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Doctorate in Professional Educational, Child and Adolescent Psychology

How can Motivational Interviewing be implemented in schools to address pupil disaffection? Examining the context and implementation of a school-based Motivational Interviewing programme in a London local authority.

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

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Abstract

School-based Motivational Interviewing (SBMI) is a promising approach to addressing pupil disaffection (Atkinson & Woods, 2003; Enea & Dafinoiu, 2009). School support staff may be well-placed to deliver SBMI because direct pastoral activities commonly feature in their deployment (Skipp & Hopwood, 2019). However, little is known about what happens when school staff attempt to implement SBMI.

This study examined the implementation of a SBMI training and intervention programme (the ‘Reach’ programme), facilitated by the Educational Psychology Service (EPS) in a London local authority (LA). The programme aimed to train school support staff to implement MI interventions with pupils experiencing disaffection. This study aimed to examine EPs’ views on the need for development of the programme. The study then aimed to examine initial Reach implementation in the context of its feasibility and usefulness to school-based facilitators (Reach coaches). The study also aimed to examine the degree to which coaches used the approach with fidelity, or adapted it, when transferring it to their everyday practice.

A qualitative multiphase design was used. Phase 1 involved semi-structured interviews (SSIs) with EPs (N = 6) to establish needs in the LA context. In Phase 2, Reach coaches took part in focus groups over two time points (N = 14; N = 11) to gather insight into their initial experiences of setting up and using Reach. Phase 3 used SSIs (N = 7) to examine coach reflections following the initial implementation period.

Coaches perceived Reach as useful and beneficial for their pupils. However, issues were identified at the level of implementation feasibility, fidelity, and adaptation. Findings implied key areas where Reach programme content could be
developed to ensure it will be sustained in schools and impact positively on pupil outcomes. Recommendations for training development to enhance coach proficiency, and contracting processes to build appropriate systemic support for coaches, are outlined.
Impact Statement

This study makes a novel contribution to SBMI research by examining implementation of an SBMI training and intervention programme (‘Reach’) across domains of feasibility, facilitator responsiveness and adaptation/fidelity. In addition, the present study established the context of need for the programme within a LA, enhancing the social validity (Wolf, 1978) of Reach compared to SBMI interventions in existing research.

This research corroborates existing evidence on the value of SBMI programmes to school staff. The study adds to knowledge by highlighting that coaches saw Reach as relevant and valuable to KS4 pupils, but less so for younger pupils. This contrasted with EP perceptions of the need for early intervention approaches to tackle disaffection, substantiated in current evidence for age trajectories in disaffection (DfE, 2022b; Ross, 2009). This suggests that Reach, and other SBMI approaches facilitated by EPs, must be adapted appropriate to children and young people’s age and developmental stage. It is especially important that adapted programmes are available for KS3 pupils, as this appears to be a critical period in age trajectories for disaffection.

The present study also adds to knowledge by highlighting feasibility issues specific to school staff in non-teaching roles. Coaches reported lacking systemic support from managers and leaders to set up and use Reach. Owing partly to these barriers, most coaches did not implement Reach as a discrete intervention, but appropriated it into their usual practice. It will be important for Reach developers and associated EPs to devise and engage in robust contracting processes with schools, including identifying line management support. This will better ensure
coaches and school stakeholders understand the time and resource investment required for the programme to impact positively on pupil outcomes.

Reach training appeared to have supported coaches to develop relational MI skills. However, coach reports highlighted variable fidelity in their use of MI. Coaches appeared partly cognisant to this, and identified suppression of habitual practice as a challenge. However, coach reports implied they were not always aware their behaviours were not MI-adherent. Education research knowledge indicates the importance of using evidence-based interventions with fidelity to promote positive pupil outcomes (Killerby & Dunsmuir, 2018). Therefore, Reach developers need to extend and amend the programme to have a greater emphasis on error management, and using the approach with adherence. Opportunities for ongoing supervision and observation of practice may be valuable here.

