Howe's (2019) study noted experiences of being bullied for their deafness at school and described feeling unsupported by school staff. This demonstrates a lack of awareness and understanding in the school's approach to bullying experienced by deaf students, despite this being a common problem. Other examples include teachers not facing deaf students when talking to enable lip reading (Dalton, 2013), a lack of modifications for whole class discussions (Salehomoum, 2020) and a lack of

captioning on videos used in lessons (Salehomoum, 2020; Todorov et al., 2022). In a mainstream education setting, the culture of the school can serve to include or exclude the minority population, in this case the minority population of deaf students. As evidenced by the research, in order to avoid exclusion, teachers must be trained appropriately in order for the deaf students' needs to be met. Training for school staff needs to cover a range of topics, such as deafness, communication, literacy, assistive listening devices, classroom strategies, friendships and emotional wellbeing (Powers, 2001).

Despite research demonstrating examples of poor practice, the research does evidence examples of inclusive approaches by schools and school staff. In contrast to Dalton's (2013) study, Todorov et al. (2022) found that some teachers in the study were reported to face deaf students when talking, allowing them to lip read. Additionally, findings in some studies demonstrated teachers seating deaf students at the front of lessons (Dalton, 2013), checking in with deaf students regularly (Dalton, 2013; Edmondson & Howe, 2019) and using visual instructions (Salehomoum, 2020; Todorov et al., 2022). Powers (2001) investigated good practice in supporting deaf students in mainstream schools in the UK by reporting the views of school staff, ToDs, parents, current students, audiologists, and EPs. Findings in Power's study highlighted that the participants noted good practice involved making time for joint planning and collaboration between ToD and class teachers. Several other studies raise this as a key implication from their findings (Salehomoum, 2020; Slobodzian, 2009). As noted previously, research illustrates a lack of deaf awareness and training for school staff in deafness, thus implications in the research highlight a need for this. Power's findings noted examples of good

practice in some schools where all teachers are given training in supporting deaf students and those who teach a deaf student are given training that is more frequent and more advanced.

Powers (2001) noted that participants highlighted the importance of involving deaf students in decisions around their support, evidencing examples of good practice in some schools. In contrast, in the study conducted by Iantaffi et al. (2003) only 12 of the 39 participants reported that they had discussed their needs and provision with their ToD or SENCO. This sadly conveys a reality for many deaf students, despite the SEND Code of Practice (Department for Education & Department of Health and Social Care, 2015) promoting a collaborative approach with children and young people. This example yet again illustrates the mixed experiences of deaf students in mainstream schools, highlighting varied understanding and approaches by schools and their staff.

2.8 Educational psychologists' approach to inclusive education for deaf learners

The majority of research discussed when reviewing the literature predominantly provides recommendations for schools in supporting the inclusion of deaf students. Furthermore, researchers that recommend deaf awareness sessions for school staff as well as training in supporting deaf students, suggest Teachers of the Deaf (ToD) are well equipped to support and guide schools with developing and delivering these (Powers, 2002). The role of Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators (SENCOs) is also referenced in educating and supporting teachers in supporting deaf students in mainstream schools (Hadjikakou et al., 2008). Other educational professionals such as Speech and Language Therapists are also mentioned when referring to

supporting deaf students language and communication, and examining their level of inclusion in mainstream classrooms (Salehomoum, 2020).

When reviewing the literature, it became clear that there are few known studies conducted by educational psychologists (EPs) on the inclusion of deaf students in mainstream secondary schools. This is surprising given the role of EPs involves working with students with special educational needs and disabilities, as well as advising schools on supporting these students. With the majority of deaf students being reported as attending mainstream schools in the UK, where they may often be the only deaf student or one of few, supporting their inclusion is integral. Edmondson and Howe's (2019) study, that explores social inclusion of deaf students in the UK, describes the importance of the role of the EP in supporting the inclusion of deaf students in mainstream settings and provides implications for EP practice. One of the researchers, Edmondson is an EP working in a service in the UK. Edmondson and Howe describe how EPs may be increasingly more likely to be requested by schools to work with deaf students due to declining numbers of ToD and their increasing caseloads.

Through the interpretation of their findings Edmondson and Howe (2019) were clear that there was a lack of deaf awareness in the school in their study and that EPs have the training and skills to support schools systemically in developing deaf awareness and practice, working alongside other specialist colleagues, such as ToDs. Edmondson and Howe (2019) also suggested that when working with individual deaf students, EPs may need to explore student's deaf identity,

considering any support that may be needed to help them develop a positive deaf identity. For example, considering their acceptance of their deafness and any embarrassment they may be experiencing. As in Todorov et al.'s (2022) study, Edmondson and Howe indicated that deaf students may be struggling to communicate their needs to school staff and recommend that EPs are well placed to work with groups of deaf students to develop their advocacy skills. Whilst this is important to consider, it needs to be in discussion with deaf students, for example discussing what skills they would like to develop. Both studies, Todorov et al. and Edmondson and Howe recommended this from their interpretation of their findings, yet it was not a recommendation suggested by the deaf students themselves. Previously it was noted that research implications from some studies discussed, highlighted the importance of collaborating with deaf students and co-producing their support (Iantaffi et al., 2003; Powers, 2002). Dalton (2013), recommended that teachers need to meet deaf students needs for relatedness through empathetic relationships, it could be argued developing relational approaches is an implication that EPs are well placed to support schools with. Whilst Edmondson and Howe's (2019) study didn't explore the approach and impact of EPs working with deaf students, it did provide useful recommendations and implications for EPs from interpretations of their discussions with deaf students.

2.9 Summary

Powers (2002) identifies characteristics of good practice in the inclusion of deaf children and young people in education in the UK which reflect the findings of my literature review. Of importance is a positive whole school approach to difference, with an effective communication environment for which all staff share responsibility. There needs to be regular opportunities for successful interaction between deaf and

hearing students, together with deaf students interacting with other deaf students, and this includes in extra-curricular activities. In addition, deaf students need access to the school curriculum through a flexible approach considering their individual needs and school staff need the necessary knowledge, skills and empathetic attitude to effectively teach and support deaf students. Lastly, the involvement of deaf students in decisions that affect them and the support they receive is integral as deaf students must be listened to and understanding of their lived experiences must be developed.

2.10 Research aims

The purpose of this project was to capture the educational experiences of deaf young people in mainstream secondary schools in order to inform future inclusive practice. There are a range of factors to consider around inclusive education for deaf young people in mainstream settings, most importantly academic and social inclusion. The literature review has highlighted that there is limited research conducted by deaf researchers on deaf young people's views on inclusion in mainstream education settings. Being a deaf researcher myself, I believe deaf young people's views are integral to understanding barriers and facilitators to inclusive education. There is also limited research on the inclusion of deaf students in the field of educational psychology. EPs can have an important role in advocating for deaf young people and supporting the systems around them in creating an inclusive ethos. Lastly, there is also limited research into the inclusion of deaf students in mainstream secondary schools. With the primary and secondary education setting being very different, it is important to understand and listen to deaf young people's experiences of inclusion in secondary mainstream schools.

The aims of this project were:

- Identify the barriers and experiences of support for learning in mainstream secondary schools for deaf learners.

- Identify the barriers and experiences of support for social interaction in mainstream secondary schools for deaf learners.

Chapter 3: Methodology

This chapter describes the philosophical and methodological approach as well as the reflexive processes. It details the design, research participants and establishes how data was collected and analysed. Lastly, ethical considerations are considered as well as quality.

3.1 Philosophical approach

Philosophical assumptions are an important consideration for researchers as the approach chosen can influence the research topic and question in addition to the methodology used (McCartan & Robson, 2016). This research was conducted from a social constructionist ontology and epistemology. A social constructionist ontology assumes that social properties are constructed through interactions between people, rather than having a separate existence (Burr, 2015). With this understanding, the difficulties deaf people experience are considered to be socially constructed, therefore as in line with the social model of disability, deaf children and young people are disabled by the discourses and narratives held by society rather than deafness itself (Shakespeare, 2017). The medical model approach creates an ableist narrative that deaf young people are measured against, thus marginalising them for being different and expecting them to conform to this narrative and the norms of the dominant hearing society. As such, deaf children and young people have a relationship with a disabling society. Inclusive education for deaf children and young people should be centred and built on knowledge from their lived experience, rather than solely on the knowledge of professionals and governmental policy aligned with a medical lens. Constructing deafness within a social discourse and perceiving deafness as a story rather than an objective disability helps to develop and reformulate how it is perceived. This helps to establish the reformulation of deafness

as a positive construction, rather than being constructed as a measurable disability based on an ableist conceptualisation of reality.

The social constructionist approach is also sometimes referred to as interpretive, signifying a focus on how the social world is interpreted by those in it (McCartan & Robson, 2016). As a perspective it challenges us to consider the way that we perceive and understand the world and motivates researchers to address that our social understanding is relative to our particular context. In this research project this perspective is applicable as the aim was to understand how participants make sense of their school experience being deaf and how these perspectives can be used to shape inclusive practice. Social constructionism, as highlighted by McCartan and Robson (2016), is a qualitative approach with links to phenomenology and hermeneutic approaches. Focusing on the theoretical perspectives of phenomenology and hermeneutics, this project was motivated to understand the meaning of children and young people's experiences and took the approach of a detailed analysis of personal accounts (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2014).

In qualitative research, it is acknowledged that the interactional nature between the researcher and participants means researcher experiences and social constructs undoubtedly shape the research (McCartan & Robson, 2016). As a deaf researcher myself, I assumed an insider positionality, whilst acknowledging that my personal experiences will have influenced the research process, my interactions with participants and the findings.

It is also important to consider researcher positionality in relation to research in deaf education, given that this project fits within this area, both with regards to the research topic and in my role as a deaf researcher. It is integral to acknowledge that researcher positionality as a deaf person influences ideological beliefs on what deaf education should look like. There have been concerns within deaf research that researchers with no connection with the Deaf community and/or knowledge of sign language may present research based around the medical model of disability, representing hearing loss as a deficit and not recognising positive constructions of deafness (Graham & Horejes, 2017). Due to the diverseness of the deaf population, every deaf researcher brings unique positionality to the study of deaf children and young people. Being born hearing and becoming deaf from the age of 7 after acquiring language means I communicate orally, and my lived experiences are primarily within the hearing community due to my parents being hearing. However, I dispute the medical model of disability and align myself with the social model of disability, understanding deafness as a positive construction, viewing society as disabling or disadvantaging to the deaf community. This project hoped to discover and promote best practices to create positive outcomes for deaf children and young people in their learning, social interactions and wellbeing within education.

3.2 Reflexivity

It is important as the researcher to describe and share the contextual intersecting relationships with the participants, in order to increase the credibility of the project and its findings, as well as deepening the understanding of the work (Dodgson, 2019). Considered through a social constructionist lens, this process should reflect upon my personal values, contexts and experiences that can affect the knowledge created from the data collected.

This research was approached with personal and professional interests in deafness and inclusion. I took on an insider perspective due to my deafness and having gone through mainstream schooling, with my own experiences of inclusion in a mainstream setting. There is the possibility an outsider status was also taken on due to the diverse social experiences and constructions of deafness amongst participants. I access language orally and see myself primarily as part of the hearing community, whilst also advocating for deaf people. In comparison, some participants may see themselves as part of the Deaf community or both the hearing and Deaf community.

When collecting young peoples' views emic accounts were gathered, due to being a member of their group/culture with my own experience as a deaf young person in mainstream secondary school. This helped me to build attuned relationships with the participants and learn new things about their experiences of deafness (Graham & Horejes, 2017).

Through lived experiences with deafness, I have had both positive and negative experiences in education and within learning and social interactions. I have also had experience with a range of professionals, and I have found it challenging when professionals work with a medical perspective of deafness. These experiences have supported the development of my construction of deafness within the social model and have also helped to develop my thoughts about the terms used to describe deafness and how I describe my own deafness.

Although my experiences are more closely aligned with the hearing community, I previously worked as a teacher in a special needs school. I worked with a number of deaf children and young people with a range of language modalities, positioned in both the hearing and Deaf community. The collective ethos amongst the school community was that deafness is a difference not a disability.

As a Trainee Educational Psychologist (TEP), I have found that the needs of deaf children and young people are not always fully understood and/or supported in, mainstream schools. The motivation for this research was not to demonstrate that deaf children and young people have a multitude of problems in school, but to explore factors supportive of positive school experiences.

3.3 Methodological approach

As the aim of this research was to provide an in-depth insight into the educational experiences of deaf young people, the project employed a qualitative methodology. The purpose was to give voice to the participants and gain an insight into their lived experiences in a rich and detailed way, it is therefore acknowledged that these insights are not generalisable but offer a rich understanding of particular experiences that may be relevant for other children and young people in other contexts. If educators are to provide an inclusive environment for deaf children and young people, an in-depth understanding of their experiences in education is vital. Consequently, the methodological approach that was adopted in this study was Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA).

IPA is an approach that focuses on the lived experiences of the person and their interpretations of these experiences and it is committed to the in-depth exploration of how people make sense of their major life experiences (Smith et al., 2022). IPA is grounded in the social constructionism standpoint that sociocultural processes are key to how we experience and understand our lives, including the stories we tell about these lives (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). Initially Thematic Analysis was considered for the method, however after further consideration IPA was felt to be better suited due to the experiential research aim and phenomenological framework, and maintaining a more idiographic, individual focus. IPA also recognises the involvement of the researcher in the process and that their experiences and perceptions are required in order to make sense of the personal world of the participant through a process of interpretative activity. Consequently, a dual interpretative process is at work that is known as the 'double hermeneutic', (Shaw, 2019). This was appropriate due to my insider positioning as a deaf researcher.

IPA as a methodology has been informed and developed by three philosophical theories: phenomenology, hermeneutics and idiography (Smith et al., 2022). It is important to discuss these theories and their links to IPA research.

Phenomenology is the study of experience, in all of its various contexts and in terms of things that are important to us and form our lived experiences, including how these have meaning for us (Smith et al., 2022). This approach stems from Husserl, Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty and Sartre whose work has provided inspiration and guidance for IPA research. Husserl understood phenomenology as exploring how an

individual might come to know their own experience of a certain phenomenon and how that individual identified the essential qualities of their experience. Husserl proposed that we must put our preconceptions to one side in order to let the phenomena speak for themselves (Smith et al., 2022). His work brought the process of reflection and reflexivity to the forefront of IPA research and this was an important part of the process in my research as a deaf researcher. In developing Husserl's work further Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty and Sartre move towards a more interpretative focus, considering our interactions in our lived world. In order to understand deaf learners' experiences in education the focus was on their views and interpretations of support provided and barriers they've faced.

The developments by Heidegger and other theorists such as Schleiermacher and Gadamer are known as hermeneutics. Hermeneutics is the theory of interpretation (Smith et al., 2022) and the most relevant concept from hermeneutics for IPA research is the hermeneutic circle. This is because of its focus on the dynamic, interrelated relationship that a 'part' of something has with the 'whole' (Smith et al., 2022). IPA combines these ideas from phenomenology and hermeneutics as it recognises that experiences are voiced and created from the individuals' lived experiences.

IPA is also concerned with idiography, i.e., the unique, particular study of an individual (Shaw, 2019). IPA research such as this project situates participants in their unique, particular contexts, exploring their personal perspectives, ensuring an in-depth exploration of each participant before moving towards more general claims

derived across all participants. The idiographic component of IPA was appropriate

for this project because of the diversity and heterogeneity of the deaf population, it

ensured each participant's views were explored in-depth, in isolation. It is also

important to note that as a deaf researcher my lived experience and historic

investment in deafness and inclusive education will have an impact on this

exploration (as identified in the reflexivity section above). This lived experience will

help to draw out deaf young peoples' unique experiences and support a deeper

analysis of their experiences.

In Chapter 2, Edmondson and Howe's (2019) study on the social inclusion of deaf

young people in mainstream schools was discussed, in which IPA was the

methodological approach used to explore the lived experiences of 5 young people.

The authors felt IPA was appropriate due to the fact it explores participants personal

perspectives, allowing experiences to be understood through an analysis of the

meanings which they ascribe to it. However, they also recognised the limitations of

IPA methodology and using a small sample, with findings not being generalisable to

other populations. Nevertheless, they rightly suggest IPA does not aim to provide

'truth', but instead provide an account that attends to the experiences of the

participant (Edmondson & Howe, 2019). This study helps to demonstrate

appropriateness of IPA for this current research project, seeking to understand the

lived experiences of deaf young people.

3.4 Design

The study adopted a qualitative phenomenological methodology. Phenomenological

designs are designed to study a phenomenon, in this case inclusive education of

deaf young people. Phenomenological designs seek to allow data to emerge around themes, guiding researchers in how to think about the phenomenon. They see participants as experts on their own experiences and can offer researchers an understanding of their thoughts and feelings through telling their own stories. Phenomenological designs often take an emic or insiders perspective to the phenomenon being studied as was the case for this project (Cawthon & Garberoglio, 2017).

3.5 Participants

Participants of this project were deaf young people who all attended different mainstream secondary schools across Greater London boroughs. They were recruited through Greater London Local Authority (LA) hearing teams and subsequently their parents/carers. Purposeful sampling was used with a sample size of 5 young people which helped ensure an in-depth analysis of each case as well as allowing the opportunity to examine similarities and differences between individuals. One of the distinctive characteristics of IPA is the aim to provide detailed interpretations of people's lived worlds, which can only be successful when done with a small sample (Smith et al., 2022). Informed consent was obtained from all participants.

3.6 Research tools

A short survey was used to obtain background information on participants (see Appendix C). For example, their educational history, the degree of their deafness, how they've been supported, any additional diagnoses. This was important due to the heterogeneity of the deaf population and ensuring this information could be used to add to the rich detailed picture of each individual participant.

In order to access the rich, detailed accounts of deaf learners semi-structured interviews were used. This flexible method allowed me to follow the participant's lead and ask additional follow-up questions, whilst ensuring that particular topics relevant to the research aims were covered. Access arrangements were considered and accommodated for each interview. Rapport-building activities were used prior to the interview to enhance engagement and create a safe environment. A good interview is essential for IPA analysis, so an interview guide (see Appendix C) was created to help ensure questions were open and didn't make assumptions about participants' experiences (Smith et al., 2022). A potential disadvantage of using semi-structured interviews is that there is a risk of bias with the open-ended nature of questions, therefore the interview schedule was carefully constructed and reviewed. The interview schedule consisted of open questions with prompts, split into sections linked to the research aims. An hour was scheduled for each interview, with flexibility where needed. The interview questions were piloted with the first participant, which helped ensure suitability. The pilot interview process created the opportunity to become familiar with the interview guide and reflect on my own skills as the interviewer. Pilot data was included in the main findings of this research and the interview schedule was not altered after the pilot interview.

3.7 Data analysis

'Pen portraits' were created using the background information from the survey. Interviews were transcribed verbatim and analysed through Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) as described by Smith et al. (2022) (see Table 1 below). The findings were analysed inductively and interpreted by referring to the existing literature, relevant psychological theories and personal experience. A

reflective approach was maintained throughout the research with member and peer checking. This involved sharing transcripts alongside Personal Experiential Themes (PETs) and Group Experiential Themes (GETs). Peer checking was undertaken with research supervisors and member checking was undertaken with 3 of the 5 participants. Attempts were made to member check with all participants, but due to time restraints and maintaining extended contact with schools this was not possible.

Table 1: IPA analysis stages as outlined by (Smith et al., 2022)

1. **Reading and re-reading**	This step allowed familiarisation with the data and active engagement in a slower, reflective process.
2. **Exploratory noting**	This step allowed exploration of semantic content and language. Specific ways in which the participant talked about the issue were identified.
3. **Constructing experiential statements**	Exploratory notes were consolidated whilst maintaining complexity.
4. **Searching for connections across experiential statements**	This step involved the mapping of how statements fitted together.
5. **Naming the personal experiential themes (PETs) and consolidating and**	At this stage, each group of statements were given a name to describe its characteristics.

	organising them in a table	
6.	Continuing the individual analysis of other cases	This step involved repeating the process for further individual cases.
7.	Working with PETs to develop group experiential themes (GETs) across cases	This step involved looking for patterns across the themes to create a set of group themes to highlight the shared features across participants' experiences.

3.8 Ethical considerations

An ethical application was completed and approved (see Appendix B) by the University College London (UCL) Data Protection team as well as the research supervisors for this project (Department of Psychology and Human Development at the UCL Institute of Education).

The main ethical considerations of this project concerned the protection of the potentially vulnerable participants, for example requiring informed consent and providing information sheets alongside a debrief process, safeguarding and child protection considerations and ensuring confidentiality and anonymity.