Reach coaches were engaged with the programme and perceived their pupils to have responded well to it. However, pupil reports and other measures for pupil responsiveness were not used in this study, limiting the credibility of the present findings in this area. Reach developers and future researchers may use outcome measures, including coach, pupil, and teacher reports, to build a better understanding of Reach’s impact on pupils presenting with disaffection.
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Glossary of Abbreviations and Acronyms

**CYP**
Children and young people

**EHCP**
Education, Health, and Care plan

**EP**
Educational psychologist

**EPS**
Educational psychology service

**KS**
Key stage

**LA**
Local authority

**MI**
Motivational Interviewing

**SBMI**
School-based Motivational Interviewing

**SEMH**
Social, emotional, and mental health

**SEN**
Special educational needs

**TA**
Teaching assistant
Chapter 1 – Introduction

1.1 Pupil Disaffection

Pupil disaffection is an issue that adversely impacts children and young people’s social and economic life trajectories (Ofsted, 2008a). Disaffection can increase likelihood of academic underachievement (Nuttall & Doherty, 2014) and the probability of being categorised as NEET (Not in Education, Employment of Training) (Allan, 2017). In the longer term, disaffection (and its indicators) is associated with an increased likelihood of poorer physical and mental health, reduced employment and wages, and quality of work outcomes (Powell, 2018), increased likelihood of substance misuse and risk of prison detention (Newburn, Shiner & Young, 2005). Early intervention is thought to be key to tackling disaffection and its indicators (such as exclusion) (Timpson, 2019). Schools have identified cost as a barrier to implementing early support, however failure to intervene early is even more expensive, as is evident (for example) in recent spending figures for Alternative Provision (AP) (Timpson, 2019).

The Cambridge Dictionary defines disaffection as ‘the quality of no longer supporting or being satisfied with a system, organisation or idea’ (Cambridge, n.d). In the context of learning and education, the UK Office for Standards in Education, Children’s Services and Skills (Ofsted) have defined disaffection in terms of its behavioural characteristics:

‘(disaffected pupils are defined as) those who displayed one or more of the following characteristics. They were regularly non-compliant, but not aggressive or threatening, and caused repeated low-level disruptions. They were regularly disruptive, challenging or both, which led to repeated entries in the school’s incident log, recurring fixed-term exclusions or both. They were absent for 20% or more of the available school sessions in the year. They were quiet and withdrawn and uninterested in most lessons.’
In academic literature, disaffection has been conceptualised as ‘an integrated set of negative attitudes, beliefs and behaviours with respect to school life generally and to academic demands in particular’ (McNamara, 2009, p. 8). Critics have remarked that this definition – in referring to attitudes and beliefs - implies this it is a ‘within child’ construct (Wilding, 2015). In fact, previous research implies multiple systemic causes of disaffection within school cultures and environments. Curriculum content (subjects perceived as ‘irrelevant’ and as not meeting the interests of pupils) and academic pressures (that rise and peak at KS4) have been suggested as factors in disaffection (Department for Children, Schools and Families [DCSF], 2009). Having a lack of clarity around aspirations (what to do beyond school; qualifications needed to reach aspirations), have also been implied as influencing factors (DCSF, 2009). Peer-peer relationships have also been suggested as important. Existing research identifies breakdowns within friendships (sometimes triggered by transitions to KS4), experience of bullying, and subjection to peer pressure as risk factors in disaffection (DCSF, 2009; Hawley, Little & Pasupathi, 2002). The character and quality of teacher-pupil relationships has also been implicated. Young people with experience of disaffection have cited authoritative school structures and autocratic staff communication styles as causing them to feel alienated from school and learning, in part because these approaches can convey to pupils that staff do not respect them (DCSF, 2009; Hartas, 2011; Hayward & Williams, 2011). By contrast, young people have reported that democratic and dialogic communication between staff and pupils is important in creating ‘cultures of respect’ that protect against disaffection (Hartas, 2011). Feeling ‘invisible’ to staff has also been suggested as a factor in disaffection, with young people reporting feeling adults’ attention could
often be concentrated on those whose behaviour presented a significant challenge, or on those who were very academically able (Hartas, 2011). By contrast, showing empathy and getting to know pupils as individuals has been highlighted as a protective staff approach (Hartas, 2011). The influence of myriad school environmental factors, highlighted in previous research, suggests there is potential for EPs to address incidence of disaffection through systemic approaches (Wilding, 2015). One way of doing this – examined in this thesis - is to train staff in communication approaches that emphasise empathy and regard for pupils' views, and that dismantle the uneven power dynamics that typically characterise staff-pupil interactions.