3.9 Quality

Evaluating the quality of research involves making decisions about how well the research has been conducted, and whether the findings can be regarded as trustworthy and useful (Yardley, 2015). There is still significant variability in how

these concepts are understood in practice, but a number of flexible guidelines have been developed to provide a supporting framework. These guidelines are typically applicable to all qualitative research, regardless of the specific methodological approach, however Smith (2011) has also produced criteria specifically for assessing the quality of IPA research. Smith et al. (2022) have since built on these earlier criteria to produce seven ways to enhance the quality of IPA research. In Table 2 below the quality of this IPA project was assessed by considering these markers.

Table 2: 7 ways to enhance the quality of IPA as outlined by (Smith et al., 2022)

1. **Consider the analytic span**	I reflected throughout the process of this project and within supervision on decisions about where and how to focus writing.
2. **Make space to elaborate on each PET and GET**	I ensured I have the word space to write a detailed, in-depth analysis.
3. **Ensure high-quality data**	I practiced and reflected on my interview practice to ensure I collected high-quality data.
4. **Demonstrate rigour**	I provided a transparent, detailed account of my analytic process to reflect the complex work of the analysis. I also conducted member checking by returning to participants to see if the PETs made sense to them and fit with their lived experience.

5. **Detail the complexity of the analysis**	I highlighted the contributing participants in a GET and across a whole output to evidence how diverse participants manifest the same GET in unique ways. GETs were discussed with research supervisors to ensure they reflect the data collected.
6. **Illustrate analytic depth and avoid description**	I evidenced analytic depth by demonstrating claims at both group and individual level as well as claims developed in interpretative notes.
7. **Attentive and skilled writing**	I made use of feedback during research supervisions and feedback on drafts to craft a binding narrative across my whole thesis.

Chapter 4: Findings

This chapter provides a phenomenological and interpretative narrative of the research findings. It begins with a 'pen portrait' of each participant to provide knowledge of each unique and individual position. To safeguard anonymity only key information is presented and pseudonyms are used. Five Group Experiential Themes (GETs) were generated from the interpretative analysis which will be presented in a table, before then exploring each GET individually, highlighting how it was described by individual participants.

4.1 Pen portraits of participants

Maya

Maya was in Year 11 at the time of the interview. She describes herself as having a mild hearing loss and she has no additional needs. Maya's parents are both hearing and she was 5 years old when her hearing loss was identified. Her first language is English, and she has no additional languages in the home. Maya wears a hearing aid and attends all lessons at school. She previously attended a mainstream primary school.

Fiona

Fiona was in Year 11 at the time of the interview. She describes herself as having a mild hearing impairment and she has no additional needs. Fiona's parents are both hearing and she was 6 years old when her hearing impairment was identified. Her first language is English, she has no additional languages in the home. Fiona wears hearing aids and attends all lessons at school. She previously attended a mainstream primary school.

Lucas

Lucas was in Year 8 at the time of the interview. He describes himself as having a moderate hearing loss and he has no additional needs. Lucas has one hearing parent and one deaf parent, and he was 4 years old when his hearing loss was identified. He experiences both English and Spanish in the home, acquiring both from birth. Lucas wears hearing aids and attends all lessons at school. He previously attended a mainstream primary school.

Katherine

Katherine was in Year 7 at the time of the interview and she describes herself as being profoundly deaf. She has no additional needs. Katherine's parents are both hearing and she was 2 years old when her deafness was identified. Her first language is English and she has no additional languages in the home. Katherine wears cochlear implants and uses a radio aid at school. She attends all lessons at school and she previously attended a mainstream primary school with a deaf support unit.

Max

Max was in Year 8 at the time of the interview. He describes himself as being moderately deaf and he has no additional needs. Max's parents are both hearing and he was 20 months old when his deafness was identified. His first language is English, and he has no additional languages in the home. Max wears hearing aids

and uses a radio aid at school. He attends all lessons at school and he previously attended a mainstream primary school.

4.2 Presentation of Group Experiential Themes (GETs)

The 10 Personal Experiential Themes (PETs) that were identified from the 5 participants' accounts were grouped into 5 Group Experiential Themes (GETs). These are presented in Table 3 below, with the green shading indicating which participants had each of the PETs. An example transcript with exploratory notes and tables evidencing the analytical process (with exploratory notes, quotes, experiential statements and PETs) can be found in Appendix D. In addition, in Appendix E there is an outline of the analytical process which includes some reflections.

Table 3: Group Experiential Themes (GETs)

Group Experiential Themes (GETs)	Personal Experiential Themes (PETs)	Maya	Fiona	Lucas	Katherine	Max
Effective support and strategies	Support strategies	green	green	green	green	green
	Friendship support	green	green	green	green	green
Developing deaf awareness and advocacy through co-production	Co-production of support strategies	green	green	green	green	green
	Deaf awareness at school	green	green	green	green	green
Difficulties with difference and relatedness	Being deaf can be difficult at school		green	green	green	green
	Feeling different	green	green	green		green
Experiences of difficulties and barriers	Barriers to learning	green	green		green	green
	Difficulties interacting with peers	green	green			

Building a positive deaf identity and self-concept	Sharing your deaf experience					
	Positive experience of deafness					

The 5 GETs will be explored individually using subthemes associated with the PETs, and thus highlighting how it was described by individual participants.

4.3 Group Experiential Theme 1: Effective support and strategies

An important feature of all participants' accounts of their school experience was support and strategies, this included support they receive in the form of classroom strategies, adult support, peer support and support from friends.

4.3.1 Sub-theme: Support strategies

Participants shared a number of classroom strategies that teachers put in place to support their learning. For example, many shared that it's helpful to be seated at the front in lessons, Maya said:

> *"I'm always sat in the front row so that I'm nearer to the front and it's just easier for me." (p1)*

Maya highlights the importance of 'always' being near the front to ensure she can access class instructions provided by the teacher. Fiona, Lucas and Max echo this:

> *"I mainly sit at the front of the classes with the teachers." (Fiona, p1)*

> *"They usually sit me in at the front of the class so I can hear better." (Lucas, p2)*

> *"Most of my classes I'm at the front, so in front of the teacher." (Max, p3)*

Intriguingly, they use 'mainly', 'usually' and 'most' which indicates they're not always at the front. With 4 of the 5 participants talking about this classroom strategy it highlights how important it is to be at the front near the teacher so they can hear and lip read. Yet, this simple, effective strategy is not used consistently by teachers.

Some of the participants also describe teachers regularly checking in with them during lessons:

> *"…my teachers check in and ask like, 'Is everything okay?'." (Maya, p1)*

> *"They (teachers) check that I am ok and if I can hear what they said…" (Max, p1)*

This allows individuals to feel held in mind by their teachers, ensuring they don't have to always ask for help or support.

Maya and Fiona also describe how support from peers during lessons was also important:

> *"…the people around me are really supportive as well. If I don't hear something, they'll like, definitely help me or show me their notes." (Maya, p1)*

> *"…if I do need help, I can always just turn to someone next to me." (Fiona, p4)*

In addition to support from teachers in lessons, participants spoke about other adults and school staff that support them. Max spoke about his form tutor, whom he described a positive relationship with:

"Well, there's two teachers that I have very good relationships. One is my form tutor…and form tutor I see every day…. He makes sure I'm OK with everything". (p1)

In secondary school students have several different teachers across the school day, thus the form tutor for Max provides a containing, relational relationship which has been supported by the regularity of seeing him every day. Similarly, Katherine spoke about how she has built a good relationship with the school SENCO due to having weekly, containing meetings to discuss any issues:

"…we have some meeting with her on Thursday and she's extremely helpful. We just tell her problems with deafness and catch up." (p5)

Max also describes being supported emotionally by his ToD:

"Yes, it has been helpful when I can talk about stuff or I can still talk about stuff to her when I don't really feel comfortable with anyone else." (p5)

The ToD was said to visit termly and it's important to note that Max said that they are deaf themselves, thus this relationship is built on trust, understanding and relatedness. This support is integral for Max, due to feeling comfortable to share particular things that he wouldn't share with anyone else.

Both Max and Katherine described using a radio aid in lessons to support them to access the teacher talking. They noted that it was an effective strategy when teachers know how to use it and remind them to use it:

"She's (Miss X) really good at using the transmitter (radio aid). She never forgets." (Katherine, p1)

"…and they ask for my radio aid which is very helpful because sometimes I forget." (Max, p1)

This support from teachers in using an assistive device such as the radio aid was described as integral for them to access learning. Katherine talked about one teacher in particular using it well, which emphasises that she doesn't feel all her teachers do. She is also indicating that some teachers forget, which subsequently puts responsibility on her to remind teachers. Alternatively, Max indicates his teachers take on this responsibility to remind him, holding themselves accountable for supporting his access to learning.

Participants expressed they felt that languages can be difficult for deaf students and both Maya and Max spoke of no longer doing languages at school:

"So, for GCSE…I dropped languages because of my hearing." (Maya, p1)

"Well, when I made the decision…my literacy wasn't actually that good they decided to take me out of French and put me into literacy class." (Max, p2)

Maya reported that she stopped doing languages when she chose her GCSE subjects, however Max said that he stopped doing French this year whilst he is in Year 8, instead attending an additional literacy session. Schools providing this flexibility in the curriculum for deaf students is an important support strategy. Both students chose this themselves, meaning schools are supporting choice and ownership over decisions in their education.

4.3.2 Sub-theme: Friendship support

An important feature of the participants' descriptions of their experience of being deaf at school was support from friends. It was clear that friends being aware of their deafness and understanding how to support them was key, Max said:

"They do look at me, which is very helpful because of lip reading, so I think they are quite aware of my deafness." (p3)

For Lucas it was also important not to be treated any differently by his friends, he said:

"They understand that I'm deaf and just treat me like a normal person." (p5)

Maya described the significance of having long term friendships, hence meaning they're well attuned to her needs and support her accordingly:

"I think they kind of get the idea when I haven't heard like they know, like to repeat it to me even if I don't ask. And one of them I've been friends with for like 12 years so, she knows what I'm like and if I'm likely to hear or not." (p2)

There was a sense of dependency described by Fiona and Katherine with their best friends at school:

"Sometimes she's not in and it's like what do I do now?" (Fiona, p2)

"… it's always sad when the other person isn't in." (Katherine, p4)

For Katherine this was a dual dependency as her best friend is also deaf. This shared experience has led them to become best friends when they met when they started secondary school. Katherine said:

"Yeah, you both understand each other because you know, I didn't really have someone who understood what it was like to be deaf." (p5)

This understanding and relatedness from her deaf best friend creates a closeness and a feeling that they're in it together. Fiona explained that her best friend has English as a second language and similarly there appeared to be a connectedness through shared difficulties and difference. Fiona said:

"…she's not English, so she starts saying words funny and sometimes I mishear what she says…" (p2)

Fiona also said that her best friend makes her *"not feel alone." (p2)*, illustrating the importance of support from friends, and in particular how significant it can be to have friends who have similar lived experiences.

4.4 Group Experiential Theme 2: Developing deaf awareness and advocacy through co-production

All participants talked about deaf awareness at school including suggestions on how to develop this and examples of an absence of deaf awareness. The importance of co-production was highlighted not only in developing deaf awareness, but also in developing support and strategies for deaf students at school.

4.4.1 Sub-theme: Co-production of support strategies

Participants shared their thoughts on co-production with deaf students when planning their support and how important it is to ask each individual about their needs and preferences. Some gave examples of times when co-production is needed but isn't happening. Katherine said:

"It's a little bit annoying because suggested that we swap around teachers. So, for example, I don't think I need an extra teacher in art because well it's

drawing and art, but it is if I would benefit from more in computer science."

(p4)

Katherine clearly knows which lessons she would benefit from the teaching assistant (TA) support, she highlighted the importance of discussing support with the individual to ensure it's appropriate and effective. Similarly, Max talks about thoughts he's had about support that would help him in Spanish lessons when doing listening tasks:

"I had the idea of getting her speaking in front of me of what's happening. They've not changed anything yet." (p4)

He expressed that he feels he would be able to access listening exercises in Spanish more easily if the teacher was in front of him, hence he could then lip read as well as listen. He uses 'yet' as he seems hopeful this might be addressed. Fiona clearly describes the need for understanding an individual's needs and collaborating with them, she said school staff need to: *"…just try to understand and work with the child." (p7).*

Katherine highlights the importance of school staff understanding all the ways deaf students may access language and ensuring they work with the students to agree classroom strategies that are effective for their communication needs, she said:

"If someone's got the transmitter (radio aid) on and not looking at me, I can still hear them, but obviously it's better if they are looking at me because I noticed my brow creasing like that (demonstrates brow creasing)." (p2)

Katherine needs to be supported by teachers using the radio aid in addition to facing her so that she can lip read, as it's more effective and easier for her to access

language via the radio aid and lip reading. Many deaf students use lip reading, Max commented:

"I use lip reading every single day…" (p3)

With lip reading being a key strategy, it's important to work with students to understand this. Both Katherine and Max recommended teachers:

"…don't speak with your back turned…" (Katherine, p7)

And:

"…don't talk while writing or looking at the board…" (Max, p5)

In addition, Katherine said:

"…I don't think people still fully understand because they were going like really enunciating which actually makes lip reading harder." (p2)

Deaf students need to be listened to when considering what is effective, they know what works and what doesn't. Other strategies and support were suggested, Max said:

"Well, one thing I think every teacher, when they've got a deaf young person is make sure they understand what the question is or what they're doing…" (p5)

It seems it's important to check in with deaf students, making sure they've heard instructions and know what the learning task is. Fiona, talked about her experience with teachers overdoing this:

"he constantly asks me even though I can hear. 'Oh can you hear me? Can you hear me?' Yeah no I can hear you please stop….Irritating cause it's like I am listening." (p7)

In order to get it right for each individual, teachers need to work with students and listen and act on their feedback. It can be a careful balance of students receiving support, whilst not feeling they are standing out from their peers. Lucas said:

"Don't exaggerate it too much." (p5)

Whilst Lucas says it's important to not exaggerate their deafness and need for support, Maya acknowledges this can be challenging to get right, she said:

"I would say don't treat them differently to the rest of the class, but they still need to have like a bit more support. At the same time, it's a bit of a weird one because you don't want to like isolate them, but still need to understand that they're going to need a bit more help to stay on top of the work and stuff." (p6)

The key take away from participants' accounts, is that they are all very knowledgeable about the support they require, and school staff need to work alongside them to co-produce this to ensure it works effectively for them in school.

4.4.2 Sub-theme: Deaf awareness at school

When considering deaf awareness at school, participants spoke about the different levels of deaf awareness amongst school staff. Maya described feeling that staff in student support had a better understanding of her deafness:

"Generally, if I need anything, I'll probably go there (student support), they just understand a bit more than other teachers." (p3)

She seeks support from those who have better deaf awareness and perhaps who can provide containment. It has been previously mentioned that Max benefits from emotional support from his deaf ToD, he notes that ToD are likely to have a better understanding than teachers due to their training:

"Well, I'm guessing Teachers of the Deaf would have a lot more understanding than school teachers have. They've had experience." (p5)

Max also refers to the lived experience of being deaf when he talks about the support and understanding he experiences from his ToD:

"And obviously my Teacher of the Deaf is deaf and she's had that when she was young. Well, I think it would be a lot more understanding if most of them were deaf and they've had the experience of childhood." (p5)

Similarly, Lucas spoke about his old form tutor:

"…My old tutor, she was really good…Because she knew how I felt and she knew other students like me…Since she knows how good I can hear and how bad I can hear." (p5)

He evidences the need for school staff to have a good level of deaf awareness and understanding of lived experience to ensure they can successfully support deaf students they work with both emotionally and with their learning. Lucas also spoke about an experience he had at school that evidences some teachers are lacking in deaf awareness:

"I used to do Italian and the teacher would always shout around the table. She even sent me out of the class because I told her to repeat something. I didn't like that teacher. I switched to Spanish." (p4)

Unsurprisingly, Lucas didn't like that teacher and swapped to Spanish. It highlights the discrimination that deaf students can experience, particularly when people have no or very little understanding of deafness. This can also be known as audism, a term coined by Humphries (1977). Katherine also spoke of a similar experience when trying to communicate with her deaf friend:

> *"… I was talking to her rather loudly because it was a crowded corridor and she needed me to speak louder to her, but I guess I was speaking too loud because the new headmaster of the school yelled at me apparently. 'Do you want a detention?'…There was another time when I was speaking loudly to (student A), a maths teacher told me off for being so loud..." (p5)*

These experiences evidence the range in understanding and awareness of deafness amongst school staff. Deafness can be invisible if students are not wearing visible aids, Fiona said:

> *"Well, some of them didn't even know that I couldn't hear that well, until they suddenly saw my hearing aid and went oh..." (p1)*

Evidently, it's important to have an awareness of who is deaf at school as well as a good level of deaf awareness and understanding. Katherine spoke about students at her school wearing a sunflower badge:

> *"…it's a little bit annoying sometimes because we have a sunflower badge. I'm not wearing it right now, which shows you have special needs and you know, maybe something you don't understand you shouldn't get cross at the child..." (p5)*

It seems her school have tried to ensure all staff are aware of students with needs by asking these students to wear a sunflower badge. The responsibility has been put on students to make themselves visible and known to staff to ensure they are understood and treated fairly. Katherine noted that she wasn't wearing it at the time, and she also described having to wear it as 'annoying', thus indicating the need for collaboration with these students when imposing a policy like this.

Participants also spoke about assumptions people can make about deaf students at school. Fiona spoke about people assuming all deaf students are the same:

> *"Don't assume that every deaf child is the same as they're not…They will have different capabilities…" (p7)*

Maya evidences these assumptions when talking about her musical talents:

> *"Yeah, I actually play two instruments. I play the piano and drums. A lot of people think that would be quite difficult because of like my hearing. I really enjoy it." (p2)*

She uses 'actually' indicating she thinks people would be surprised that a deaf person can play instruments, when it's something she really enjoys.

Participants also spoke about staff needing training in deaf awareness to counteract this and ensure they fully understand different levels of deafness and deaf students lived experiences. Fiona and Lucas described staff needing awareness of different types and levels of deafness:

"More awareness of different types of hearing and not just the normal oh, you can't completely hear anything or you can hear everything, I feel like the confusion between (different types of hearing loss) needs to be discussed a bit more because like it just isn't." (Fiona, p3)

"That there's different types of hearing losses. It's not just that you can't hear a thing. With some you need to treat a bit more, than other ones." (Lucas, p6)

They highlight the confusion there can be with the different levels of hearing loss, thus what someone can or can't hear. Fiona emphasises that this needs to be discussed and understood and Lucas emphasises that in turn this will help to support students effectively.

In addition, a need for an awareness of their lived experience of being deaf at school was spoken about, Max said:

"I don't think they really know that it is difficult for me." (p5)

Katherine, also expressed feeling that staff didn't fully understand her experience:

"Sometimes I feel a little bit shy because I don't think they fully understand how serious it is to be in a mainstream school, because it's so hard." (p7)

Deaf awareness seemingly incorporates many integral elements including an understanding of lived experience and the emotions that any difficulties can produce.

Some of the participants also described their experiences of peer awareness, or lack of at school. Both Fiona and Katherine described some experiences of being discriminated against by peers:

> *"I think all my friends were a bit jealous that maybe I got extra time on tests. And she's like, 'why do you need extra time on the test? Just because you're deaf' or 'it's not that hard'…" (Katherine, p2)*

> *"I remember one time I said it was like last year or so and these younger kids spoke loudly because I was there and said, 'I don't want a deaf person to babysit my future children because they won't be able to hear my baby cry.' I was like, why are you like saying this?" (Fiona, p6)*

These experiences are saddening to hear and highlight a need for better peer understanding and awareness. For Fiona, she described feeling at a loss as to why these young people felt the need to say this in her earshot. It was a privilege to know that they felt comfortable to share these experiences with me during their interviews.

Bearing peer awareness in mind, Katherine spoke about deaf awareness sessions needing to include opportunities to experience deafness:

> *"Or people just maybe investing time, like a deaf specialist come around and people can really ask questions and feel what it's like wearing hearing aids or I'm sure they'll soon be some technology where people can feel what it's like to wear implants on them somehow to turn their ears off." (p7)*

For both peers and staff to experience and better understand what it is like to be deaf is important and Katherine seemed passionate about this when she spoke about it.

Part of developing deaf awareness in schools involves providing deaf representation in the school community. Maya spoke about the lack of deaf representation in her school:

> *"They have a lot of empowered females they stick around the school to show you like people you can aspire to. And I feel like maybe they could just add someone who may be deaf. They do have people who have disabilities, but I haven't seen a deaf person." (p7)*

Katherine touched on the importance of working with deaf students when promoting deaf representation at school:

> *"There was a time when (Mrs G) brought us some posters. They were like 'Deafness is not a disability it's an identity'. But then I was like it's both actually." (p6)*

Katherine points out an assumption or misunderstanding and this emphasises that schools although wanting to help and support deaf students, need to remember the importance of co-production with deaf students themselves.