The term disaffection is often used interchangeably with the term disengagement (for example, Steedman & Stoney, 2004). Although both share commonalities, a key distinction is that disaffection can be thought of as an emotional or attitudinal state, whereas disengagement is thought to be an agentic act (Allan, 2014; Steenberghs et al., 2021). Disengaged pupils have been described as having withdrawn from school activities ‘in a significant way’ after experiencing reduced feelings of belonging and connection to school (Willms, 2003, p.8). Therefore, whilst disengagement can be thought of as a potential consequence of disaffection, the negative impacts of disaffection (for example, problematic classroom behaviour) can be experienced in the absence of disengagement (Allan, 2017). This is also a useful conceptualisation as it accounts for pupils whose disaffection may manifest ‘quietly’ in being present but passive (rather than in observable, disruptive behaviours), and therefore often remains unaddressed by teachers (Yan & Jament, 2009).
Because of the multifaceted and affective character of disaffection, its incidence can be difficult to definitively identify and measure in populations. Despite this, the literature does suggest there are likely to be some valid indicators (or features) of disaffection, which can be divided as visible (behavioural) and invisible (emotional). Visible indicators of likely disaffection include low attendance and truancy, being quiet or withdrawn in lessons, being non-compliant or disruptive (Ofsted, 2008a; Snape & Atkinson, 2017). Disaffection may also be observed as tendency towards inattention and distraction, and a lack of preparedness for school and lessons (Skinner et al., 2008). Invisible or ‘quiet’ indicators may be feelings of alienation (Allan, 2017), boredom, frustration, anxiety, shame (Skinner et al., 2008) relating to school. Disaffected pupils may also experience learning as unenjoyable, dissatisfying, and irrelevant (Nardi & Steward, 2003). Therefore, disaffection is a multi-faceted construct and may manifest differently from pupil to pupil (Ofsted, 2008a; Skinner et al., 2008).

There are a lack of large-scale studies examining the prevalence of pupil disaffection. However, data on key (visible) indicators of disaffection can be used to provide estimates of current rates. For example, figures of persistent absenteeism (pupils missing more than 10% of total school sessions: one session meaning half a school day) are approximately 13% of pupils attending mainstream secondary schools in England since the school year 2015/16 (Department for Education (DfE), 2022a). Whilst these numbers have risen since the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020, the stability of numbers prior to this period indicate some causal factors that cannot be attributed to the exceptional circumstances of recent years. School exclusion rates provide another possible representation of incidence of disaffection. In the period 2020-21, 3928 permanent exclusions were made, whilst
a further 352,454 suspensions (formally referred to as ‘fixed term exclusions’) were recorded (DfE, 2022b). Lumby (2013) notes a limitation in using these figures alone, owing to the myriad ways disaffection can be present including ‘(pupils) who are still mostly attending school, but who nevertheless have stopped trying or who actively resist taking part in a positive way’ (p.1). Thus, prevalence of disaffection is likely higher than figures for exclusions imply.

1.2 School Support Staff
Relationships with school staff may be key to pupils’ development of resources that protect against disaffection and promote their engagement with school and learning (Furrer, Skinner & Pitzer, 2014; Skinner et al., 2008). One way that supportive staff-pupil relationships can be established and developed is through one-to-one interventions. Such interventions are valuable especially within secondary school contexts, where subject learning can limit opportunities for staff to invest in and develop closer, higher quality relationships with individual pupils. Previous research has highlighted that pupils who have experienced disaffection value opportunities to share democratic dialogue with staff, and want adults in school to get to know them as individuals (DCSF, 2009; Hartas, 2011). One-to-one interventions can offer opportunities for pupils to experience this through development of alliances with facilitating members of staff. The learning from such interventions can then (within appropriate confines of confidentiality) be shared with teachers and other staff, and generalised to address disaffection across affected pupils’ learning experience (Ofsted, 2008a; 2010). Pupil-staff alliances in interventions, such as mentoring programmes, are suggested to be particularly valuable in providing relational support for disadvantaged CYP (Education Endowment Foundation, 2021). School support staff, such as teaching assistants, learning mentors, and other pastoral
staff, may be well placed to contribute here, given that intervention delivery is already a core responsibility carried out by this group (Skipp & Hopwood, 2019). School based one-to-one programmes could also address a need, identified in the literature, for low-cost strategies to address markers of disaffection including risk of exclusion (Gaffney et al., 2021).

The numbers of support staff in England have increased year on year since the beginning of the school workforce census in 2010/11, with marked growth in teaching assistant (TA) numbers (DfE, 2022c). Whilst the remit of school support staff is broad and varied, this group often lack training and professional development opportunities (Blatchford et al., 2009; Unison, 2014; Webster et al., 2013). This means that there appears to be a gap between the breadth of support staff responsibilities, and the training they receive to enable them to fulfil their roles successfully. Rice O’Toole and Soan (2020) suggest that staff assigned to work with the most vulnerable children may have very little, if any, training to provide appropriate support. The Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA) training programme is one national initiative that has been used to shape support staff roles, whilst also offering a school-based resource for supporting pupils presenting with social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) difficulties (ELSA, n.d; Skipp & Hopwood, 2019). ELSA training is facilitated by educational psychologists (EPs) and aims to equip TAs with knowledge and skills to support pupils’ emotional wellbeing (including emotional literacy). However, ELSA is an adult-directed approach for supporting pupils to recognise and manage their emotions, and it was not designed specifically to address complex emotional mechanisms in pupil disaffection. Therefore, there is a need to provide school support staff with specific skills to address pupil disaffection, and EPs could be well placed to facilitate this.
Motivational Interviewing (MI)

MI is a counselling approach that emerged from the work of clinical psychologists Miller and Rollnick. MI is defined by its developers as ‘a collaborative, person-centred form of guiding to elicit and strengthen motivation for change’ (Miller & Rollnick, 2009, p. 137). Given its emphasis on partnership and person-centredness, with associated characteristics of empathy and positive regard, the MI approach offers potential for supporting pupils experiencing disaffection in school. Miller and Rollnick devised MI as an approach to supporting behavioural change in clients, with counsellors facilitating client reflections on helpful goals to work towards and how they might go about reaching them. Core to MI thinking is the suggestion that ambivalence can hinder individuals in pursuing and adopting desirable behavioural changes. As such, MI counsellors aim to resolve unhelpful ambivalence by encouraging clients to reflect on arguments for and against change in a particular area (identified by the client themselves), ultimately leading to the client’s autonomous decision to pursue the change – or not (Rollnick & Miller, 1995). This emphasis on autonomy-support makes MI an appropriate way to support CYP experiencing disaffection, given evidence for the adverse impact of autocratic adult approaches on pupils’ engagement and school participation (DCSF, 2009; Hartas, 2011; Hayward & Williams, 2011).

Originally developed as a counselling treatment approach for addiction sufferers (Miller, 1983; Miller & Rollnick, 1991), MI use has since expanded within and beyond clinical settings, into criminal justice, educational and community systems. After successes of application of the approach with diverse adult populations, researchers and clinicians began to explore its use with child and
adolescent groups (McNamara, 1992; McNamara, 2009). From this, there has grown a small body of research into the use of school-based Motivational Interviewing (SBMI). Atkinson (2016) conducted the most recent review of the literature into student-focused MI in educational settings. This highlighted some evidence of promise for SBMI to impact change across a range of outcomes including academic attainment, attendance, and school-based motivation (Enea & Dafinoiu, 2009; Snape & Atkinson, 2015; Strait et al., 2012; Terry et al., 2013; 2014).