4.5 Group Experiential Theme 3: Difficulties with difference and relatedness

When sharing their accounts of deafness at school, the participants spoke about difficulties they experience and how it can lead to feeling different and feelings of isolation.

4.5.1 Sub-theme: Being deaf can be difficult and isolating at school

Several of the participants talked about situations that can be difficult and frustrating at school, Fiona voiced annoyance when people don't repeat things you haven't heard:

> "… *if they want help and didn't hear something, just repeat it, rather than just 'ohh you should have listened'…" (p7)*

Being told 'you should've listened', is understandably frustrating and makes Fiona feel at fault for something out of her control. She described this:

> *"It gets frustrating sometimes because like I want to hear, but then I just can't hear." (p5)*

Both Lucas and Max spoke of the difficulties at break and lunchtimes:

> *"If you go outside and play football it will be harder to hear somebody doing that…Because you can hear the wind in your ear when you're running sometimes." (Lucas, p2)*

> *"Background noise is a bit frustrating, actually in playground and lunch hall background noise makes it harder to hear people I sometimes have to ask them to repeat what they said."* (Max, p5)

They refer to the difficulties of the environment outside of the classroom and how this can make it difficult to interact with others when there is lots of background noise.

Katherine noted that she doesn't know many other deaf people in her school:

> *"So, I don't know very many deaf people in the school."* (p1)

As Katherine highlights here, deaf students may be the only deaf young person in their school or one of few. This can make school a difficult experience when you feel like the only one in the situation, Fiona talks about this:

> *"Sometimes a bit isolated because you're like the only one in that situation and you don't really know what to do and it's like none of these people around you get it."* (p4)

Katherine expressed similar feelings of isolation, despite having a deaf best friend at school:

> *"And also like if I'm on my own planet because OK, because my experience of being deaf will always be different to another person's experience of being deaf."* (p4)

Here she signifies how difficult it can be even when you do have other deaf peers or friends with you at school, despite some relatedness and understanding, there is still variance in every deaf person's lived experience. Katherine goes on to say this can make her feel low:

> *"Uh, make me feel depressed and just like ahhh."* (p7)

Again, I feel very privileged that they felt comfortable to share these experiences and feelings with me, it's important they have voiced how difficult and isolating it can be and the feelings this evokes.

4.5.2 Sub-theme: Feeling different

Participants spoke about a strong feeling of difference at school and sometimes made comments associated with the concept of 'fitting in'. Maya comments on her 'voice' improving:

"So, my voice has improved a bit and hopefully will improve more." (p3)

She hopes her speech will improve further. This gives the sense that she notices her speech is different to peers and feels she needs to improve as society's norm is to communicate through speech. When Maya spoke about stopping languages at school due to finding them difficult, she said:

"And there are quite a few people who don't take the language, so I'm not like the only person." (p1)

Here she refers to not being the only person to not do something, again indicating her awareness of being different to the majority of peers by not learning languages at school, but she's reassured that she's not the only one. Lucas and Fiona often used the word 'normal' in their accounts, indicating a desire to be treated normally and not differently to others:

"Yeah, they know about it and knew I was deaf, they just treat me like a normal person." (Lucas, p2)

"But then most of them knew and then they just treated me normal because I can hear." (Fiona, p1)

They both described people at school knowing about their deafness but treating them normally. The use of the term 'normal' and 'normal person' in this sense lends

itself to the idea that they want to be normal and not different. Max, on the other hand describes himself as not being 'normal':

> *"Well, I'm not actually normal, but that's what I sometimes think but I going to have to get over that. Sometimes I feel that I've not been able to."* *(p6)*

He adds that he 'sometimes' thinks that, indicating there are times when he feels his deafness or difference assimilates him into society rather than not. He also says he will have to overcome this feeling of not being normal, but this is difficult for him.

This feeling of difference and desire to be treated the same as their peers means they will often avoid situations that make them different or stand out from peers. For example, Maya and Fiona spoke about not wanting to ask for support or help in lessons:

> *"Um, well, probably wait till the end of the lesson, because I don't feel comfortable like asking in the lesson for that." (Maya, p5)*

> *"I don't want to put my hand up and don't want to ask for help." (Fiona, p4)*

This uncomfortableness that Maya describes is echoed when she describes assemblies being difficult at school:

> *"…But I did have the option to sit the front, but I didn't want to like be like one person just going up to the front." (p4)*

She recognises a difficulty and the support that has been offered. However, if this support makes them feel different in anyway, they may prefer to continue to try and cope without support. This reiterated when Maya spoke about previously using a radio aid at school:

"I used to have a radio aid, so I would give it to the teachers and then they would wear it, I could hear better as it was louder. But um, I think last year I stopped using it because I thought it was extra and I don't really need it I think." (p3)

Again, she recognises that the radio aid helped her to hear better, but she felt it was 'extra'. She appears unsure about whether she requires the radio aid, using 'I think' when she talks about not needing it. It may be that using the radio aid makes her feel too different to her peers and prefers to rely on her hearing aid and lip reading which are more discreet.

4.6 Group Experiential Theme 4: Experiences of difficulties and barriers

A key feature of participants accounts of their school experience was the difficulties and barriers to learning that they experience on a daily basis. In addition, the difficulties they experience when interacting with their peers both in the classroom and socially during break and lunchtimes.

4.6.1 Sub-theme: Barriers to learning

Most of the participants talked about a number of difficulties and barriers to learning at school. Accessing spoken language from the teacher and peers proved to be a barrier to learning. The positioning of the teacher in the classroom was mentioned by Maya:

"I think that sometimes teachers like to wander around the classroom, which is okay because they're looking at other people's work to like check as well. But then when they start talking, when they're like halfway through the room, then there's some difficulty there. But I try to like turn around and face them,

so that can be a bit awkward sometimes, like trying to write notes and be like facing the other way." (p5)

Maya describes finding it difficult to hear and lip read when the teacher isn't positioned in front of her and facing her. She also finds it difficult to note take and face the teacher at the same time, meaning she could miss out on information or instructions when she is writing and may get behind when focusing on listening/lip reading over writing notes. Katherine spoke about teachers giving verbal instructions and not supporting this with written instructions. She expressed that she felt teachers were in a rush for the majority of students to get on with the learning task:

"No, they just say, because they want the kids to get on with the task, and sometimes I'm like I have no idea what I'm doing." (p3)

She said she will sometimes not know what she needs to do, therefore she's unable to access the learning. There are also opportunities for learning from peers in the classroom when they may be giving answers or ideas in class feedback. Fiona highlights that this can be difficult:

"I don't know sometimes like other children just know to speak up a bit more, because they're often really quiet and if they are in some lessons the teachers don't repeat it like what the child says so it's like what did you say? What was the answer? I don't know what the answer is." (p3)

She describes not being able to hear what peers have said and teachers may not repeat it. This is frustrating for her when she then doesn't know what answer was shared.

Participants described some particular subjects being difficult, such as music. Maya talks about the difficulties with listening to music:

"So in music, listening is done as well and that can sometimes be quite difficult because you have to pick up on like what you think the pitch would be or like the timings." (p4)

She describes finding it difficult to try and listen to the specific elements of the music. Yet, Fiona refers to the amount of noise in music lessons making it hard to hear what the teacher is saying:

"Music sometimes as I can't hear what the teacher is saying with the music and then there's like multiple sounds at once." (p5)

Katherine highlights the reality of mishearing the teacher's instructions in music:

"So, we were doing digital music and the teacher was like you've got to use these 3 notes CE&G. And I heard something like D. C and E. Or something like that…so there was a big confusion. Yeah. So then we kind of had to redo the project." (p3)

Here, Katherine misheard the notes they had to use for a music project and ended up having to redo the project as a result.

As mentioned previously, some participants described no longer learning languages at school or do one language instead of two. Max said:

"I don't do French, as it's very difficult for me. I do, do Spanish, but not French." (p1)

Maya chose not to do languages at all at GCSE level, she said:

> *"Yeah, I made the decision because I found it quite difficult with the listening exercises and also talking as well because of the speech and stuff and the accent I couldn't really get right." (p1)*

In addition to languages, Maya also described finding English lessons difficult:

> *"…and I think I struggle more with English, I think because of my language development. I feel like I'm quite behind in English subjects like English language and literature because I don't know how to like articulate properly, but I'm being helped a lot." (p2)*

Maya demonstrates here the impact she feels her language development has on lessons such as English, however she does feel she is getting support.

As well as some lessons at school being particularly difficult, both Maya and Max spoke about assemblies:

> *"Well, assemblies can be quite difficult…You sit as you come in so you could be faced anywhere in the hall. So then like I am not right at the front." (Maya, p4)*

> *"…but I'm always at the very top because that's how it is somehow…It can be difficult, but the radio aid normally helps with that." (Max, p5)*

It seems that where they may be sitting for assembly can make it difficult due to the positioning of the speaker in the room and the distance they may be from them. This is counteracted slightly for Max by using his radio aid.

Max and Maya spoke about group work:

> *"Well, quite a lot of group work, in certain subjects, let's say drama- that's a lot of group work can be really difficult and quite loud."* (Max, p4)

> *"Yeah, I find group work quite difficult because the whole class is talking and then you're trying to listen to just one group."* (Maya, p6)

Group work is clearly challenging for them due to increased noise levels and trying to focus and listen to your own group.

Katherine described using a radio aid at school and although this supports her to access learning at times she described how it can be a barrier:

> *"So I don't think my teachers have had a lot of experience, so they kind of forget sometimes with the transmitter (radio aid) because it's lying on the desk and in a class conversation it's very loud. I'm trying to speak to my partner and I literally cannot hear anything they're saying. I have to go by lip reading because the transmitter has all the noise of the class into it.* (Katherine, p1)

She describes how when not used correctly the radio aid can hinder more than it helps. If the radio aid has not been switched off during class discussions, the additional noise means she has to rely on lip reading to be able to work with her partner. Katherine also said:

> *"Yeah, some of my teachers forget to wear it. For example, my form tutor just assumes that if it's, left lying on the desk, you can still hear through it."* (Katherine, p1)

Again, incorrect use of the radio aid is hindering Katherine's access to learning when it should be a support. For Katherine to be able to hear with the radio aid, the teachers need to be wearing it. Katherine explains that teachers 'forget', feeling perhaps that some teachers don't deem it important to ensure they remember and use it correctly.

Participants seemed to report that difficulties and barriers to learning are sometimes when the support or strategies in place for them are forgotten about or not used consistently, and thus become a barrier to learning:

> *"Sometimes children move around on the tables and decide to swap my place around on the table, I sometimes hear more of the kids on the other side of me than the teacher and I'll have to just adjust to the noises again, and it's not like fun and I don't enjoy it." (Fiona, p5)*

> *"Some lessons, I'm not actually always at the front." (Max, p5)*

Here Fiona describes not always being in the most appropriate seat in class when students move around and teachers do not monitor this. She describes this as 'not fun', as she can often then hear other students and struggles to hear the teacher. Max noted that he was not always at the front in all lessons, which likely makes it difficult for him to access what the teacher is saying, seeing as this is why he sits at the front in the majority of lessons.

4.6.2 Sub-theme: Difficulties interacting with peers

Both Maya and Fiona spoke about difficulties interacting with their peers at school, Maya said:

"Like big groups, it's obviously more difficult because people like talk over each other or like there's three different conversation going on at once. And that can be really overwhelming." (p5)

The complexities of group social interaction makes it difficult for Maya to follow and this can be overwhelming. She said she can get lost when multiple people are talking and different conversations are happening:

"Most of the time they will repeat themselves, but sometimes I get a bit lost and it gets a bit confusing at times." (p2)

Not only is there the issue of the noise level making it harder to hear, but it will also make lip reading harder for Maya, as she will find it difficult to follow who is speaking. Similarly, Fiona expressed finding it difficult interacting with peers at times and this has led to arguments, she said:

"Yeah, because sometimes I've had arguments with people because I haven't understood what they said and they got frustrated with the fact that I haven't really listened, even though I couldn't hear them anyway, so that wasn't fun." (Fiona, p5)

It's difficult for deaf students to manage in these situations with peers and if in addition peers are not very understanding and accommodating this understandably can lead to tensions.

4.7 Group Experiential Theme 5: Building a positive deaf identity and self-concept

Some of the participants spoke of sharing their deaf lived experience with others at school and two of the participants spoke quite openly and positively about their deafness.

4.7.1 Sub-theme: Sharing your deaf experience

Participants spoke about it being awkward and embarrassing to share your experience of deafness with school staff:

> *"…I don't explain my situation to them, they kind of just see the profile... so I would find it a bit awkward, like trying to tell them like, my perspective."*
> *(Maya, p6)*

> *"Sometimes I feel a little bit shy because I don't think they fully understand how serious it is to be in a mainstream school because it's so hard. I don't think they fully understand that sometimes I can be embarrassed…*
> *(Katherine, p3)*

As Katherine mentions, it feels difficult to share to people who may not fully understand. Max said:

> *"Probably tell them in the next few years and build up my confidence for them." (p2)*

Although teachers are given information about deaf students in school, this is about their needs and support they require. It can feel more challenging to share their lived experiences, although they also stress the importance of sharing their experiences and perspective with school staff as well as peers:

> *"I think it's important that they, if they want to, they should try and hear what they have to say about, their story and stuff on how hearing loss affects them." (Maya, p6)*

Maya emphasises that deaf students should only share their experiences if they want to. Katherine and her deaf friend at school did want to share more about their experiences with their peers:

> *"So, we did a presentation to our form explaining everything and then we did it to the whole of Year 7 which is 180 children." (p2)*

She added:

> *"I think it's more important if you do it, show them to them so they can see how you feel about everything." (p2)*

Here Katherine stressed how important it is to share this lived experience, so that people can better understand the emotional impact being deaf at school can have.

Max spoke about not being ready to share his lived experience with his friends yet:

> *"… I've not really told them anything about my deafness…I don't really know if I should tell them just yet, about my deafness." (p3)*

As mentioned previously in this chapter, Max said that his friends knew about his deafness and would ensure he was able to hear and/or lip read them when together. However, he prefers not to share further about his lived experience being deaf and he is still unsure if he wants to do this in the future. Participants highlight how sharing their experience can be fundamental to developing better understanding amongst school staff and peers yet emphasise the importance of it being your choice.

4.7.2 Sub-theme: Positive experience of deafness

Both Katherine and Lucas spoke positively about being deaf at school, Lucas said:

"There is nothing bad about having hearing aids when you go to school everything will happen normally…It hasn't affected me, everyone treats me normal. Nothing bad, I can still play sports and understand people." (p6)

He describes his experience referring to a sense of normalcy and feeling very much a part of the school community. Katherine described a mix of emotions:

"What's the word for something that's hard but exhilarating and also fun at the same time. I enjoy the challenge, but sometimes it can be a bit much, but I love, I love it anyway…Just so fun. Anyway, I feel as if I'm flying." (p7)

Katherine appears to acknowledge that there are challenges being deaf at school, but she embraces these challenges and demonstrates a positive deaf identity, describing it as exhilarating.

Chapter 5: Discussion

The purpose of this chapter is to relate the findings of my research to current research and literature. As some novel topics and different ways of thinking emerged through the interpretative analysis, new literature will also be introduced and discussed to aid understanding. Self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000) was a useful psychological construct to use as a theoretical lens to frame my findings and the facilitation of inclusion of deaf students at school, therefore this is discussed throughout this chapter.

5.1 Summary of main findings

The purpose of this project was to capture the educational experiences of deaf young people in mainstream secondary schools in order to inform future inclusive practice.

The project aims were:

- Identify the barriers and experiences of support for learning in mainstream secondary schools for deaf learners.
- Identify the barriers and experiences of support for social interaction in mainstream secondary schools for deaf learners.

Five Group Experiential Themes (GETs) emerged from the interpretative analysis which help facilitate understanding in relation to these aims. The GETs that emerged were:

- Effective support and strategies
- Developing deaf awareness and advocacy through co-production

- Difficulties with difference and relatedness

- Experiences of difficulties and barriers

- Building a positive deaf identity and self-concept

These will each be presented and discussed in turn in an appropriate order that fits the narrative. However, these themes and related findings often overlap and therefore some topic areas are discussed across several themes. For example, an effective classroom strategy for some participants may also act as a barrier for some participants.

5.2 Effective support and strategies

All participants spoke about experiences of support for learning including examples of classroom strategies that helped them at school. For example, participants were sat at the front in most of their lessons. This is reflected in the existing literature base with Todorov et al. (2022) reporting that sitting at the front was a self-perceived strategy used by deaf students in primary schools. Interestingly, Todorov et al. (2022) report this as a student strategy, thus something students do to support themselves instead of teachers organising this. In my research Fiona and Max additionally spoke about seating position as a barrier to learning, describing not always being at the front and seating plans getting moved around. Thus, it appears they felt seating positions were the responsibility of the teacher and therefore would be something they would need to ask permission for rather than moving to the front themselves. Sitting at the front of the classroom improves access to speech by reducing the distance between the teacher and the student, subsequently their voice is louder and if they're facing them then access to facial cues and lip reading also improves. Consequently, it's important for teachers to ensure deaf students are consistently seated at the front of all lessons.

Another strategy identified by participants in my research was teachers regularly checking in with them during lessons to ensure they have heard and understood the learning tasks. This was not highlighted much in research discussed in the literature review, however it is noted in the National Deaf Children's Society's (2019) deaf friendly teaching guide for secondary school staff as a recommended strategy to support deaf students in the classroom. One reason this is important is deaf students may have reduced attention and concentration at times due to the effort it can take to listen and lip read. However, it must also be recognised that if teachers do not consistently ensure access to instructions for deaf students, it will be even more integral to check in with them. In my research Katherine spoke about not hearing the correct music notes in an instruction given by the teacher and subsequently doing the task wrong and then having to redo it. So, in the first instance, it is key for teachers to ensure instructions are given to deaf students in an accessible way, to ensure this doesn't create a barrier to learning.

Effective support was provided for some participants in my research through using a radio aid in lessons to support them to access the teacher talking, otherwise known as an assistive listening device. It was noted that it was an effective aid when teachers know how to use it and prompt them to use it in lessons. Katherine illustrated that she must remind some teachers to use the radio aid, whereas in contrast for Max teachers remind him. Therefore, his teachers are holding themselves accountable for supporting his access to learning. Similarly, Todorov et al. (2022) reported primary school students recounted that their class teacher

regularly used the radio aid in the classroom. However, with only one class teacher in primary school it is a markedly different experience in secondary school with numerous teachers needing to use the radio aid and students having to manage this.

These classroom strategies (being seated at the front, regular check ins and using radio aids correctly and consistently) would help to support deaf students to feel competent in managing their classroom environment, which aligns itself well with self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000). This is a theory of human motivation and personality, that suggests people are driven to fulfil 3 basic psychological needs: autonomy, competence and relatedness in order to be satisfied and self-determined, indicating a positive wellbeing (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Therefore, these classroom strategies can help to support deaf students' self-determination and wellbeing, whilst supporting their inclusion in learning.

It was important for two participants (Maya and Max) in my research to have access to a flexible curriculum at school allowing them to choose not to learn languages or learn one language rather than two, thus allowing them autonomy. Maya chose not to do any languages at GCSE level and Max chose to solely do Spanish rather than in addition to French. In addition, for Max this meant being able to have extra literacy sessions. There is limited research into deaf students learning foreign languages at school and the research available focuses predominantly on deaf students learning English as a foreign language in Europe. However, the NDCS (2019) provides recommendations in their deaf friendly teaching guide for secondary school staff on how to support students learning languages at school. Although the two participants

(Maya and Max) in my study wanted this flexibility in the curriculum, it is also important to stress that many deaf students can successfully learn foreign languages and should have full access to the curriculum with required adjustments made. The NDCS (2019) recommend deaf students may need visual aids, vocabulary support sheets, 1:1 pre-learning sessions and live speaker versions for audio material or transcripts. Max did note that he thought his teacher being a live speaker would be helpful in Spanish for audio material, yet this was not currently happening. If Maya and Max were supported effectively with adjustments to support them with the difficulties they experience learning languages, it is possible they would have chosen to continue. It will be important for deaf students to be appropriately supported when learning languages at school as well as being given autonomy to choose within a flexible curriculum. Increasing deaf students' autonomy at school with regards to their learning aligns with self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Supporting deaf students to ensure they have control and input into their support, helps them to meet this basic need of autonomy and thus self-determination.

Deafness can impact on the development of language and the closely related area of literacy (Antia et al., 2020), therefore some deaf students can have difficulties with reading and writing and subsequently find literacy-based subjects challenging. In my research Max spoke about attending extra literacy sessions with teaching assistants (TAs), and it will be important for staff to have an understanding of appropriate strategies to develop deaf students' literacy. For example, Antia et al. (2020) suggest due to English syntax (the grammatical arrangement of words in sentences) being a notable area of difficulty for deaf students who use spoken language, intensive instruction in this area would be beneficial.