There is a small body of literature on the use of SBMI to address disaffection. SBMI is considered a useful approach here because it helps pupils to reflect on and self-manage their own needs, rather than having their behaviour ‘corrected’ by coercion which would be less likely to prompt a sustained change (McNamara, 2009). By inviting and guiding pupils to explore and articulate their own ideas and beliefs about their current circumstances, counsellors may be better able to identify support that may benefit their young clients (Atkinson, 2009). If facilitated by school staff, SBMI may be additionally beneficial in enhancing the quality of pupil-staff interactions, considered key in disaffection incidence and prevention. The core principles of MI (collaboration, evocation, and autonomy-support) (Miller & Rollnick, 2002) embody relational qualities highlighted as protective against disaffection in schools (DCSF, 2009; Hartas, 2011). Use of key active listening skills in MI (Miller & Rollnick, 2012a) ensure a person-centred approach, that promotes pupil sense-making about their own school experiences, and could give staff better insight into pupil needs (Kittles & Atkinson, 2009). The current study examined the implementation of an SBMI programme that trained school staff to adhere to MI principles and to implement associated communication skills in their interactions with pupils, with the hope that this could address disaffection systemically within
local schools. As well as offering a framework for one-to-one pastoral work facilitated by support staff, it was also hoped that the programme could prompt staff to reflect on alternative ways of communicating with pupils, that would be more conducive to CYP learning and wellbeing.

A small group of case studies have examined the use of SBMI to address disaffection (Atkinson & Woods, 2003; Atkinson & Amesu, 2007; Cryer & Atkinson, 2015; Kittles & Atkinson, 2009; Snape & Atkinson, 2015; Snape & Atkinson, 2017), although the generalisability of positive findings has been limited by small sample sizes. Some more recent studies, using larger sample sizes, have suggested that SBMI may be a helpful approach to improving behavioural and emotional functioning in pupils experiencing disaffection (Henry et al., 2020; Ratanavivan & Ricard, 2018; Terry et al., 2021). Within the literature on SBMI, only a small number of studies have examined interventions facilitated by school-based staff. Of this group, fewer still have focused on implementation processes when school-based staff use SBMI, including whether facilitators themselves find MI a feasible and useful approach. Crucially, existing studies have tended to have documented SBMI delivered as part of intervention research designs (Rochat, 2019; Sheftel et al., 2014; Simon & Ward, 2014; Snape & Atkinson, 2015). Studies that have focused on real-world application of SBMI have looked at barriers and facilitators to implementation (Pennell et al., 2020; Svensson et al., 2021), but – as yet – not from the perspectives of staff whose everyday deployment involves one-to-one pastoral work with pupils. Additionally, these studies have not focused on how staff training transfers to practice, a focus reviewers have found rare in education research more widely (Killerby & Dunsmuir, 2018). As such, there is a need for real-world research
into what happens during the period when school-based support staff first attempt to implement SBMI in their practice, following training.

1.4 Rationale and the Current Study

There is some evidence for the promise of SBMI to address pupil disaffection, although existing studies largely involve expert facilitators (such as EPs) rather than school staff, and use designs that implement SBMI interventions under controlled conditions. Little is known about what happens when school staff are asked to implement SBMI in practice in their different settings, including how it is adapted for use, and how pupils respond to this. Where SBMI training may benefit school staff (and their pupils) in one-to-one pastoral work, it is important to understand they implement the approach before its effectiveness can be investigated (Durlak & Dupre, 2008).

The present study aimed to make a unique contribution to the research base on SBMI and was undertaken in the context of a single local authority. The study aimed to examine EP views on needs within a local authority’s (LA) schools, and then document the process of implementing a SBMI programme (‘Reach’) devised by EPs to meet these needs. The Reach programme was devised to address incidence of disaffection systemically by training staff in key MI principles and skills, which they could then implement via one-to-one pupil interventions. To address existing gaps in the literature on SBMI, implementation of Reach was examined in the context of:

i. Feasibility of use (how feasible is the programme to use and what are the facilitators and barriers to its use?)
ii. User responsiveness (are users enthused by the MI approach; do they find that their students are responsive to it?)

iii. User fidelity and adaptation (to what extent participants adhered to the MI principles and strategies in their practice?)

Results of this study will be important in providing insight into how the SBMI programme in this specific LA could be further refined by the facilitating EPS, to maximise its impact for local schools. Outcomes of this study may also have wider value in modelling how EPs in other UK services could provide SBMI training and implementation for school staff. These insights are significant in the context of UK-wide school needs: growing internal capacity to meet pupils’ SEMH needs, and improving staff access to training to support vulnerable pupils.