In addition to support from teachers, participants noted their peers also provided support to them in class. For example, the students they are sat next to will provide support by repeating things or sharing their notes. Todorov et al. (2022) similarly found that primary school deaf students were supported by classmates and Iantaffi et al. (2003) found key stage 3 students indicated sitting next to a friend was helpful. The participants in my research who spoke about this did not speak of sitting next to friends, though this is a support strategy that could well be helpful for secondary school students to feel more confident and comfortable to ask for help from those seated next to them.

As well as practical support from teachers and/or TAs in lessons, it was important for most participants in my study to have support from other adults in school through containing and relational relationships. Max spoke of his relationship with his form tutor and makes reference to seeing him every day, which is important in secondary school when you have many different subject teachers, thus providing Max with consistent support. Recent research into the role of the form tutor in secondary schools in England provides a characterisation of the role and suggests it is key that form tutors are relational and supportive, advocative and act as a 'first port of call' (Cara, 2022). Similarly, Dalton (2013) states that schools need to meet deaf students' needs for relatedness and emotional support through empathic and caring relationships. In my research Katherine also experienced a containing relationship, with the school SENCO who she meets with weekly with another deaf peer to discuss any issues that have occurred. This relationship provides Katherine with a

sense of relatedness and competence in managing her school environment. Max also spoke about being supported emotionally by his ToD who visits him at school on occasion. This is another opportunity for relatedness and understanding for Max as his ToD is deaf, and he spoke of feeling comfortable to share things with her he didn't feel able to share with others. Previous research by Iantaffi et al. (2003) recommended that deaf students would benefit from support from deaf adults at school, be it teachers or ToD, because this provides positive deaf role models and hence can play an important role in fostering deaf students' sense of self. Max's ToD being deaf is an integral part of the connection and relatedness he experiences in the relationship. It is of note that Max was the only participant to make reference to having a ToD who is deaf themselves. Furthermore, the other participants either spoke very little of their ToD or didn't mention a ToD at all. This may indicate they may not be assigned a ToD or it may be indicative of ToD work predominantly going on behind the scenes (Iantaffi et al., 2003). It has been reported by CRIDE (2022a) that there are 622.77 full time equivalent ToD in England working mainly as a peripatetic ToD, this means they normally visit deaf children and young people in non-specialist pre-schools and mainstream primary and secondary schools. These ToD were reported to have an average theoretical caseload of 63 deaf children and young people. Caseload was considered as deaf children and young people receiving some form of support at least once a year, for example, direct teaching, school visits, home visits, providing equipment checks (CRIDE, 2022a). It was also reported that the number of full time equivalent peripatetic ToD has decreased from 625.14 in 2021 to 622.77 in 2022 and since 2011 there has been a 13% decline from 718.3 full time equivalent peripatetic ToD (CRIDE, 2022a). These figures indicate deaf children and young people may not all be receiving regular support from a ToD

due to the falling numbers of ToD and an increasing caseload. Edmondson and Howe (2019) noted that with decreasing numbers of ToD, EPs may be increasingly requested by schools to work with deaf young people.

The support from adults at school described by the participants in my research as well as the autonomy experienced by some, again aligns with self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Previous research has pointed to the importance of self-determination skills, including self-advocacy for effectively navigating life as a deaf individual (Dalton, 2013; Edmondson & Howe, 2019; Garberoglio et al., 2020; Luckner & Becker, 2013). They highlight the importance of deaf individuals having a greater sense of control over their life and environment in order to achieve a better wellbeing. Whilst I think self-determination and self-advocacy are important, I also think there needs to be a balance when considering elements such as a mastery of your educational environment to ensure there is shared responsibility between the individual and school staff. Therefore, not solely reliant on self-advocacy by the student, this shared responsibility and collaboration is demonstrated effectively with Katherine's experience of weekly meetings with her school SENCO.

Friendship was a topic that participants commented on frequently, highlighting the importance of friendships in supporting them to navigate their school experience. It was key for participants' friends to be accepting and understanding of their deafness in addition to being attuned in supporting them, this is in line with the research by Edmondson and Howe (2019) with secondary school students with moderate deafness. Friendships and self-determination (associated with self-determination

theory) have been noted in previous research to positively influence the lived experiences of deaf individuals (Millen et al., 2019), thus highlighting the importance of supportive friendships that offer acceptance, relatedness and understanding. Edmondson and Howe (2019) also concluded that social inclusion for deaf students is facilitated by interpersonal relationships, self-concept and confidence. In my research, it was clear for Katherine it helped to have a deaf friend at school, this can help to raise the confidence of deaf students (Iantaffi et al., 2003). There was a sense of reciprocated dependency and an understanding and relatedness from her deaf friend, creating a closeness and a feeling that they're in it together. This facilitation of shared understanding helps to ensure deaf students don't feel isolated at school (Iantaffi et al., 2003).

5.3 Experiences of difficulties and barriers

The majority of participants in my research spoke of their experiences of difficulties at school that subsequently act as barriers to their learning. There were several examples given for difficulties accessing spoken language from the teacher during lessons. The positioning of the teacher in the classroom was mentioned, describing teachers moving around the classroom and talking at the same time. Not only did this create difficulties hearing and/or lip reading the teacher, but it was also harder to shift attention from turning and facing the teacher to note taking. Earlier in this chapter, the importance of being seated at the front of the class, thus in front of the teacher was highlighted. If teachers frequently move around the classroom as they talk this negates the purpose of being seated at the front. The importance of being able to see the teacher's face in order to understand what they're saying was also noted by Todorov et al. (2022). In my research Maya recognised the need for teachers to move around the room to check in with students and manage the class,

however when talking to the whole class and giving instructions they need to ensure they're positioned in front of any deaf students in the class.

These difficulties deaf students experience accessing spoken language in the classroom are why it is so integral for teachers to provide written instructions and information (Salehomoum, 2020; Todorov et al., 2022). In my research Katherine spoke of teachers only giving spoken instructions and not supporting this with written instructions, consequently this means there were times when she didn't know what they were doing, therefore being unable to access the learning. It is also important for teachers to repeat what other students have said (Todorov et al., 2022). In my research Fiona spoke of finding it frustrating when some students speak quietly and the teacher doesn't repeat what they've said, creating opportunities for missed learning.

There were particular subjects at school that were reported to be particularly difficult for the deaf students in my research, and without appropriate support and adjustments in these subjects they experienced barriers to their learning. Both Max and Maya referenced English being difficult due to their language and literacy development which was referred to earlier in this chapter when discussing literacy interventions and appropriate strategies. When learning foreign languages Maya referred to the difficulties with the listening exercises and finding it difficult to speak the language. Languages have also previously been discussed in this chapter when referring to the effectiveness of accessing a flexible curriculum in which students can choose not to do some languages. Strategies recommended by the NDCS to support

deaf students in learning languages at school were shared. Despite deaf young people enjoying music as much as their hearing peers, music was another subject that was difficult for participants in my research. They spoke about difficulties listening to music and having to describe the rhythm, tempo and pitch. In addition, if teachers gave instructions or information when music is being played it was difficult to hear and understand. The NDCS (2019) and LaLonde (2017) both give similar recommendations on supporting deaf students in music lessons, for example, using assistive devices, using gestures and demonstrations, visual aids, keeping background noise to a minimum, facing the student when speaking and never talking at the same time as music is being played. These classroom strategies are not at all dissimilar to strategies that can support deaf students in any lesson at school. This highlights how integral it is for teachers to understand and be trained in supporting deaf students at school.

As well as some lessons at school being particularly difficult, both Maya and Max spoke about assemblies being challenging due to the positioning of the speaker and the distance that they may be sat from them. The difficulties experienced in assemblies are similar to those experienced in the classroom environment. The importance of the speaker or teacher being close to and facing deaf students has been highlighted when considering the classroom environment, this is no different in an assembly hall. Background noise and the acoustics of the room need to be considered, as large halls or rooms can be reverberant with limited soft furnishings, which further reduces understanding of speech (Todorov et al., 2022). Strategies that can additionally support deaf students in assemblies are sitting at the front, using any assistive devices such as a radio aid and being provided with any

PowerPoints or written content prior to the assembly. In my research Max spoke about his radio aid being helpful in assemblies, because the speaker's voice is amplificated at a consistent level regardless of how far the student is from the teacher.

Several participants in my research spoke about the difficulties of group work in lessons at school. Some lessons appeared to have more group work than others, for example drama. Previous research has referenced group work as being challenging for deaf students at school due to the noise level and difficulty understanding what's being said (Todorov et al., 2022). During group work the noise level will increase drastically from the result of numerous group discussions at the same time, likely making it harder for all students to hear each other and consequently even harder for deaf students. The dynamic nature of group discussions can also be challenging for deaf students, trying to follow who is speaking and keep up with the pace of the discussion, subsequently severely reducing accessibility for the deaf students (Salehomoum, 2020). Noise level should be managed as much as possible and there should be the consideration of using a separate room or area for deaf students' groups. As well as discussion in group work, the literature reports difficulties in whole class discussion for deaf students. Salehomoum (2020) reported that signing deaf students were not observed participating in whole class discussion and the teacher failed to encourage their participation. Therefore, it is important during whole class discussion for teachers to use visual aids, repeat what other students say and encourage participation from deaf students.

Previously in this chapter the use of assistive devices such as a radio aid were discussed as being an effective support for participants in my research (Max and Katherine). However, Katherine also described difficulties engaging in classroom activities when the radio aid was not used effectively or not used at all. Katherine spoke about feeling that her teachers often are not using the radio aid effectively, demonstrating a lack of experience in using assistive devices. She talked about teachers leaving it on the desk rather than wearing the microphone or not switching it off when the noise level increases during group discussions, making it very challenging for Katherine to hear and thus it becomes a barrier to her learning. This finding of teachers using assistive devices incorrectly is consistent with previous research (Iantaffi et al., 2003; Todorov et al., 2022). Unsurprisingly, Katherine appeared exasperated by several teachers consistently not using the radio aid correctly. Previous research has similarly highlighted deaf students feeling embarrassed when teachers don't know how to work assistive equipment such as radio aids (Iantaffi et al., 2003). Katherine also explained that teachers 'forget', thus additionally leading to feelings of being forgotten. This is similar to other participants in my study when they spoke of support strategies not being consistent or monitored, consequently indicating they feel forgotten. This is consistent with previous research highlighting the importance of feeling understood and a sense of belonging for deaf students to promote positive school experiences over feeling forgotten (Dalton, 2013). Mainstream secondary school teachers need to use effective and inclusive support strategies and to accomplish this schools need to provide them with ongoing training and professional development.

Some participants in my research also experienced difficulties and barriers when interacting with peers at school. Maya described finding it challenging in group social scenarios with several people talking at once, she explained this can feel overwhelming. These difficulties with communication described by Maya create barriers to social interaction with peers which is consistent with previous research, deaf students being aware of their own communication difficulties posing obstacles (Edmondson & Howe, 2019). Fiona spoke about having disagreements with peers when they feel she hasn't been listening when she hasn't heard them. As indicated by Fiona's experience, these communication and interaction difficulties can be exacerbated by a lack of understanding from hearing peers (Nunes et al., 2001). Schools need to be proactive in anticipating how deafness can inadvertently result in negative interactions with peers and provide opportunities for hearing peers to develop a better understanding of their deaf peers' perspectives and lived experience.

These barriers and difficulties experienced by deaf students relate to all 3 basic psychological needs of self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000). It is key for students to experience relatedness with both school staff and their peers. Additionally, support and strategies that must be established to prevent deaf students experiencing these barriers will help to develop their competence and autonomy in managing the school environment. This in turn supports deaf students to be satisfied and self-determined, promoting a positive wellbeing and sense of belonging.

5.4 Difficulties with difference and relatedness

Some of the participants talked about feeling different from peers at school and how this can feel isolating at times. Many deaf students in mainstream schools may be the only deaf young person in their school or one of few, this can make school a difficult and isolating experience. It's often been highlighted that deaf students are at risk of social isolation from their hearing peers as well as from the hearing world around them (Wilkens & Hehir, 2008). One participant described how even when deaf students do have deaf peers or friends at school it can still feel isolating because there is divergence in every deaf person's lived experience due to the heterogeneity of the deaf population. This participant explained that this can make them feel low and frustrated. Some researchers have recommended that deaf students would benefit from deaf adults who could provide a relatedness and be seen as positive deaf role models (Iantaffi et al., 2003; Wilkens & Hehir, 2008). Findings of my research support this, as Max spoke of the benefits of having a deaf ToD and in addition Katherine shared the benefits of having a deaf friend at school who provides understanding and relatedness. Relatedness is one of the basic psychological needs of self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000) that can promote self-determination and therefore positive wellbeing and sense of belonging. With limited access to deaf peers and adults in mainstream schools, deaf students may struggle to build their confidence and self-concept, thus struggling to build a positive deaf identity. It can be argued that having deaf peers and/or adults in school will also raise awareness of deafness amongst hearing peers and adults in the school community (Iantaffi et al., 2003). It is also important to note that in my research participants also spoke of experiencing supportive and understanding friendships with hearing peers, indicating a good deaf awareness.

When describing feelings of difference, my research participants made comments associated with the concept of 'fitting in'. For example, Maya wanted to improve her speech to feel more assimilated with her hearing peers and the hearing world. Contrastingly, she also spoke about being interested in learning BSL, indicating a desire towards a more bi-modal deaf identity. Similarly in previous research students have talked about feeling different, being ashamed of their deafness and difficulties keeping up with peers (Dalton, 2013). Two participants used the word 'normal' in their accounts frequently, indicating a desire to be treated normally and not differently to others. This is consistent with previous research, with deaf students indicating a desire to be treated like everybody else, thus meaning sometimes too much attention or support is unwanted and dismissed (Iantaffi et al., 2003). Participants in my research gave several examples of avoiding situations that make them feel different or like they stand out from peers. Some didn't want to ask for help and support in class when they having difficulties understanding or had missed instructions. As previously portrayed, some students found assemblies difficult, but rejected the option to sit at the front not amongst their peers. Likewise Maya chose no longer to use her radio aid at school, feeling it was 'extra', deciding to rely on her hearing aid and lip reading which likely feels more discreet. Previous research has similar findings that assistive devices or support that made students' deafness more visible was often felt to be embarrassing and would avoid using them or receiving support (Iantaffi et al., 2003). Previous research has also illustrated that deaf students in mainstream schools express feelings of not belonging in their hearing classrooms, with the majority reporting feelings of shame and embarrassment (Dalton, 2013). My findings mirror this, with one participant in my research speaking

of not being normal and said that they would need to overcome this but are struggling to. As well as the consideration of deaf role models, school staff and other professionals need to work with deaf students to support them to explore their self-concept and acceptance of their deafness, Edmondson and Howe (2019) suggest that EPs would be well placed to do this. In addition to this schools need to support and promote deaf awareness and work with deaf students to address the school ethos around difference. In doing this schools could create a school community that celebrates difference and ensures there is no longer a disconnect between inclusive philosophy and exclusionary practice.

5.5 Building a positive deaf identity

It's been illustrated that the participants in my research struggled with feeling different to their peers and have had experiences of exclusion both academically and socially, sometimes leading to feelings of isolation. Some participants spoke more negatively about their deafness, such as not feeling normal and in contrast some participants spoke more positively about being deaf and their inclusive experiences of being deaf at school. As previously noted, it's important to support deaf students to explore their self-concept and deaf identity to help them to feel more confident and comfortable with their deafness. Identity is the representation of the self and this is a social construction because it is formed through interactions with the social world (Burr, 2015). The social constructionist perspective that has guided this thesis conceives that self-identity is created from thoughtful reflection on interactions with others in the societal environment, both past and present (Jackson & Hogg, 2010). Hence, why an interpretative analysis was used to explore participants' deaf lived experiences. The findings as stated have indicated varied experiences of being deaf at school and demonstrate how positive and negative experiences at school have

helped to create their deaf identities. Unsurprisingly, previous research has illustrated that supportive school environments contribute to positive perceptions of deafness and in contrast, non-supportive school environments and being treated as different contribute to negative perceptions of deafness (Leigh, 1999).

One's identity is not static: it can constantly change and evolve through continued interactions with our ever-changing environment. Adolescence in particular is a time when young people explore and experiment with different identities and for deaf young people, they're also exploring how this may or may not be influenced by their deafness. It has been documented that there are several factors than can influence young peoples' deaf identity, including the type of school setting, communication choice and their parents' identities (Byatt et al., 2021). One study in Greece evidenced that participants' educational experiences were a key influence on their deaf identity, with participants' interactions and communication with their hearing or deaf peers at school being critical in forming their deaf identity (Nikolaraizi & Hadjikakou, 2006). Nikolaraizi and Hadjikakou (2006) reported that deaf students who attend schools for the deaf and communicate using Greek sign language had a Deaf identity, identifying with the Deaf community and culture. Whereas deaf students who attend mainstream schools and communicate in spoken Greek had a hearing identity and felt part of the hearing world. However, deaf students who attend mainstream schools and communicate in spoken Greek but had opportunities to socialise with deaf peers or adults outside of school, were described as being part of a third identity that was defined as bicultural (Nikolaraizi & Hadjikakou, 2006). In Hardy's (2010) study into deaf identity in the UK with deaf adolescents, students identified as either deaf aligned, hearing aligned or the 'bridge between two worlds'.

This choice was said to be influenced by the ease or difficulty with communication they experienced and their experiences of friendships (Hardy, 2010). It is evident that deaf identity development is complex and a recent scoping review of the literature in this area identified the dynamic nature of deaf identity development in adolescents (Byatt et al., 2021). This dynamic nature of deaf identity is reflected in my research, although it must be noted that deaf identity wasn't directly spoken about specifically by participants, rather observations can be made through the stories they shared of their lived experiences.

This thesis research explored the experiences of deaf students in mainstream secondary schools, and accordingly all participants attend a mainstream school and they also all communicate with spoken English. This was as expected considering that in mainstream schools the majority of learning is taught orally, therefore the majority of deaf students in mainstream schools use spoken English. As stated in Chapter 1, 88% of deaf young people in the UK mainly communicate using spoken language within the school setting (CRIDE, 2021). With deaf identity being complex and dynamic with many influencing factors, the deaf identity of my participants cannot be assumed as identifying as hearing from this evidence, far from it, their deaf identity is certainly dynamic and evolving. Within my findings pen portraits were written for each participant based on information they gave in the background survey. From this it is known that 4 of 5 participants have hearing parents and 1 participant has one hearing and one deaf parent. Lucas did present with a more positive deaf identity at times, describing the majority of his school experiences as positive and supportive. He also spoke of nothing being any different being deaf at school and being treated normally. It could be hypothesised that in line with previous

research these supportive experiences at school have contributed to a positive perception of his deafness (Leigh, 1999). Although, it could be hypothesised that describing being treated normally indicates he is less embracing of his deafness as one may be if you are part of the deaf community and culture (Byatt et al., 2021). In addition, his deaf parent's identity may be influencing his perception of his deafness positively as it is providing him with a deaf role model and a sense of relatedness, understanding and advocacy (Kossewska, 2008).

Like Lucas, Fiona often referred to being treated normally, although she also indicated a frustration when people misunderstood her hearing, advocating for more awareness and understanding of different levels of deafness. Thus, it appeared Fiona did not want to be perceived by others as deaf and aligned with the deaf world, instead perhaps having a strong hearing self-perception. She describes herself in the background survey as hearing impaired, a term that can be viewed as aligned with the medical model of deafness, and consequently as a deficit. However, using the term hearing impairment to describe her hearing is likely heavily influenced by medical professionals' use of the term during appointments and letters throughout her life. My personal experience is testament to this and in recent years since gaining more understanding I now describe myself as deaf, demonstrating the dynamic element of deaf identity. In addition, Fiona also presented with some acceptance of her deafness and perhaps preferred the ease of assimilating into the dominant hearing culture. However, she also described a number of negative school experiences likely facilitating a more negative perception of deafness, as aligned with previous research (Leigh, 1999).

Another study in the UK explored adolescents' experiences after receiving cochlear implants, and found that many of the participants viewed deafness as a key aspect of their identity and viewed themselves as having a bicultural deaf identity (Hilton et al., 2013). This is consistent with my research, with Katherine who has cochlear implants: it appears deafness was an important part of her identity, yet she also seemed to be still developing her deaf identity, again indicating the dynamic feature of deaf identity. For example, Katherine spoke of deafness being both a disability and an identity, thus perhaps aligned with 'between the two worlds' often known as bicultural deaf identity. She also described a mix of emotions about being deaf, describing it as 'hard but exhilarating'. In the background survey Katherine recorded that she previously attended a primary school with a deaf provision, therefore she may have experienced a more positive deaf experience in the deaf provision, thus influencing a deaf identity (Nikolaraizi & Hadjikakou, 2006).

Both Katherine and Maya spoke about experiences of beginning to learn BSL, which could also be hypothesised as aligned with a bicultural identity of deafness (Byatt et al., 2021). Maya spoke of examples of not wanting to be different and fitting in with peers, this idea of normality may be viewed as either a hearing of more marginal identity perhaps working towards a bicultural identity (Byatt et al., 2021). Maya spoke a lot about friendships and she experienced acceptance and understanding from her group of friends at school. This is in line with Hardy's (2010) conclusions that participants' peer group influenced their identity development and alignment, thus with Maya's friends being hearing perhaps influencing a hearing identity. Research

would imply that because Katherine has a deaf friend at school, this would influence her towards a deaf identity (Leigh et al., 2008).

Some participants appeared to be struggling with their deaf identity as they spoke of not being normal, but also indicated that they wanted to overcome this feeling. Their apparent difficulties in learning to accept their deafness are consistent with research which indicates an individual's deaf identity is intertwined with their acceptance of being deaf (McIlroy & Storbeck, 2011). Max spoke positively of his deaf ToD, and he clearly valued the relatedness and understanding he experiences through the relationship. Max's ToD provides him with a deaf role model, which appears to be having a positive influence on his perspectives of deafness (Rogers & Young, 2011). Research indicated that a deaf role model can provide deaf young people with an opportunity to meet a deaf adult and see what deaf people can achieve from hearing about their experiences (Rogers & Young, 2011). As a further reflection, all participants in my research spoke very openly with me about their experiences and the majority seemed to benefit from speaking with me informally outside of the interview. Some wanted to know more about my experiences and what I had accomplished as a deaf adult with lived experience of a mainstream school setting.

All participants in my research spoke of both positive and negative experiences at school, therefore they have experience of both positive and negative perceptions of deafness. All participants also identified as having hearing difficulties, whether they describe it as a hearing impairment, hearing loss or deafness, thus to some extent they're accepting of their deafness as none described themselves as not being deaf.

Many of my participants recognised their hearing needs and the support they require, yet also had a strong desire not to be seen as different. The heterogeneity of the deaf population demonstrates that deaf identity is dynamic and flexible. Deaf identity is a fluid and dynamic concept, particularly for adolescents such as those in my research. Yet, it is a complex one which will continue to be influenced by factors such as self-awareness, acceptance, school experience and belonging (Hardy, 2010). Whilst also being an ongoing journey of development to find oneself within a world that elevates the dominant hearing society (McIlroy & Storbeck, 2011). This can also be framed as a journey towards self-determination as consistent with self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000), promoting positive wellbeing and sense of belonging.

The participants in my research emphasised the need for both school staff and hearing peers to have a better understanding of their lived experience. Despite some feelings of awkwardness and shyness, participants felt if deaf students feel comfortable and confident enough that it is important for them to share their experiences. Although teachers are normally given some basic information about deaf students in their class, the focus is on their needs and support they require. Participants felt it was important for school staff to also be aware of how being deaf in a mainstream school can be challenging. Katherine was the only participant who appeared to have endeavoured to do this, as she and her deaf friend did a presentation initially to their form group and then following this, to the whole of their year group. Hearing from deaf students themselves demonstrates an effective way to develop better understanding amongst school staff and peers. Much of previous research discusses a lack of deaf awareness amongst hearing peers and school

staff in schools (Iantaffi et al., 2003; Dalton, 2013). The importance of deaf awareness training and developing deaf awareness practice is highlighted, yet some suggest this should be delivered by professionals such as ToD and EPs (Hadjikakou et al., 2008; Edmondson & Howe, 2019). Others quite rightly champion the involvement of deaf young people in co-producing deaf awareness sessions to ensure its effectiveness (Iantaffi et al., 2003; Salehomoum, 2020).

5.6 Developing deaf awareness and advocacy through co-production

The participants in my research highlighted the importance of co-production in developing support and strategies for deaf students at school. This is consistent with previous research illustrating the importance of involving children and young people in decisions around their support (Powers, 2001). Remarkably, the majority of my participants weren't involved in decisions around their support, despite recognising the need for this. Similarly, Iantaffi et al. (2003) reported in their study that only 12 of the 39 participants stated that they had discussed their needs and provision with their ToD or SENCO. In my research Max reported a good relationship with his ToD and Katherine reported a good relationship with her SENCO, yet they both had ideas about their support and this was not being utilised. Deaf students have valuable insights into support and strategies used by teachers in the classroom (Iantaffi et al., 2003) and participants in my research stressed the importance of working together with deaf students.

Previous research illustrated a need for better understanding of strategies and support such as assistive listening devices. Teachers must understand that hearing aids, cochlear implants, radio aids and any other assistive devices used by deaf

students are not a cure, and therefore additional support may be needed such as facing the student when talking (Dalton, 2013). Katherine uses a radio aid, and she noted that she found herself having to work hard to listen when teachers were not facing her, forcing her to solely rely on the radio aid. Katherine spoke of the importance of her teachers having a better understanding that she uses lip reading in addition to the radio aid with her cochlear implants. The majority of participants in my study said they lip read at school, demonstrating how integral it is for school staff to understand and recognise this. My participants advised that teachers should ensure they don't speak with their back turned, don't talk when writing on the board and don't enunciate when speaking as this makes lip reading harder. Access to communication should be a shared responsibility in schools with training and education needed for teachers, in addition to collaboration between ToD, class teachers and deaf students (Salehomoum, 2020). Furthermore, with clear evidence that teachers' actions can act as a barrier to learning for deaf students, thus indicating exclusionary practice, it is integral for additional training for teachers focusing on facilitative teaching strategies to meet the needs of deaf students in an inclusive environment (Hadjikakou et al., 2008; Todorov et al., 2022).

Whilst it is necessary to include deaf students in decisions about their support and seek their input on effective teaching strategies, it is also of note that deaf students often do not want to be seen as different. Therefore, teachers must practice discretion and work with their students to get the balance of support and discretion right for each individual (Iantaffi et al., 2003). In my research, Fiona spoke of teachers constantly overtly asking her if she could hear which she found irritating. Maya and Lucas highlighted that it is key to not exaggerate a student's deafness and

not to treat them differently. These findings provide clear evidence for the benefit of school staff and other professionals working with deaf students to co-produce inclusive classroom strategies and effective support for them at school.

Deaf awareness at school is also an area of priority that was raised by all participants in my research with them speaking of variation in the level of deaf awareness amongst school staff. Participants reported that staff working in student support or special needs departments appeared to have a better understanding and awareness of deafness, such as the school SENCO. In addition, some participants referred to their ToD and a few particular teachers as being more experienced and understanding both the impact on learning as well as the emotional impact of being deaf at school can have. Additionally, Max's ToD being a deaf adult meant they had lived experience that they were able to share with Max. It seems that participants felt that school staff often place lots of focus on their hearing needs but less on the emotional experience of deafness. As well as schools meeting deaf students' needs for relatedness through empathic and caring relationships (Dalton, 2013), they must promote deaf awareness and ensure all school staff have an understanding of their lived experiences.

Participants in my research also spoke of experiences at school that illustrated a lack of deaf awareness amongst school staff, to the extent that some were discriminated against for being deaf, otherwise known as audism. Audism is bias, prejudice or discrimination against individuals who are deaf, thus audio-centric assumptions and attitudes of superiority, and it can be overt, covert or aversive practices of

discrimination (Eckert & Rowley, 2013). An example of audism is an unwillingness to assist someone's auditory or communication needs, making assumptions about deaf people's ability or that deaf people can't do certain things. These may be argued as indirect discrimination or a lack of understanding or awareness, yet the long-term emotional impact this can have on deaf students is of grave concern and thus these experiences must be taken seriously. Participants in my research have experienced being sent out of class for asking a teacher to repeat something and shouted at for talking loudly to a deaf peer so they could communicate. These experiences evidence the range in understanding and awareness of deafness amongst school staff and illustrate a dire need for deaf awareness training. Previous research has recommended training for all mainstream teachers regardless of whether they teach deaf students and more frequent and advanced training for teachers that do teach deaf students (Powers, 2001).

Deafness can be invisible, especially if deaf people are not wearing assistive devices or the devices are not visible. Another example of audism and the lack of deaf awareness in schools in my research is the practice identified by one participant of encouraging deaf students to wear a sunflower badge to identify themselves to others. School staff should not assume that everyone in their school community is abled unless otherwise identified; they instead need to have an awareness of all additional needs including deafness whether they are visible or not. This puts responsibility on students to make themselves visible and known to staff to ensure they are understood and treated fairly. The participant found it annoying having to wear the badge and was not wearing it at the time of the interview. Not only does this example indicate a lack of deaf awareness, but also indicates the need for

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collaboration with deaf students. This is consistent with previous research recommending the schools promote deaf awareness and work with deaf students to address the school ethos around difference (Iantaffi et al., 2003).

As noted, people can make assumptions about deaf people through a lack of awareness, participants described examples of feeling that people assume all deaf students are the same in their abilities and capabilities at school. Moreover as with previous research, they felt teachers may view them as lacking in ability, slow or an extra problem (Dalton, 2013). Additionally, participants in my research reported a need for school staff to understand the different types and levels of deafness as they felt it is often assumed that all deaf students can't hearing anything at all. Indicating they feel that school staff need to understand each individual's deafness to effectively understand and support them.

As well as deaf awareness for school staff, participants spoke about deaf awareness for their hearing peers and gave some examples of negative experiences with peers in the form of bullying and discrimination. As Nunes et al. (2001) noted, simply being around deaf peers does not establish better understanding and awareness of deafness amongst hearing peers. Two participants spoke of hearing peers discriminating against them, one gave an example of a friend disputing the need for extra time on assessments, saying 'just because you're deaf'. The other gave an example of a group of younger peers discriminating against the abilities of deaf people to look after babies, implying they wouldn't be able to hear a baby cry, whilst in close proximity, deliberately in earshot of my deaf participant. Bullying and

discrimination is an underestimated issue for deaf students and will likely have an impact on their self-esteem and emotional wellbeing (Edmondson & Howe, 2019). These experiences are saddening to hear and highlight a crucial need for better peer understanding and awareness. Deaf awareness sessions for hearing students can be provided by appropriate professionals such as ToD, EPs and in discussion and collaboration with deaf students (Iantaffi et al., 2003).

Part of developing deaf awareness in schools involves providing deaf representation in the school community. In my research Maya spoke about the lack of deaf representation at school, describing representation of other disabilities, but not deafness, for example in posters around the school. Katherine noted the importance of working with deaf students when promoting deaf representation at school to ensure its appropriateness. She gave an example where her school had displayed posters which imposed the assumption that deafness is not a disability, but an identity. With the heterogeneity of the deaf population and the dynamic and fluid identities of deaf students, it is all the more important to co-produce deaf awareness and representation with deaf students in the school community. Co-production of support and developing deaf awareness are both areas consistent with self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000). If deaf students' support is co-produced this provides them with autonomy and additionally helps them to feel competent in the school environment. Likewise, if deaf awareness is developed in schools, then deaf students will experience relatedness and understanding with school staff and peers, helping to promote positive wellbeing and sense of belonging.

Chapter 6: Conclusions

The purpose of this chapter is to provide final conclusions of this research whilst describing strengths and limitations, sharing implications for practice and suggesting possible further research.

6.1 Conclusions

This research was of importance due to there being at least 52,798 deaf children and young people aged 0-19 across the UK, with 77% of those who are school-aged reported to be attending mainstream schools (CRIDE, 2022b). The purpose of this research was to explore the experiences of deaf students in mainstream secondary school, with the aims focusing on the barriers and facilitators to academic and social inclusion at school. The concept of deafness is complex and profoundly misunderstood due to the heterogeneity of the deaf population and the dominant hearing society that we live in. Deaf students' experiences within this research are mixed with both negative and positive experiences at school leading to both negative and positive perceptions of deafness by them, their hearing peers and school staff. In turn this led to deaf students developing dynamic and flexible deaf identities at school which will likely continue to develop and change as they leave school due to the fluidity of deaf identities. Whilst the participants' experiences provided examples of both barriers and facilitators for academic and social inclusion, these highlighted the need for co-production of support with deaf students, ongoing professional development and training for school staff and deaf awareness training for both school staff and hearing peers in collaboration with deaf students. In addition, due to the difficulties of being deaf at school as highlighted by participants, and the emotional impact this can have on their wellbeing it is integral to provide deaf students with support through a relational approach to support their wellbeing and

sense of belonging at school. As well as this, deaf students need to be provided with opportunities to meet and interact with deaf peers and deaf adult role models to help build their autonomy and competence in navigating their school experience. Furthermore, in order to support this development of a sense of belonging and competence, schools need to collaborate with deaf students to develop and promote a school ethos of difference.

Self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000) was a useful psychological construct to frame the support needed by deaf students at school to facilitate their inclusion both academically and socially. This theory proposes that individuals experience increased wellbeing when their interactions with their environments meet their needs for self-determination, thus their autonomy, competence, and relatedness. If the suggested co-production, training and supports are established this will enhance deaf students' opportunities to have these needs met at school. Furthermore, this will also support deaf students to develop a positive deaf identity, additionally enhancing their wellbeing. As noted in the introduction there is limited quality research in the area of emotional wellbeing in deaf children and young people, yet there are indications that there are different factors that may be related to deafness that are linked to emotional wellbeing difficulties. This research has indicated that deaf awareness, or a lack thereof, can affect wellbeing, in addition to negative experiences of discrimination and academic and social exclusion at school. Hence, highlighting the importance of working towards inclusive practice for deaf students at school.

Findings of this research support the notion that inclusive education requires an emphasis on the access to appropriate co-produced support, in order to minimise barriers to academic and social inclusion. As well as the celebration of diversity and difference and supporting sense of belonging. Schools need to develop their inclusive practices and have an inclusive school ethos encompassing equity and acceptance. As we know the reality of inclusive education is wrapped up in conflict with the current socio-political context of education, thus there are opportunities for schools and EPs to work systemically together to address and navigate this.

Engaging in this research has been a very personal journey due to my insider positioning as a deaf adult. There have been emotional ups and downs with difficulties recruiting participants and difficulties arranging transcribing of the interviews through university disability services. Plus, my resilience has been tested when navigating what felt like a mammoth task of completing and writing a doctoral thesis. Yet, my interest and commitment to this research has never faltered due to my personal interest in my participants' lived experiences. It has been a privilege and extremely rewarding to share their accounts and provide an opportunity for them to be heard.

6.2 Strengths and limitations

When reflecting on my research both strengths and limitations have been identified throughout the process. I feel I have demonstrated sensitivity to the context in which I carried out my research, with it being grounded in the philosophy of IPA there has been the interactional nature to the research. My insider positioning as a deaf adult helped me to build rapport with participants through our sense of shared lived experience, supporting them to open up and share their experiences. My insider

positioning also supported my commitment to the topic and has helped to ensure a consistent epistemological positioning throughout. I have been transparent and clear about my positionality throughout my research and acknowledged that I have taken an active role throughout the analytical and interpretative processes.

As with all IPA research, I recognised that it is not possible to completely bracket my personal perspective and experiences, however I adopted a transparent, reflective and reflexive approach throughout. For example, I have demonstrated transparency by including my literature search process in the appendix, reading in depth about IPA methodology and conducting a rigorous data analysis. Unfortunately, I was unable to check PETs and GETs with all participants due to the time constraints and difficulties maintaining extended contact with schools. However, I used supervision to share analyses and promote discussions and reflections. I also used supervision alongside draft feedback to ensure reflectiveness and to craft a binding narrative across my research.

My research consisted of a small sample size of 5 participants, therefore findings are not readily generalisable, yet as with IPA and other qualitative research there is a focus on potential transferability. Additionally, due to the heterogeneity of the deaf population my sample provided a diverseness that can help to broaden my findings so that implications from my research can be considered more widely. Furthermore, deaf children and young peoples' experiences continue to change and transform over time with earlier identification through newborn hearing screening and greater exposure of deaf people in the media. These developments may create

improvements in deaf children and young peoples' experiences in mainstream schools, for example facilitating better deaf awareness and understanding. Therefore, my research findings from this heterogenous sample can be considered transferrable to a population whose experiences are continually varying and diverse.

6.3 Dissemination

My research aimed to give deaf young people an opportunity to share their stories and help to ensure their narratives are heard so that change can begin to be implemented where applicable. Therefore, it is integral to disseminate my findings in a number of ways to various audiences and stakeholders. Most importantly, a summary of findings will be sent to participants as well as including my heartfelt thanks for their participation.

I will present findings and implications from research to my local authority Educational Psychology Service as part of professional development during a service day or team meeting. Additionally, I have plans to team up with an EP colleague in my service and use my research findings and implications to create and deliver training for school staff next academic year (2023-24). There is also an opportunity to share a research briefing with school SENCOs via our local authority's SENCO bulletin and additionally sharing via the SENCO forum days. I will also share a research briefing with the hearing team and ToD in my local authority and collaborate with them about any future opportunities for systemic work.

In order to more widely share findings and implications from my research I am currently collaborating with my academic research supervisor, Professor Chloe

Marshall, to jointly deliver a professional development training session for education staff at the Institute of Education, UCL in June 2023. Additionally, I will look to publish my research in a journal relevant to educational psychology (*Journal of Educational Psychology in Practice*) or deaf education (*Journal of Deaf Studies and Deaf Education*).

6.4 Implications for practice

Whilst I aim not to generalise the experiences of my participants, I do make recommendations for schools, educational professionals and EPs as a result of my findings. At the school level it is of importance that schools provide training and professional development for their teaching staff on effective teaching strategies and the academic and social inclusion of deaf students in the classroom. Strategies would likely include sitting at the front, sitting them next to friends, facing them when talking, repeating what students say, written or visual instructions, regularly checking in discreetly, considering group work adjustments and training in using assistive devices. This training must be ongoing and those that teach deaf students should receive more in-depth training. It is integral that this training encompasses identification and strategies to support deaf students with any language or literacy needs. Additionally, schools need to provide deaf awareness training for all school staff and hearing students which covers understanding deafness and its heterogeneity and the lived experiences of deaf students, including their emotional wellbeing. Both professional development training and deaf awareness sessions need to be co-produced with any deaf students and adults in the school community, they must also be offered the opportunity to co-deliver. Furthermore, school EPs and ToD can offer their knowledge and experience and collaborate on training and deaf awareness and co-deliver as appropriate.

Further implications for schools are to offer a flexible curriculum to deaf students in which they can have autonomy over learning subjects that may be difficult such as foreign languages as well as opportunities for any appropriate additional interventions or wellbeing support. It is recommended that each individual deaf student is provided with regular opportunities to meet with a key staff member, for example their form tutor or SENCO to check in with them, discuss their support, any concerns and to support them in exploring and developing their deaf identity. It would be beneficial if this is with the support and guidance of the school EP and/or the individuals ToD. In addition to providing this containing relationship for them at school via an appropriate staff member, deaf students should also be provided with opportunities to meet with deaf peers and deaf adult role models to support their identity development as well as their need for relatedness, autonomy and competence. Again, EPs and ToD can support and facilitate this accordingly.

As well as supporting schools with the development and delivery of staff training, deaf awareness and individual work with deaf students, EPs must also support with promoting a school ethos of acceptance and difference. An inclusive school environment and community can be worked towards by encompassing a relational approach with the support of EPs knowledge and experience. EPs are well placed to act as a supportive 'critical friend' to schools in the development of a more inclusive environment whilst navigating the social-political educational context.

Wider implications include the consideration of training sessions on initial teacher training courses to support their understanding of working with deaf students. This will help to ensure teachers are entering the profession with a better understanding and awareness in how to support deaf students' academic and social inclusion at school effectively. This recommendation includes the consideration of more in-depth tailored training on secondary subject specific initial teacher training such as music and foreign languages which can pose more specific difficulties for deaf students. Additionally, EP doctoral training courses also need to provide sessions on deafness, working with deaf students and working with schools to support deaf awareness and understanding. As before, these training sessions on initial teacher training and EP doctoral courses must be co-produced with deaf students and adults and co-delivered with them if applicable and appropriate.

There is an urgent need for clear government guidance for secondary mainstream schools in relation to inclusive education and importantly supporting deaf students. Schools, initial teacher training institutions and educational professionals need clear guidance on developing awareness, relatedness, ethos and examples of good practice. We need flexible school systems that accept everyone to ensure a community of belonging rather than othering and highlighting differences. Furthermore, there is a clear need for educational professional training courses to recruit and support the training of deaf adults. For example, deaf teachers, deaf ToD, deaf EPs. This will help to provide an increasing number of deaf adult role models within educational settings to raise awareness of deafness and provide deaf students with deaf role models.