1.5 Positionality

This research developed from my interest in learning disaffection and trajectories to exclusion, which I had observed in my professional experiences as a secondary school teacher. Through my work in schools, I also developed first-hand understanding of the challenges school face in addressing (increasingly prevalent) pupil SEMH needs. These experiences were valuable to the research process, as I carried knowledge of the systems participating EPs and school staff worked within. However, I also remained mindful of how my previous experiences, and ongoing experiences as a trainee EP, brought subjectivity to my research approach. To account for this, I engaged in reflexivity (including keeping a reflexive journal) throughout the research process.
Chapter 2 – Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This literature review begins with an overview of theoretical perspectives on disaffection, before considering the origins, theory, and practical applications of MI. A scoping review follows which identifies current literature on the efficacy of MI to address pupil disaffection, and existing research on the implementation of SBMI by school-based staff. Current knowledge on the deployment and training of support staff is outlined. Finally, issues relating to transfer and implementation of new skills following training are discussed. The chapter ends with a summary of the evidence, an overview of the project and research questions.

2.2 Characterising Pupil Disaffection

In disaffection, pupils present with behaviours and emotions that reflect ‘maladaptive’ motivational states relating specifically to school and learning (McNamara, 2009; Skinner et al., 2008, p.767). McNamara characterises disaffection as ‘an integrated set’ of negative school-oriented beliefs and behaviours (2009, p.8). This conceptualisation is valuable in its understanding of disaffection as having multiple ‘integrated’ facilitators, reflecting that is persistent in nature or larger in ‘grain size’ (Sinatra et al., 2015), contrasting to understandings that characterise engagement as momentary involvement in tasks.

Disaffection is characterised by its emotional component, which may manifest in pupils’ ongoing negative feelings oriented to school and learning including alienation, boredom, frustration, anxiety, and disinterest (Allan, 2017; Nardi & Steward, 2003; Skinner et al., 2008). Whilst disaffection is characterised by its affective dimension, it may also translate into observable behaviours:
• Low classroom and task participation
• Passivity and withdrawal
• Behavioural non-compliance or classroom disruption
• Poor attendance
• Lack of preparedness for school and learning


2.2.1 Processes in Pupil Disaffection

Literature on pupil disaffection highlights myriad school environmental facilitators in its incidence including perceptions of curriculum content (as irrelevant or unrelated to pupil interests), KS4 workload pressures, and poor-quality relationships with peers (DCSF, 2009; Hawley, Little & Pasupathi, 2002). Dynamics within pupil-staff relationship have also been found to be important in pupils’ experience of school, and so may be key to understanding disaffection (Robinson, 2014; Tucker, 2013). Existing studies suggest an association between poor quality pupil-teacher relationships and behavioural and emotional difficulties indicative of disaffection (DeSantis King et al., 2007; Murray & Greenberg, 2000). Researchers have attempted to identify the specific elements of school-based relationships which may facilitate disaffection. Furrer, Skinner and Pitzer (2014) suggest that poor relationships with peers and teachers may trigger feelings of alienation or incompetence in school pupils, which then manifest as disaffection. Some evidence suggests that controlling teacher approaches (e.g., commands and punishment threats) can undermine pupils’ sense of ownership over their learning which leads to classroom anxiety and shame (Reeve, 2009). Conversely, classroom autonomy is related to higher classroom participation (Hafen et al., 2012). These findings
suggest that good quality relationships, characterised by autonomy, may play a critical role in explaining pupil disaffection. These findings also provide some explanation for why disaffection (and its indicators, such as exclusion) rise and peak at secondary age (DfE, 2022b; Ross, 2009; Timpson, 2019). Compared to primary schooling, the secondary phase is characterised by increased academic pressure, and reduced opportunity to build relationships with staff (due to individual subject teaching). Therefore, whilst there appear to be multiple, interacting causal influences in disaffection, one way of addressing disaffection may be to consider ways to foster protective qualities within pupil-staff relationships (characterised by warmth and autonomy support).