6.5 Further research

Due to recommendations and implications of this research focusing on training and deaf awareness for school staff, trainee teachers and trainee EPs, it would be beneficial to explore their development and effectiveness through action research. In addition, deaf identity was prominent in the findings of this research, I feel it would be beneficial to further study this through participatory research with deaf students to ensure their voice continues to guide understanding and best practice. Additionally, further research to understand the benefit and effectiveness of deaf role models from deaf children and young peoples' perspective. Lastly, it would be interesting to work with deaf children and young people to explore how parents/carers can best support their deaf children and young people from when their deafness is identified and onwards.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Systematic literature search strategy

Databases

- British Education Index (EBSCO)
- Education Resource Information Centre (ERIC)
- PsychINFO
- UCL Explore

Search terms

Several scoping searches were initially carried out to refine the search terms and results from these searches were scanned for relevance. Relevant articles returned by these searches were used to identify any additional key words to include in the final search. The final list of search terms used are outlined below.

The following search terms were used:

deaf* OR "hard of hearing" OR "hearing impair*" OR "hearing loss"

AND "mainstream education* OR "mainstream school" OR "general education" OR "general school"

AND inclusion OR "inclusive education"

Inclusion and exclusion criteria

Phase 1 during initial search		
Study item	**Inclusion criteria**	**Exclusion criteria**
Type of research	Original, primary peer reviewed research	Secondary research
Date	Published between 2000-2022 (inclusive)	Any date prior to 2000
Language	English language	Any language other than English
Phase 2 during title, abstract and full reading		
Study item	**Inclusion criteria**	**Exclusion criteria**
Phenomenon of interest	An investigation primarily focusing on deaf children and young peoples' experiences of inclusion in mainstream schools.	N/A
Context	Primary or secondary schools (or international equivalent)	Any context outside of primary/secondary schools.

	Mainstream schools (or international equivalent)	Any context outside of mainstream schools.

Process

- A filter was applied to limit the search to documents that were published in English and in peer reviewed journals between 2000-2022.
- Duplicate articles were removed.
- The remaining articles were screened by title and then abstract for relevance.
- Full text copies of the remaining articles were then downloaded for close review according to the inclusion criteria.
- In addition to a systematic search, a snowballing strategy was also used, whereby I accessed relevant material from articles' reference lists. I was also signposted to relevant articles by my research supervisors, which have also been included.

3517 • Articles identified through database searches (peer reviewed, in English and between 2000-2022).

42 • Articles after duplicates removed and screened by title. Topic limits were used where appropriate to screen titles, e.g. education, deafness.

25 • Articles after exclusions based on abstract screening.

9 • Articles after exclusions based on full text reading, with additional articles from snowballing strategy and signposting.

Appendix B – Ethics approval and information/consent sheets

With this action in mind, I am pleased to confirm that this project is now registered under, reference No **Z6364106/2022/04/89 social research** in line with UCL's Data Protection Policy.

You may quote this reference on your Ethics Application Form, or any other related forms.

You should make arrangements as early as possible for the secure long-term storage of your data, taking into account any specific requirements of your department or funder. UCL staff and PhD students can use the UCL Research Data Repository while undergraduate and Masters students may want to ask their supervisors about the Open Education Repository. The Research Data Management team can be contacted at ███████████████████

UCL staff can contact the Records Office ████████████████ to arrange for the long-term secure storage of their research records.

For data protection enquiries, please contact the data protection team at ████████████████

For ethics enquiries, please contact the ethics team at ████████████████

Regards,

████████████
Data Protection & Freedom of Information Administrator & Chief Web Editor
██

General enquiries. Please first check our FAQs as your question is likely to be answered there. If your question isn't answered in the FAQs, we aim to respond to all enquiries within 3 working days.

Please note I am currently working from home and best contacted via email.

Working hours: Please note that my current working hours are Monday to Friday 7.30am – 3.30pm.

Please protect the Environment. Print only if necessary.

▲UCL

Confidentiality and Legal Privilege: The contents of this e-mail and its attachment(s) are confidential to the intended recipient and may be legally privileged. It may not be disclosed, copied, forwarded, used or relied upon by any person other than the intended addressee. If you believe that you have received the e-mail and its attachment(s) in error, you must not take any action based on them, nor must you copy or show them to anyone. Please respond to the sender and delete this e-mail and its attachment(s) from your system.

WA ████████████████ ███████████@████████
18/05/2022 13:46

To: Prior, Stefanie

Save all attachments

📄 Parent information sheet.docx 127.67 KB	📄 School information sheet.docx 127.22 KB
📄 Young person consent sheet.docx 173.87 KB	📄 Young person information... 355.06 KB

📄 Stefanie Prior doctoral-research... 114.42 KB

Dear Stefanie,

I am pleased to inform you that your research project 'Capturing the educational experiences of deaf learners: Using the voices of children and young people to inform practice.' for the year 2 research project on the Doctorate in Professional Educational, Child and Adolescent Psychology, has been given ethical approval. If you have any further queries in this regard, please contact your supervisor.

Please note that if your proposed study and methodology changes markedly from what you have outlined in your ethics review application, you may need to complete and submit a new or revised application. Should this possibility arise, please discuss with your supervisor in the first instance before you proceed with a new/revised application.

Your ethical approval form has been logged and will be uploaded to the UCL IOE database.

Good luck with your data collection!

Many thanks,

████████████
Programme Administrator
███████████████████████████████████

<u>School information sheet</u>

Research project title: Capturing the educational experiences of deaf learners: Using the voices of children and young people to inform practice.

The researcher

I'm Stef Prior, and I'm training to be an Educational Psychologist. I am in Year 2 on the Doctorate in Educational, Child and Adolescent Psychology at the Institute of Education, University College London.

Why am I doing this research project?

I'm deaf myself and went to a mainstream secondary school. I am interested in children and young people's experiences at school because I know sometimes there can be barriers to learning and interacting with friends and peers. I would like to ask them about any barriers they have experienced as well as what has helped them. There is limited research conducted on deaf children and young people's views on inclusion in mainstream education settings. I believe their views are paramount to understanding issues in inclusion and planning for future educational psychology practice.

What will participants be asked to do?

- Respond to a written survey, so that I can learn a bit more about them and their deafness, how they've been supported, and any additional difficulties they might have.
- Take part in an interview which will last about an hour. We will talk about their learning and social experiences at school. I will audio record the interview.
- They will not have to answer any questions they are not comfortable answering.

What will happen to the information provided by participants?

- As part of my training I will write up my research project as a report, this is so that other people can read about my research.
- All data will be anonymised and every effort made to ensure participants are not identifiable.
- I will maintain participants' confidentiality within safeguarding limits and make sure they are aware of the limits of their confidentiality.

What do I do now?

- If you have any questions, you can email me at: ███████████████
- There is an information sheet and consent form for participants to complete to let me know whether they want to take part in the study.
- If they decide to take part, I would like to meet them at school first so they can ask me any questions. Then we will meet again to do the interview at school.
- Participants can withdraw from the study at any time.

Supervision and ethical approval

This research is being supervised by Professor Chloe Marshall and Dr Chris Bagley and has ethical approval, which means my project will adhere to accepted ethical standards. I also hold a valid enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check.

Data protection privacy notice

- The controller for this project will be University College London (UCL). The UCL Data Protection Officer provides oversight of UCL activities involving the processing of personal data, and can be contacted at ████ ████████████████

- This 'local' privacy notice sets out the information that applies to this study. Further information on how UCL uses participant information can be found in their 'general' privacy notice: click here

- The information that is required to be provided to participants under data protection legislation (GDPR and DPA 2018) is provided across both the 'local' and 'general' privacy notices.

- The lawful basis that would be used to process participants' personal data will be performance of a task in the public interest.

- Participants' personal data will be processed so long as it is required for the research project. If I am able to anonymise or pseudonymise the personal data provided I will undertake this and will endeavour to minimise the processing of personal data wherever possible.

- If you are concerned about how participants' personal data is being processed, or if you would like to make contact about their rights, please contact UCL in the first instance at ████████████████████

<u>Parent/carer information sheet</u>

Research project title: Capturing the educational experiences of deaf learners: Using the voices of children and young people to inform practice.

The researcher

I'm Stef Prior, and I'm training to be an Educational Psychologist. I am in Year 2 on the Doctorate in Educational, Child and Adolescent Psychology at the Institute of Education, University College London.

Why am I doing this research project?

I'm deaf myself and went to a mainstream secondary school. I am interested in your child's experiences at school because I know sometimes there can be barriers to learning and interacting with friends and peers. I would like to ask them about any barriers they have experienced as well as what has helped them. There is limited research conducted on deaf children and young people's views on inclusion in mainstream education settings. I believe their views are paramount to understanding issues in inclusion and planning for future educational psychology practice.

What will my child be asked to do?

- Respond to a written survey, so that I can learn a bit more about them and their deafness, how they've been supported, and any additional difficulties.
- Take part in an interview which will last about an hour. We will talk about their learning and social experiences at school. I will audio record the interview.
- They will not have to answer any questions they are not comfortable answering.

What will happen to the information provided by my child?

- As part of my training I will write up my research project as a report, this is so that other people can read about my research.
- All data will be anonymised and every effort made to ensure your child is not identifiable.
- I will maintain your child's confidentiality within safeguarding limits and make sure they are aware of the limits of their confidentiality.

What do I do now?

- If you have any questions, you can email me at: █████████████
- There is an information sheet and consent form for your child to complete to let me know whether they want to take part in the study.
- If they decide to take part, I will meet them first so they can ask me any questions. Then we will meet again to do the interview.
- Your child can withdraw from the study at any time.

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- The lawful basis that would be used to process your child's personal data will be performance of a task in the public interest.

- Your child's personal data will be processed so long as it is required for the research project. If I am able to anonymise or pseudonymise the personal data provided I will undertake this and will endeavour to minimise the processing of personal data wherever possible.

- If you are concerned about how your child's personal data is being processed, or if you would like to make contact about their rights, please contact UCL in the first instance at ██████████████████████

<u>Young person information sheet</u>

Research project title: Capturing the educational experiences of deaf learners: Using the voices of children and young people to inform practice.

Who am I?
I'm Stef Prior, and I'm training to be an Educational Psychologist. I work with schools, families and children and young people like you and I help with learning and wellbeing.

Why am I doing this research project?

I'm deaf myself and went to a mainstream secondary school too. I am interested in your experiences at school because I know sometimes there can be barriers to learning and interacting with friends and peers. I would like to ask you about any barriers you have experienced as well as what has helped you.

What will you be asked to do?

- A written survey, so that I can learn a bit more about you and your deafness, how you've been supported, and any additional difficulties.
- An interview which will last about an hour. I will do some activities with you and ask questions.
- We will talk about your learning and social experiences at school.
- I will audio record the interview.
- You will not have to answer any questions you are not comfortable answering.

What will happen to the information you tell me?

- As part of my training I will write up my research project as a report, this is so that other people can read about my research.
- I will use and describe the information in the survey in my report.
- I will write up the interview and write about it in my report. I will check in with you to ensure I accurately represent your views.
- I will share my report with other people, but I won't use your real name, to help ensure no one will know who you are.
- I will give you a summary of my report at the end of the study.
- What you tell me is confidential, it is private between me and you. However, if you tell me anything that makes me think you or anybody else is in danger, I will have to tell somebody.

What do I do now?

- If you have any questions, you can email me at: █████████████
- There is a consent form for you to complete to let me know whether you want to take part in the study.
- If you decide to take part, I will meet you first so you can ask me any questions. Then we will meet again to do the interview.
- If you change your mind, you can pull out at any time.

Yes

Complete the consent form and I will arrange to meet with you.

First meeting - you can ask me any questions and I will ask you to complete the survey.

Second meeting - we will do a 1 hour interview.

I will use your survey and interview information in my report.

I will share a summary of my report with you when the study has ended.

No

That's ok! Tick 'No, I would not like to take part' on the consent form.

I will not contact you again.

Data protection privacy notice

- The controller for this project will be University College London (UCL). The UCL Data Protection Officer provides oversight of UCL activities involving the processing of personal data, and can be contacted at ████ ████████████████

- This 'local' privacy notice sets out the information that applies to this study. Further information on how UCL uses participant information can be found in their 'general' privacy notice: click here

- The information that is required to be provided to participants under data protection legislation (GDPR and DPA 2018) is provided across both the 'local' and 'general' privacy notices.

- The lawful basis that would be used to process your personal data will be performance of a task in the public interest.

- Your personal data will be processed so long as it is required for the research project. If I am able to anonymise or pseudonymise the personal data provided I will undertake this and will endeavour to minimise the processing of personal data wherever possible.

- If you are concerned about how your personal data is being processed, or if you would like to make contact about your rights, please contact UCL in the first instance at ████████████████████

Young person consent form

Research project title: Capturing the educational experiences of deaf learners: Using the voices of children and young people to inform practice.

Name of researcher: Stef Prior

☐ Yes, I would like to take part in this study.

☐ No, I would not like to take part in this study.

If you would like to take part, please circle yes or no to each statement:

I have read and understood the information sheet about the study	Yes	No
I have had the opportunity to ask Stef any questions.	Yes	No
I confirm that my decision to take part is my own.	Yes	No
I understand that I am free to ask Stef questions about the study at any time.	Yes	No
I know that I will complete a survey and be interviewed by Stef. I know I will be asked questions about my experience of being deaf at school.	Yes	No
I understand that I do not have to answer any questions I do not want to and I can pull out of the study at any time.	Yes	No
I understand that the interview will be audio recorded and typed up.	Yes	No
I understand that Stef will use the information I tell her in a report which will be shared with others, but that no one will be able to identify me.	Yes	No
I understand that Stef will not use my real name in the report and will protect my identity.	Yes	No
I understand that if I tell Stef something that makes her think I or anybody else is in danger she will have to tell someone.	Yes	No

Name: **Signature:**

Date:

Background Survey

Research project title: Capturing the educational experiences of deaf learners: Using the voices of children and young people to inform practice.

Thank you for agreeing to participate in my research project in which I will ask you to share your experiences of school. The first part is this survey, so that I can learn a bit more about you and your deafness, how you've been supported, and any additional difficulties. Then we will meet for an interview which will last about an hour in which we will talk about your learning and social experiences at school.

Survey

1. How do you choose to describe your deafness? (Please circle)
   a) Hearing loss
   b) Hearing impairment
   c) Hard of hearing
   d) Deaf
   e) Other, please specify………………

2. How do you describe your level of deafness? (Please circle)
   a) Mild
   b) Moderate
   c) Severe
   d) Profound

3. How old were you when your deafness was identified?
   ………………………………….

4. Are your parents hearing or deaf? (Please circle)
   a) Both parents hearing
   b) One parent hearing, one parent deaf
   c) Both parents deaf
   d) Other, please specify……………

5. What is your first language?
   ………………………………..

   Do you have any additional languages? If yes, please specify.
   ………………………………..

6. What (if any) assistive devices do you use for your deafness at school?
   For example: hearing aids, cochlear implants, FM system/microphone, speech to text device.
   …………………………………………………………………………………

7. Which type of primary school did you attend? (Please circle)
   a) Mainstream primary school
   b) Special needs school
   c) School for deaf children
   d) Other, please specify………………

8. How do you spend your time in your current school? (Please circle)
   a) Attend all lessons
   b) Attend some lessons in the deaf provision
   c) Other, please specify……………

9. What adult support (if any) do you receive at school?
   For example: support from a teaching assistant, support from a teacher of the deaf.
   …………………………………………………………………………………

10. Can you describe the help you receive to support your learning in school?

11. Can you describe the help you receive to support you outside of lessons?

12. Do you have any other needs or difficulties? If yes, please specify.
    For example: autism, anxiety.
    …………………………………………………………………………………

<u>Interview schedule</u>

<u>Pre-interview</u>

Reminders:

- 1 hour interview
- audio recording
- they don't have to answer any questions they're not comfortable with
- if they share something that makes me think they or anybody else is in danger I will have to tell someone.

<u>Introduction</u>

- **Let's start by drawing/telling me about your school.**
  Prompts: Can you describe a typical day at school?

- **We're interested in whether being deaf affects young people's lives at school. Can you describe your school experience?**
  Prompts: teachers, peers, lessons, the building, after school activities, breaktimes
  Which aspects of this do you prefer or least prefer?

- **Who do you spend time with at school?**
  Prompts: How long have you known them?
  How would you describe them?
  What kinds of things do you do with them?
  What do these friendships mean for you?
  What do you like about them?
  How do you think they see you?

- **How do you feel about school?**
  Prompts: Can you describe your best experiences?
  Can you describe your worst experiences?

What else? Tell me more.

How do you feel about that?

<u>What works/helps</u>

- **What sort of things help all young people to join in during class?**
  Prompts: Are there things the teacher can do to help everyone?
  What helps when giving instructions?
  What helps when doing group work?
  What helps in the classroom environment?

- **Who helps you in school? How do they help you?**
  Prompts: Teachers, ToD, peers, TAs

- **We have spoken about the people that help you. Is there anything else that helps you in school?**
  Prompts: Equipment?
  Peers/friends?
  Classroom set up/environment?
  School ethos?

- **What sort of things help you outside of lessons?**
  Prompts: When socialising with peers?
  At breaktimes?

*What else? Tell me more.

*How do you feel about that?

Difficulties and barriers

- **Is there anything that you find difficult at school? Can you tell me about these things?**
  Prompts: With learning?
  In any particular subjects?
  In the classroom environment?
  When you're socialising with peers?

- **We're interested in whether being deaf affects young people's lives at school. Can you tell me whether being deaf has affected your life at school?**
  Prompts: Can you describe your best experiences?
  Can you describe your worst experiences?

*What else? Tell me more.

*How do you feel about that?

Even better if

- **Can you describe what would make things better for you at school?**
  Prompts: What else would make things even better for you at school?
  Is there anything that would help with learning in the classroom?
  Is there anything that would help with socialising outside of the classroom?
  Is there anything that would help people better understand your deafness?

- **How do you think teachers and other staff in schools could help deaf children/young people to be best supported at school?**
  Prompts: How could they help in the classroom environment?
  How could they help with access to learning?
  How could they help when working in groups?
  How could they help outside of the classroom?
  How could they help staff and others to understand deafness/how it feels to be deaf?

- **What would you tell teachers to do if they have children who are deaf in their class?**
  Prompts: What would you tell them to do to prepare for working with deaf young people?
  What would you tell them helps in the classroom environment?
  What would you tell them helps with access to learning?
  What would you tell them helps when working in groups?
  What would you tell them to help them understand deafness/how it feels to be deaf?

- **What would you tell teachers NOT to do if they have children who are deaf in their class?**
  Prompts: Anything they shouldn't do when teaching?
  Anything they shouldn't do when interacting with you?

What else? Tell me more.

How do you feel about that?

<u>Conclude</u>

- **We are coming to the end of the interview. Is there anything you would like to tell me? Or ask me?**

Finish with a reminder of next steps.

Appendix D – example transcript and analysis

Transcript - Maya

Me: So, first thing, can you start by telling me about your school? Can describe a typical day?

Student: *So, in the morning, we just, like, talk as a form, like in the class because it's a form plan, so we don't do too much, just register and then lessons. We have six lessons or, three lessons, but they're doubles. And then lunch time and break time, so break is 20 minutes and lunch is 40 minutes.*

Me: What lessons do you have?

Student: *So, for GCSE, I picked as my extras, psychology, geography, triple science and music. And I dropped languages because of my hearing.*

Me: Okay, when did you drop languages?

Student: *Just when we started GCSE's.*

Me: What made you want to drop languages, was that your decision?

Student: *Yeah, I made the decision because I found it quite difficult with the listening exercises and also talking as well because of the speech and stuff and the accent I couldn't really get right.*

So, I thought it would be the best.

Me: How did it feel to drop it?

Student: *It was actually okay. The student support people were quite okay with it and helped me to do it. And then the teachers were fine with it. And there are quite a few people who don't take the language, so I'm not like the only person.*

Me: As you know, we're interested in whether being deaf affects young people's lives at school. So in terms of describing your school experience, can you describe your teachers, your peers, your lessons. Anything about the building, the classrooms, break times. Think about things that you prefer and least prefer.

Student: *So, in lessons, I think all my teachers are aware that I have hearing loss so they make sure to stand at the front and face forward towards me. So, when they're writing on the board, they won't be talking at the same time so that I can make sure that I understand. And a lot of my teachers check in and ask like, "Is everything okay?". Or they will see if I'm confused and then re-explain it to me or I can just ask someone next to me. I'm always sat in the front row so that I'm nearer to the front and it's just easier for me. And yeah, the people around me are really supportive as well. If I don't hear something, they'll like, definitely help me or show me their notes.*

At break time, uh, we're quite a big group, like the whole form kind of just sit together and we just talk and eat like snacks and stuff. And it can be difficult at times because there's a lot of people talking at the same time, but I think I manage okay. And overall I just like, ask someone, what did they say again? Like my best friend. More like, who I ask.

Me: So how does it make you feel when it's a bit difficult at those times?

Student: *Most of the time they will repeat themselves, but sometimes I get a bit lost and it gets a bit confusing at times.*

Me: Okay. Are there any after-school activities that you do or any clubs that you participate in?

Student: *Yeah, I actually play two instruments. I play the piano and drums. A lot of people think that would be quite difficult because of like my hearing. I really enjoy it.*

Me: Is that something at school or do you have lessons outside of school?

Student: *Outside of school, but I do play for music GCSE.*

Me: How did you become interested in playing the piano and playing drums?

Student: *I think when I was really young, like a lot of my friends were playing piano or instruments and I really like the sound of the piano. So then I asked my parents and they were like, okay. And then I was quite good at it.*

Me: Do you take music examinations or grades?

Student: *Yeah, for piano I'm grade 4. And in piano there's like a listening part of the exam, but my teacher did manage to get like a different bit for that. So that's cut out and then I get a different part so I don't have to do the listening bit.*

Me: What's the listening part? What does that normally require?

Student: *Um, I think they play something on the piano, and then you have to sing it. And I did that once in, like, grade 1 and I found that really difficult. I told my piano teacher, and then the next time she changed it.*

Me: So how does it make you feel when you're playing the piano and playing the drums?

Student: *Yeah, I really enjoy it and I really like the sound of it.*

Me: You've talked a little about your friends already and how they help you. Who do you spend most of your time with at school?

Student: *Well, I have like two main best friends and also like a group of friends. I think they kind of get the idea when I haven't heard like they know, like to repeat it to me even if I don't ask. And one of them I've been friends with for like 12 years so, she knows what I'm like and if I'm likely to hear or not.*

Me: How would you describe them?

Student: *They're really helpful. And, yeah, I appreciate it a lot.*

Me: What do their friendships mean to you? How do you feel about being friends with them.

Student: *I think it's really important because it makes school so much better as well. If you have people that you can like talk to at break times it's quite fun as school can be quite long and boring.*

Me: You said school can be boring. so how do you feel about school in terms of your experience so far? Do you have any best experiences or any worst experiences that you want to talk about?

Student: *So I do find school interesting. I do enjoy working and stuff, just sometimes it's quite long and I think I struggle more with English, I think because of my language development. I feel like I'm quite behind in English subjects like English language and literature because I don't know how to like articulate properly, but I'm being helped a lot. So, my voice has improved a bit and hopefully will improve more and I'm more stronger in maths.*

Me: Can you tell me more about what you find difficult about English?

Student: *I think there's a lot of information that if you don't pick up on it, then you're going to fall behind.*

Me: How do your teachers support you?

Student: *I sit like almost right in front of them and they mark my work on the side just to see if I'm following along correctly. They'll ask me questions to double check that I'm engaged in the lesson so that I'm not, like falling behind.*

Me: How does that make you feel that you have found English a bit difficult?

Student: *I think everyone does have a weaker subject, so not too bad. And like some of my other friends are really good at English, so I can just ask them for help.*

Me: Have you got any really good experiences you want to share?

Student: *I just really like maths lessons because I feel like I understand it and then that makes me enjoy it more.*

Me: We've talked a bit about some things that helped you. Are there things that you think help all young people in class that teachers can do.

Student: *So, I was saying about the teacher facing towards us, I think that has actually helped a lot more people than just me because yeah, it's easier to stay engaged when you can make eye contact to like follow what they're saying. Also, having most of the notes on the board can be helpful because sometimes you miss out things that the teacher said. So it's benefited everyone I think.*

Me: What about at break times, are there things that help everybody?

Student: *In year 11, we are allowed to have break time and lunch time in our form room. So it's quite quiet and it's like easier for everyone to talk. Instead of outside with all the crowds and the noise.*

Me: Thinking about specifically who helps you in school, who is it and how do they help you? It could be, teachers, teaching assistants, your friends, student support.

Student: *I think student support have helped a lot. They organise my meetings with (Teacher of the Deaf) who like checks up on my hearing. Generally, if I need anything, I'll probably go there, they just understand a bit more than other teachers. But my teachers are really helpful because I think now that they know, they find ways to like help me like by sending me the PowerPoint after the lesson or something. If I miss bits of it.*

Me: We've spoken about people that help you, is there anything else that helps you in school? That could be equipment, that could be the setup of the classroom.

Student: *I used to have a radio aid, so I would give it to the teachers and then they would wear it, I could hear better as it was louder. But um, I think last year I stopped using it because I thought it was extra and I don't really need it I think.*

Me: What made you change your mind about using the radio aid?

Student: *I feel like sometimes it was a bit disturbing because it was quite loud and I would rather just a normal setting.*

Me: Anything else you can tell me about it?

Student: *It did really help me in past years when I was a bit younger, because I found it more difficult to hear. I feel like I've progressed with lip reading and other stuff like that, which is getting better.*

Me: You mentioned lip reading, is that something you feel that you use a lot at school?

Student: *Yeah, I think lip reading is quite an important thing to me.*

Me: Can you tell me more about that?

Student: *Yeah, because I found it quite annoying to, like, have to go off at the beginning of each lesson and hand over the radio aid and then take it back because I kept forgetting as well and then it would get lost somewhere and I'd have to go and hunt for it. I always use my hearing aid at school, so that helps too. I think on the few days where I forget my hearing aids, I do notice that I do struggle a bit more. But I can still manage.*

Me Anything else that helps you outside of lessons?

Student: *Um, I kind of learnt, or not learnt, but this trick where if you sit with your back towards the wall so you can't hear noise behind you. And so it's only in front of you so that makes me feel a bit better because there's not noise all around.*

Me: Okay, thinking a bit more about what you might find difficult at school. Can you tell me about anything that you do find difficult, with learning, with particular subjects, you mentioned English already.

Student: *So in music, listening is done as well and that can sometimes be quite difficult because you have to pick up on like what you think the pitch would be or like the timings. But in the exams, I'm put into a separate room with a separate speaker that's a bit louder and then there's no distractions. That helps a lot because then I can like focus more on sounds and yeah, it is difficult, but I think this method works when I'm in a separate room.*

Me: Anything else you can tell me?

Student: *I prefer being in a different room, but like obviously everyone else is going into like the main hall together, but it doesn't really bother me too much. Because I'm getting a benefit anyway.*

Me: Anything else that you would mention in terms of the school environment that makes it difficult for you?

Student: *Well, assemblies can be quite difficult, but I don't really mind because I can catch up afterwards and most information I get because it's on the board in the assembly. If I do miss anything, I'll like catch up with my friend afterwards and they will tell me.*

Me: What's difficult about assembly?

Student: *You sit as you come in so you could be faced anywhere in the hall. So then like I am not right at the front. But I did have the option to sit the front, but I didn't want to like be like one person just going up to the front.*

Me: Is there anything else that could make it easier for you?

Student: *I think as long as they stand in the middle of the stage, the sound does project like outwards.*

Me: Anything else you want to tell me about socialising with your friends. That you find difficult, that you haven't already mentioned?

Student: *Like big groups, it's obviously more difficult because people like talk over each other or like there's three different conversation going on at once. And that can be really overwhelming.*

Me: Can you tell me anymore about how you feel in those situations?

Student: *I'm quite good at making sure that I ask for someone to repeat what they said or try to make out from the next thing that's been said.*

Me: We've talked about some things that already help you as well as some things that can be difficult. Can you describe what would make things better for you at the school?

Student: *Yeah. I think that sometimes teachers like to wander around the classroom, which is okay because they're looking at other people's work to like check as well. But then when they start talking, when they're like halfway through the room, then there's some difficulty there. But I try to like turn around and face them, so that can be a bit awkward sometimes, like trying to write notes and be like facing the other way.*

Me: What would you tell them? What would be the ideal?

Student: *Um, well, probably wait till the end of the lesson, because I don't feel comfortable like asking in the lesson for that. And then normally they, like, understand they just needed to be reminded really.*

Me: So how does that make you feel when they do things like that?

Student: *I think it's okay overall as I can just ask someone next to me, I can just copy their notes.*

Me: Anything that would help with socialising outside of the classroom?

Student: *We kind of sit in a circle, so that's quite helpful, because if we were all, like, randomly placed, it would be quite difficult to look at who's talking because you wouldn't really know.*

Me: What about helping people to understand you and your hearing loss, is there anything that could be even better that could help?

Student: *I think most of my teachers have the profile of like what my hearing loss is and what they need to do because student support sent it out to them. But I feel like some teachers need to be reminded because obviously they forget that.*

Me: So how do you think, teachers and any other staff in schools could help deaf children and young people to be better supported at school?

Student: *I think it's really important that they keep checking up to see if you're on track because sometimes you don't know if you're behind or if you're on track in a lesson and like only the teacher could really tell if your where you should be. So I think if they come and check like what you've been writing or ask a few questions to check that you're still following along with the lessons.*

Me: Is there anything, for example, if they were working in groups in the classroom that teachers or staff could do to help?

Student: *Yeah, I find group work quite difficult because the whole class is talking and then you're trying to listen to just one group. I say we do less of that in year 10 and 11 anyway, but it's not too*

much of a problem. But maybe they could organise a room differently so that like groups are a bit further apart from each other and you're not allowed to get too noisy because then, like, no one can hear.

Me: Anything you think would help staff to understand deafness/hearing loss and how it might feel to have hearing loss/be deaf.

Student: *I think one of my teachers mentioned that in one of their late teacher meetings, they had a conversation about how they can help students with disabilities, like any. I think they found that quite helpful so that they could get an understanding, because I don't explain my situation to them, they kind of just see the profile.*

Me: Do you think it would help to explain your situation?

Student: *Maybe actually.*

Me: How would you feel to do that?

Student: *I don't know, because I feel like they would already know, so I would find it a bit awkward, like trying to tell them like, my perspective.*

Me: Do you think your perspective is important?

Student: *Yeah. But I just feel that they haven't enough understanding to, like, teach in the way that they need to.*

Me: What would you tell teachers, if they do have children or young people who are deaf or have a hearing loss in their class. Is there anything you would tell them?

Student: *I would say don't treat them differently to the rest of the class, but they still need to have like a bit more support. At the same time, it's a bit of a weird one because you don't want to like isolate them, but still need to understand that they're going to need a bit more help to stay on top of the work and stuff. I think it's important that they, if they want to, they should try and hear what they have to say about, their story and stuff on how hearing loss affects them.*

Me: How do you think young people would feel about sharing their experience?

Student: *I think it depends what kind of person you are. But if someone asked me, I'd be more than happy to tell them about my hearing loss and what happened.*

Me: Is there anything you would tell teachers not to do if they have a child or a young person in their class that has a hearing loss?

Student: *Yeah. I feel like raising your voice or shouting is really not that helpful. If you feel like you've been extremely quiet, then yeah make it a bit louder and maybe just ask us what they need clarity on.*

Me: Anything else you can think of, when their interacting with a young person with hearing loss that they really shouldn't do?

Student: *It's a difficult one because I think it depends on what the person wants. But I don't think that you need to keep asking, like, did you hear this or that? Because I would rather just ask the question -" Oh, I didn't hear this, could you repeat?" Instead of keep being asked because otherwise it becomes quite repetitive.*

Me: Do you feel like you are understood as an individual young person with a hearing loss at school?

Student: *Yeah, I think I've had discussions with most of my teachers who maybe didn't understand. I just tell them I have a hearing loss and could you make sure you do this these things so that I can be more engaged in the lesson and it will help me to improve. And they do understand.*

Me: So, we're coming to the end of my questions. Is there anything else that you feel is important to tell me? Or ask me?

Student: *Well, I started doing a sign language club. And I think that it might be important for other young people who have a hearing loss or even those who don't to start like learning it because it's like a form of communication, like a language almost. I hadn't really heard much about it until (Teacher) from the student support asked if I wanted to take part in the club. I really enjoy doing sign language.*

Me: Can you tell me anymore?

Student: *I think all young people, but in particular those with hearing loss because it just makes you more aware of like other people you could have worse hearing loss or yeah people who maybe this is a good form of communication to have and makes you have more awareness of like the deaf community.*

Me: Is there anything else you think schools can do to raise awareness of the deaf community?

Student: *They have a lot of empowered females they stick around the school to show you like people you can aspire to. And I feel like maybe they could just add someone who may be deaf. They do have people who have disabilities, but I haven't seen a deaf person.*

Me: Anything more to tell me?

Student: *I also think it's important a teacher checks on you every term maybe, to see where you are and how you're feeling about the actual content and learning and how you think you're doing personally. Just so you feel that confidence in yourself that you're able to do the lessons right.*

Me: Any last things that you would want to share? Or questions?

Student: *I think that's it really.*

Maya - Exploratory comments and experiential statements

Exploratory comments (conceptual, linguistic, descriptive)	Page	Experiential statements	Example quotes
Uses 'like' frequently - filler word, allows time to think about what to say next	1		"So, for GCSE, I picked as my extras, psychology, geography, triple science and music. And I dropped languages because of my hearing."
Hearing loss given as the reason for stopping languages - "because of my hearing"		Flexibility in curriculum, able to drop languages.	
Her choice/decision to stop languages		Reasonable adjustments and support not adequate in making languages accessible.	"Yeah, I made the decision because I found it quite difficult with the listening exercises and also talking as well because of the speech and stuff and the accent I couldn't really get right."
Possible lack of support/access prior to stopping languages, were options explored to support with difficulties for example with listening exercises.			
She was surprised it was okay to stop languages - possibly used to having to accept/manage through difficulties with limited adaptations/reasonable adjustments		Accepting of difficulties with learning due to hearing loss.	"…So, I thought it would be the best."
Others (staff) were ok with her stopping languages - seems worried they wouldn't have been ok with it.		A need/want to fit in with peers.	"And there are quite a few people who don't take the language, so I'm not like the only person."
Need to fit in, not being the only one to not do something (drop languages)		Importance of ALL teachers/staff knowing how to support deaf students.	"So, in lessons, I think all my teachers are aware that I have hearing loss…"
THINKS all teachers aware of her hearing loss - she's not sure if all are. Not involving her in support decisions and process.		Classroom strategy – teachers stand at the front and facing class when talking.	"…so they make sure to stand at the front and face forward towards me. So, when they're writing on the board, they won't be talking at the same time so that I can make sure that I understand."
Teachers stand at the front, facing the front when talking, including not writing on the board and talking at the same time.			
Teachers check in regularly - "is everything ok?"		Classroom strategy – regular check ins	"And a lot of my teachers check in and ask like, 'Is everything okay?'."
Seated at the front in all lessons		Classroom strategy – young person being seated at the front	"I'm always sat in the front row so that I'm nearer to the

Peers sat near her are really supportive - will help or share notes.		Classroom strategy – being sat near supportive peers/friends	*front and it's just easier for me."* *"And yeah, the people around me are really supportive as well. If I don't hear something, they'll like, definitely help me or show me their notes."*
Uses the word 'difficult' a lot when describing experiences at school Can be difficult when lots of people are talking at breaktimes when socialising.		School experience can be difficult when deaf Social interaction (break times) challenging with multiple voices and noise Manage/cope with difficulties of hearing loss	*"And it can be difficult at times because there's a lot of people talking at the same time, but I think I manage okay."*
"But I think I manage ok" - not confident in management of hearing loss? Supported by her 'best friend' the most in social settings.		Friends are important and supportive in social situations	*"…And overall I just like, ask someone, what did they say again? Like my best friend. More like, who I ask."*
People will mostly repeat themselves in social settings if needed.	2		
"sometimes I get a bit lost and it gets a bit confusing at times" - social interaction at break times		Difficulties with social interaction – feeling confused and lost	*"Most of the time they will repeat themselves, but sometimes I get a bit lost and it gets a bit confusing at times."*
Makes reference to people making assumptions about hearing loss - deaf YP being able to play instruments Really enjoys playing piano and drums outside of school and in music GCSE		People can make assumptions about deaf young people and their skills/abilities. Importance of pursuing learning interests to build sense of self	*"Yeah, I actually play two instruments. I play the piano and drums. A lot of people think that would be quite difficult because of like my hearing. I really enjoy it."*
Wanting to do the same activities as friends - need/want to fit in Adaptations made for music grade examination - this was after trying it once - lack of deaf awareness in ensuring reasonable adjustments in place from the start		Flexibility in examinations, adaptations to music grade exam in listening task. Need for deaf awareness and ensuring	*"Um, I think they play something on the piano, and then you have to sing it. And I did that once in, like, grade 1 and I found that really difficult. I told my piano teacher, and then the next time she changed it."*

Two main best friends and a group of friends. One best friend has known for 12 years - good awareness of her hearing loss. Appreciative of her friends help Friends are really important and make school better. English lessons difficult due to her language development - **but** being supported.		reasonable adjustments in place early. Long term friends with deaf awareness and understanding are important to build self-esteem, sense of self and confidence. English lessons are difficult with hearing loss due to level of language development. Support with speech development at school.	*"Well, I have like two main best friends and also like a group of friends. I think they kind of get the idea when I haven't heard like they know, like to repeat it to me even if I don't ask. And one of them I've been friends with for like 12 years so, she knows what I'm like and if I'm likely to hear or not."* *"…and I think I struggle more with English, I think because of my language development. I feel like I'm quite behind in English subjects like English language and literature because I don't know how to like articulate properly, but I'm being helped a lot."*
Speech development ("my voice has improved a bit and hopefully will improve more") Conscious of deaf speech, being different from peers Concerns about falling behind in English due to a lot of information Support in English lessons - marking work during lessons, check ins Awareness of everyone having strengths and weaknesses in their learning Can seek support from friends with work - no extra interventions/support mentioned. Link between understanding work and enjoyment. Teachers facing the class when talking and making notes on the board helps all students with learning and engagement.	3	Awareness of speech difficulties and being different. Classroom strategy – teacher marking work during lessons Awareness/appreciation of difference Importance of support and access to learning to boost enjoyment and engagement. Social interaction – helps to have quiet areas available to socialise in	*"So, my voice has improved a bit and hopefully will improve more."* *"…they mark my work on the side just to see if I'm following along correctly."* *"I think everyone does have a weaker subject…"* *"I just really like maths lessons because I feel like I understand it and then that makes me enjoy it more."* *"In year 11, we are allowed to have break time and lunch time in our form room. So it's quite quiet and it's like easier for everyone to talk. Instead*

Use of quiet form room at breaktimes due to being in Year 11 - helps with social interaction.			*of outside with all the crowds and the noise."*
ToD "checks up on my hearing" - no mention of wellbeing support, supporting her to build her deaf identity, checking in on what's working/not working at school.		ToD role – experiences narrow focus of support offered (hearing check ins)	*"…my meetings with (Teacher of the Deaf) who like checks up on my hearing."*
Student support staff - better understanding than teachers. Why is this - empathy? Training? Experience? Relationships?		Different levels of deaf awareness across school staff	*"Generally, if I need anything, I'll probably go there (student support), they just understand a bit more than other teachers."*
Teachers share PowerPoints after the lesson - possibly more useful before the lesson		Classroom strategy – sharing lesson powerpoints	*"…my teachers are really helpful because I think now that they know, they find ways to like help me like by sending me the PowerPoint after the lesson or something."*
Stopped using radio aid due to thinking "it was extra" - wanting to fit in, not be different		Reluctant to use some hearing equipment such as radio aid as feels an inconvenience.	*"I used to have a radio aid, so I would give it to the teachers and then they would wear it, I could hear better as it was louder. But um, I think last year I stopped using it because I thought it was extra and I don't really need it I think."*
"I think lip reading is quite an important thing to me" Use of 'think' still figuring out her deaf identity. Lack of support with this and options available for accessing communication.	4	Importance of lip reading. All communication options for deaf young people should be shared or understood.	*"Yeah, I think lip reading is quite an important thing to me…because I found it quite annoying to, like, have to go off at the beginning of each lesson and hand over the radio aid and then take it back because I kept forgetting as well and then it would get lost somewhere and I'd have to go and hunt for it."*
"I always use my hearing aid at school"			
Radio aid more of an inconvenience in comparison to lip reading and hearing aids - easier when she has majority of responsibility with access		Difficulties with organisation around hearing equipment (radio aid) use in lessons	
Adapting herself/her ways independently to make social environments more accessible.		Self-adaptations to access social situations	*"Um, I kind of learnt, or not learnt, but this trick where if you sit with your back towards the wall so you can't hear noise behind you. And so its only in front of you so that makes me feel a bit*

Listening assessments in music are difficult - in formal exams a separate quiet room is provided. She feels this method works, but still remains difficult - appears accept difficulty - can more be done to support Comfortable with exam access arrangements and being different to peers - due to it being more discreet than the radio aid?		Exam access arrangements – quiet room for listening assessments Listening assessments are difficult with hearing loss despite reasonable adjustments.	*better because there's not noise all around."* *"So in music, listening is done as well and that can sometimes be quite difficult because you have to pick up on like what you think the pitch would be or like the timings. But in the exams, I'm put into a separate room with a separate speaker that's a bit louder and then there's no distractions. That helps a lot because then I can like focus more on sounds and yeah, it is difficult, but I think this method works when I'm in a separate room."*
Assemblies can be difficult to access, despite option to sit at the front chooses to manage and catch up after from friends. Not wanting to be different/stand out/be the only one		Assemblies are difficult with hearing loss Not wanting to be different	*"Well, assemblies can be quite difficult…(because) You sit as you come in so you could be faced anywhere in the hall. So then like I am not right at the front."* *"…But I did have the option to sit the front, but I didn't want to like be like one person just going up to the front."*
"Overwhelming" - large groups in social situations (multiple voices at once) Access in social situations often her responsibility - friends/peers not always aware Teachers walking around the class whilst talking is challenging - solve herself by turning around to face them	5	Social situations can feel overwhelming for deaf young people Peer deaf awareness important Barrier to learning – teachers walking around class and talking	*"Like big groups, it's obviously more difficult because people like talk over each other or like there's three different conversation going on at once. And that can be really overwhelming."* *"I'm quite good at making sure that I ask for someone to repeat what they said or try to make out from the next thing that's been said."* *"I think that sometimes teachers like to wander around the classroom, which is okay because they're*

Not comfortable to seek support during lessons - will talk to the teacher after the lesson and seek support from peers instead		Barrier to learning - Not seeking support in lessons, not wanting to stand out	*looking at other people's work to like check as well. But then when they start talking, when they're like halfway through the room, then there's some difficulty there. But I try to like turn around and face them, so that can be a bit awkward sometimes, like trying to write notes and be like facing the other way."*
		Teachers needed to be reminded of hearing needs.	*"Um, well, probably wait till the end of the lesson, because I don't feel comfortable like asking in the lesson for that. And then normally they, like, understand they just needed to be reminded really."*
Sitting in a circle helps access in social situations so can see everyone		Social interaction – sitting in a circle helps	*"We kind of sit in a circle, so that's quite helpful, because if we were all, like, randomly placed, it would be quite difficult to look at who's talking because you wouldn't really know."*
Teachers have access to her pupil profile that explains hearing loss and needs - reminders needed - thus profile not sufficient in itself.		Pupil profile helpful for teachers to understand strengths and needs of deaf students	*"I think most of my teachers have the profile of like what my hearing loss is and what they need to do because student support sent it out to them."*
Uses the word 'forget' - "teachers need to be reminded because obviously they forget" not being held in mind, feeling forgotten.		Teachers/school staff need regular training/refreshers on deaf awareness and supporting deaf students	*"…But I feel like some teachers need to be reminded because obviously they forget that."*
Check ins from teacher mentioned again - an important subtle support			
Group work in lessons can be tricky - suggests they could be seated further apart and noise level kept in check	6	Barrier to learning – group work due to noise level	*"Yeah, I find group work quite difficult because the whole class is talking and then you're trying to listen to just one group."*
Value of co-producing reasonable adjustments with YP - should always be the case		Need for co-production and collaboration with deaf young people when planning their support	*"…But maybe they could organise a room differently so that like groups are a bit further apart from each other and you're not allowed*
Staff meeting or training on disabilities			

Appears torn between teachers needing to hear her perspective and being comfortable to share. Struggling with her deaf identity, where she fits hearing world/deaf community, and juggling the need to fit in and not be different. Clear thread about not being treated differently/feeling different/standing out - whilst also receiving the support needed. Mentions again the importance of sharing your perspective of hearing loss - but on your own terms Happy to share her perspective - perhaps means with peers? Speaking very loudly/shouting isn't helpful - lack of awareness from staff Constant checks to see if you have heard isn't helpful - again lack of awareness from staff of what helps		Difficult to share deaf experience with school staff Balance with receiving support whilst not feeling like they are standing out from peers. Important to share deaf experience on your own terms Shouting or raising voice isn't a helpful strategy for deaf students as well as checking if you have heard all the time.	*to get too noisy because then, like, no one can hear."* *"…I don't explain my situation to them, they kind of just see the profile."* **"***I don't know, because I feel like they would already know, so I would find it a bit awkward, like trying to tell them like, my perspective."* *"I would say don't treat them differently to the rest of the class, but they still need to have like a bit more support. At the same time, it's a bit of a weird one because you don't want to like isolate them, but still need to understand that they're going to need a bit more help to stay on top of the work and stuff."* *"I think it's important that they, if they want to, they should try and hear what they have to say about, their story and stuff on how hearing loss affects them."* *"I feel like raising your voice or shouting is really not that helpful. If you feel like you've been extremely quiet, then yeah make it a bit louder and maybe just ask us what they need clarity on."*
Will share her hearing loss and what she needs, but not perhaps more depth about her personal experience of hearing loss with staff Interesting that she had little awareness about BSL, perhaps never been introduced as an option for her She raises importance of deaf awareness and importance of all young people having awareness/learning BSL	7	Comfortable to share hearing needs with teachers, less comfortable to share personal experience of hearing loss. Peer deaf awareness and awareness of BSL	*"Yeah, I think I've had discussions with most of my teachers who maybe didn't understand. I just tell them I have a hearing loss and could you make sure you do this these things so that I can be more engaged in the lesson and it will help me to improve. And they do understand."*

Not feeling represented as a deaf person in the school community		No deaf representation in the school community	*"Well, I started doing a British sign language club. And I think that it might be important for other young people who have a hearing loss or even those who don't to start like learning it because it's like a form of communication, like a language almost. I hadn't really heard much about it until (Teacher) from the student support asked if I wanted to take part in the club. I really enjoy doing sign language."* *"I think all young people, but in particular those with hearing loss because it just makes you more aware of like other people you could have worse hearing loss or yeah people who maybe this is a good form of communication to have and makes you have more awareness of like the deaf community."*
Raises importance of regular check ins from staff, interesting that she doesn't refer to ToD here - perhaps doesn't fulfil that role for her.		Regular/termly check ins from school staff would be helpful.	*"They have a lot of empowered females they stick around the school to show you like people you can aspire to. And I feel like maybe they could just add someone who may be deaf. They do have people who have disabilities, but I haven't seen a deaf person."* *"I also think it's important a teacher checks on you every term maybe, to see where you are and how you're feeling about the actual content and learning and how you think you're doing personally. Just so you feel*

			that confidence in yourself that you're able to do the lessons right."

Maya - Experiential statements and Personal Experiential Themes (PETs)

Personal Experiential Themes (PETs)	Experiential statements	Example Quotes
Barriers to learning	Barrier to learning – teachers walking around class and talking (p5)	*"I think that sometimes teachers like to wander around the classroom, which is okay because they're looking at other people's work to like check as well. But then when they start talking, when they're like halfway through the room, then there's some difficulty there. But I try to like turn around and face them, so that can be a bit awkward sometimes, like trying to write notes and be like facing the other way."*
	Listening assessments are difficult with hearing loss despite reasonable adjustments. (p4)	*"So in music, listening is done as well and that can sometimes be quite difficult because you have to pick up on like what you think the pitch would be or like the timings. But in the exams, I'm put into a separate room with a separate speaker that's a bit louder and then there's no distractions. That helps a lot because then I can like focus more on sounds and yeah, it is difficult, but I think this method works when I'm in a separate room."*
	Barrier to learning – group work due to noise level (p6)	
	English lessons are difficult with hearing loss due to level of language development. (p2)	*"Yeah, I find group work quite difficult because the whole class is talking and then you're trying to listen to just one group."*
	Assemblies are difficult with hearing loss (p4)	*"…and I think I struggle more with English, I think because of my language development. I feel like I'm quite behind in English subjects like English language and literature because I don't know how to like articulate properly, but I'm being helped a lot."*
	Reasonable adjustments and support not adequate in making languages accessible. (p1)	*"Well, assemblies can be quite difficult…(because) You sit as you come in so you could be faced anywhere in the hall. So then like I am not right at the front."*
	Difficulties with organisation around hearing equipment (radio aid) use in lessons (p4)	*"Yeah, I made the decision because I found it quite difficult with the listening exercises and also talking as well because of the speech and stuff and the accent I couldn't really get right."*
		"Yeah, I think lip reading is quite an important thing to me…because I found it quite annoying to, like, have to go off at the beginning of each lesson and

		hand over the radio aid and then take it back because I kept forgetting as well and then it would get lost somewhere and I'd have to go and hunt for it."
Support strategies	Classroom strategy – young person being seated at the front (p1)	*"I'm always sat in the front row so that I'm nearer to the front and it's just easier for me."*
	Classroom strategy – regular check ins (p1)	*"And a lot of my teachers check in and ask like, 'Is everything okay?'."*
	Classroom strategy – teacher marking work during lessons (p3)	*"…they mark my work on the side just to see if I'm following along correctly."*
	Classroom strategy – sharing lesson PowerPoints (p3)	*"…my teachers are really helpful because I think now that they know, they find ways to like help me like by sending me the PowerPoint after the lesson or something."*
	Exam access arrangements – quiet room for listening assessments (p4)	*"So in music, listening is done as well and that can sometimes be quite difficult because you have to pick up on like what you think the pitch would be or like the timings. But in the exams, I'm put into a separate room with a separate speaker that's a bit louder and then there's no distractions. That helps a lot because then I can like focus more on sounds and yeah, it is difficult, but I think this method works when I'm in a separate room."*
	Flexibility in curriculum, able to drop languages. (p1)	*"So, for GCSE, I picked as my extras, psychology, geography, triple science and music. And I dropped languages because of my hearing."*
	Support with speech development at school. (p2)	*"…I don't know how to like articulate properly, but I'm being helped a lot."*
	Flexibility in examinations, adaptations to music grade exam in listening task. (p2)	*"Um, I think they play something on the piano, and then you have to sing it. And I did that once in, like, grade 1 and I found that really difficult. I told my piano teacher, and then the next time she changed it."*
	Classroom strategy – being sat near supportive peers/friends (p1)	*"And yeah, the people around me are really supportive as well. If I don't hear something, they'll like, definitely help me or show me their notes."*
	Classroom strategy – teachers stand at the front and facing class when talking. (p1)	*"…so they make sure to stand at the front and face forward towards me. So, when they're writing on the board, they won't be talking at the same time so that I can make sure that I understand."*
	Importance of support and access to learning to boost enjoyment and engagement. (p3)	

	Social interaction – helps to have quiet areas available to socialise in (p3)	*"I just really like maths lessons because I feel like I understand it and then that makes me enjoy it more."* *"In year 11, we are allowed to have break time and lunch time in our form room. So it's quite quiet and it's like easier for everyone to talk. Instead of outside with all the crowds and the noise."*
Co-production of support strategies	Importance of lip reading. All communication options for deaf young people should be shared or understood. (p4)	*"Yeah, I think lip reading is quite an important thing to me…because I found it quite annoying to, like, have to go off at the beginning of each lesson and hand over the radio aid and then take it back because I kept forgetting as well and then it would get lost somewhere and I'd have to go and hunt for it."*
	Need for co-production and collaboration with deaf young people when planning their support (p6)	*"I feel like raising your voice or shouting is really not that helpful. If you feel like you've been extremely quiet, then yeah make it a bit louder and maybe just ask us what they need clarity on."* *"…But maybe they could organise a room differently so that like groups are a bit further apart from each other and you're not allowed to get too noisy because then, like, no one can hear."*
	Regular/termly check ins from school staff would be helpful. (p7)	*"I also think it's important a teacher checks on you every term maybe, to see where you are and how you're feeling about the actual content and learning and how you think you're doing personally. Just so you feel that confidence in yourself that you're able to do the lessons right."*
	Need for deaf awareness and ensuring reasonable adjustments in place early. (p2)	*"Um, I think they play something on the piano, and then you have to sing it. And I did that once in, like, grade 1 and I found that really difficult. I told my piano teacher, and then the next time she changed it."*
	Shouting or raising voice isn't a helpful strategy for deaf students as well as checking if you have heard all the time. (p6)	*"I feel like raising your voice or shouting is really not that helpful. If you feel like you've been extremely quiet, then yeah make it a bit louder and maybe just ask us what they need clarity on."*
	Balance with receiving support whilst not feeling like they are standing out from peers. (p6)	*"I would say don't treat them differently to the rest of the class, but they still need to have like a bit*

		more support. At the same time, it's a bit of a weird one because you don't want to like isolate them, but still need to understand that they're going to need a bit more help to stay on top of the work and stuff."
Sharing your deaf experience	Important to share deaf experience on your own terms (p6)	*"I think it's important that they, if they want to, they should try and hear what they have to say about, their story and stuff on how hearing loss affects them."*
	Comfortable to share hearing needs with teachers, less comfortable to share personal experience of hearing loss. (p7)	*"Yeah, I think I've had discussions with most of my teachers who maybe didn't understand. I just tell them I have a hearing loss and could you make sure you do this these things so that I can be more engaged in the lesson and it will help me to improve. And they do understand."*
	Difficult to share deaf experience with school staff (p6)	*"…I don't explain my situation to them, they kind of just see the profile… so I would find it a bit awkward, like trying to tell them like, my perspective."*
Deaf awareness at school	Different levels of deaf awareness across school staff (p3)	*"Generally, if I need anything, I'll probably go there (student support), they just understand a bit more than other teachers."*
	Pupil profile helpful for teachers to understand strengths and needs of deaf students (p5) Importance of ALL teachers/staff knowing how to support deaf students. (p1)	*"I think most of my teachers have the profile of like what my hearing loss is and what they need to do because student support sent it out to them."* *"…But I feel like some teachers need to be reminded because obviously they forget that."*
	Teachers/school staff need regular training/refreshers on deaf awareness and supporting deaf students (p5)	*"Yeah, I actually play two instruments. I play the piano and drums. A lot of people think that would be quite difficult because of like my hearing. I really enjoy it."*
	People can make assumptions about deaf young people and their skills/abilities. (p2) Peer deaf awareness and awareness of BSL (p7)	*"Well, I started doing a British sign language club. And I think that it might be important for other young people who have a hearing loss or even those who don't to start like learning it because it's like a form of communication, like a language almost. I hadn't really heard much about it until (Teacher) from the student support asked if I*

		wanted to take part in the club. I really enjoy doing sign language."
	No deaf representation in the school community (p7)	*"I think all young people, but in particular those with hearing loss because it just makes you more aware of like other people you could have worse hearing loss or yeah people who maybe this is a good form of communication to have and makes you have more awareness of like the deaf community."*
		"They have a lot of empowered females they stick around the school to show you like people you can aspire to. And I feel like maybe they could just add someone who may be deaf. They do have people who have disabilities, but I haven't seen a deaf person."
Feeling different to peers	Awareness of speech difficulties and being different. (p3)	*"So, my voice has improved a bit and hopefully will improve more."*
	Prefer not to use some hearing equipment such as radio aid as feels "extra"/an inconvenience. (p3)	*"I used to have a radio aid, so I would give it to the teachers and then they would wear it, I could hear better as it was louder. But um, I think last year I stopped using it because I thought it was extra and I don't really need it I think."*
	Not wanting to be different (p4)	*"…But I did have the option to sit the front, but I didn't want to like be like one person just going up to the front."*
	A need/want to fit in with peers. (p1)	*"And there are quite a few people who don't take the language, so I'm not like the only person."*
	Not seeking support in lessons, not wanting to stand out (p5)	*"Um, well, probably wait till the end of the lesson, because I don't feel comfortable like asking in the lesson for that. And then normally they, like, understand they just needed to be reminded really."*
Interacting with peers can be difficult and overwhelming	Social interaction (break times) challenging with multiple voices and noise (p1)	*"And it can be difficult at times because there's a lot of people talking at the same time, but I think I manage okay."*
	Social situations can feel overwhelming for deaf young people (p5)	*"Like big groups, it's obviously more difficult because people like talk over each other or like there's three different conversation going on at once. And that can be really overwhelming."*

	Difficulties with social interaction – feeling confused and lost (p2)	*"Most of the time they will repeat themselves, but sometimes I get a bit lost and it gets a bit confusing at times."*
Friendship support	Long term friends with deaf awareness and understanding are important to build self-esteem, sense of self and confidence. (p2)	*"Well, I have like two main best friends and also like a group of friends. I think they kind of get the idea when I haven't heard like they know, like to repeat it to me even if I don't ask. And one of them I've been friends with for like 12 years so, she knows what I'm like and if I'm likely to hear or not."*
	Friends are important and supportive in social situations (p1)	*"…And overall I just like, ask someone, what did they say again? Like my best friend. More like, who I ask."*
	Social interaction – sitting in a circle helps (p5)	*"We kind of sit in a circle, so that's quite helpful, because if we were all, like, randomly placed, it would be quite difficult to look at who's talking because you wouldn't really know."*

Duplicated:

Importance of pursuing learning interests to build sense of self (p2)

Awareness/appreciation of difference (p3)

Peer deaf awareness important (p5)

Teachers needed to be reminded of hearing needs. (p5)

Appendix E - Outline of IPA Process using Smith et al. (2022) Stages 1-6

Stage 1: Reading and re-reading

- Interviews were transcribed from audio recordings by a transcriber through IOE.
- I read the transcript through several times to familiarise myself and become actively engaged in the data to ensure the participant is the focus of analysis.

Stage 2: Exploratory noting

- I made notes using the comments feature in word directly onto the transcript, making descriptive, linguistic and conceptual notes.
- Descriptive notes summarised what the student said, linguistic notes looked at language they used and conceptual notes were more interrogative, giving meaning to what they said.

## Stage 3: Constructing experiential statements

- I created a table in a separate word document and copied across the exploratory notes and began to consolidate them into statements in the second column. The aim was to reduce the data volume of the transcription and exploratory notes whilst maintaining complexity.
- The experiential statements were intended to reflect my interpretations of the student's words/experience.
- Some of these statements were taken verbatim from the exploratory notes and some were paraphrased, particularly from the conceptual comments.
- I recorded the page numbers of the comments and some example quotes.

Stage 4: Searching for connections across experiential statements

- Mapping of how statements fitted together – to do this I printed all the statements and cut them up to enable me to manipulate and begin to group them on the table. I revisited these groupings a few times before settling on the final version. Any duplicates were placed on top of each other.

Stage 5: Naming the personal experiential themes (PETs)

- Each group of statements were given a name to describe its characteristics.
- I consolidated and organised them in a table with the original experiential comments and example quotes.
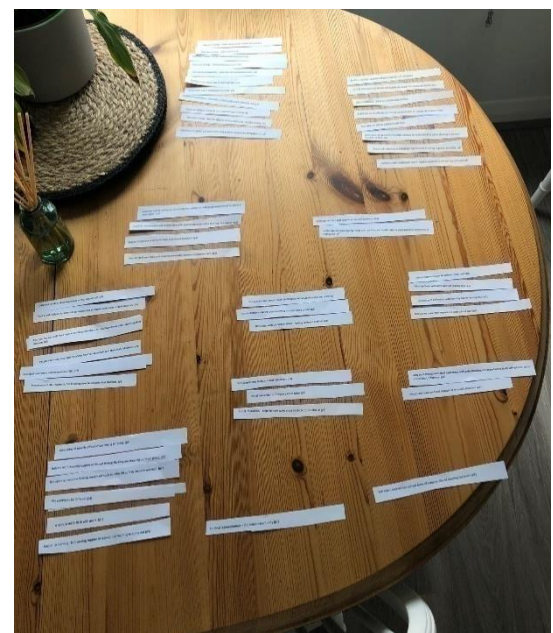
Stage 6: Continuing the individual analysis of other cases

- This step involved repeating the process for further individual cases.

Stage 7: Working with PETs to develop group experiential themes (GETs) across cases

- This step involved looking for patterns across the themes to create a set of group themes to highlight the shared features across participants' experiences.
- There was lots of similarity across participants' PETs which meant they were 15 PETs in total across participants and some of those were alike too. In order to create GETs I began to group the PETs whilst referring back to individuals' experiential statements to ensure it made sense to group them.
- I ended up with 5 GETs and presented them in a table with the linked PETs and noted which participants had those PETs.

Reflections

- I found it hard to get started – fear of not doing it right. It helped to return to the book (Smith et al., 2022) where authors remind you that there is no right or wrong way of doing this sort of analysis.
- I often questioned whether I was being interpretive enough or too interpretive and also if I was sometimes seeking themes at earlier stages and looking for the bigger picture a lot.
- When creating the PETs I played around with the groupings, returning to them several times which I think helped – when I began to name the groupings I was then questioning if I needed to regroup into less broad PETs. Thus, I spent some time narrowing some groupings down.
- When beginning the analysis of the other participants, I tried to treat each case as stand alone, in order to be careful of reproducing ideas. Although, I reminded myself that inevitably I would be influenced by what I had already found. I did find some of the same themes in subsequent participants, however new themes emerged in some of their accounts so I felt I did them justice.