2.2.2 Attachment Theory

Attachment Theory (AT) is one framework for understanding relational processes in disaffection. Attachment theorists suggest individuals are innately driven towards connecting with others (Ainsworth et al., 2015; Bowlby, 1969/1982). Consistent, nurturing parenting styles are thought to yield secure attachment in infants, which then promotes healthy emotional development in later life (Bowlby, 1969/1982). Secure attachment provides a dependable ‘base’ from which children can explore unfamiliar situations (Ainsworth et al., 2015) and protects against internalising and behavioural difficulties in children (Moretti & Peled, 2004). Crucially, Ainsworth (1985) suggested that individuals other than primary caregivers (e.g., school staff) can assume the roles of ‘secondary attachment figures’. These supplementary figures are thought to be especially important sources of support when secure attachment has not formed in the parent-child relationship. This offers one theoretical explanation for why pupil-staff relationships predict positive pupil learning and engagement patterns (De Santis King et al., 2007; Murray &
Greenburg, 2000). AT frameworks highlight a potentially important role for staff in promoting pupils’ social and emotional wellbeing and engagement.

### 2.2.3 The Self-System Model of Motivational Development (SSMMD)

The Self-System Model of Motivational Development (SSMMD) (Furrer, Skinner & Pitzer, 2014; Skinner et al., 2008) is another helpful framework for understanding the processes underlying disaffection (see Figure 1). The model suggests that a sense of oneself as competent, autonomous, and as being connected to others are essential to emotional and behavioural engagement in the classroom (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Skinner et al., 2008). The model also suggests that when pupils lack these resources, they become at risk of disaffection (Skinner et al., 2008). This framework proposes that contextual factors (e.g., relationships with social partners in school) are key in determining pupils’ development of these protective resources (Furrer, Skinner & Pitzer, 2014; Skinner et al., 2008). Thus, pupils thrive in school when their relationships with teachers and staff are characterised by warmth and consistency, similar to AT. Additionally, the SSMMD holds that optimal staff-pupil interactions should be structured so that staff set boundaries and hold high expectations for their pupils’ behaviours, and staff should allow learning autonomy, which entails actively pursuing and valuing the pupil’s voice (Tucker, 2013). This approach can also help staff to support pupils to better engage in areas they do not find intrinsically motivating – by explaining relevance and value to the pupils’ aspirations. Conversely, SSMMD proposes that staff approaches that are rejecting, chaotic and/or coercive undermine pupil motivation, resulting in patterns of disaffection (Reeve, 2009). These proposals suggests that if staff are trained and supported to
adopt helpful interaction characteristics identified in the SSMMD, they may be able to prevent or reduce disaffection in pupils they work with.

**Figure 1**  
*The Self System Model of Motivational Development (SSMMD) taken from Furrer, Skinner, and Pitzer (2014)*

![Diagram of Self System Model of Motivational Development (SSMMD)]

**2.2.4 Interventions for Pupil Disaffection**

The types of support currently indicated for pupils experiencing disaffection include interventions at the level of pupils’ school-based relationships. One approach is mentoring, which aims to build pupil aspirations, relationships, confidence, and resilience (Education Endowment Foundation [EEF], 2021). Autonomy-supportive teacher instruction styles have also been cited as a valuable. These are informed by Self Determination Theory (SDT) (Ryan & Deci, 2000) and consider that, for engagement to occur, staff must adopt styles that fulfil pupils’ ‘three basic universal psychological needs’ for autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Reeve et al., 2019, p. 89). Another approach indicated is the implementation of peer relationship
interventions, which aim to enhance the quality of pupils’ relationships by supporting development of emotional literacy skills (Ryan et al., 2019). Fostering of caring and compassionate school cultures and communities has also been identified as an approach to tackle disaffection, that functions by taking a whole school approach to developing pupils’ (and teachers’) social and emotional competency (Sauve & Schonert-Reichl, 2019).

Tiered counselling and therapeutic approaches have also been cited as appropriate to tackling unhelpful emotional patterns that occur in disaffection. Amongst these, Motivational Interviewing (MI) has been highlighted as an intervention for addressing disaffection and promoting engagement (Suldo et al., 2019). MI is a person-centred psychological approach which at its core emphasises the autonomy of clients (in making changes within their lives). MI counsellors aim to create respectful, non-judgemental collaborative partnerships with their clients, conducive to clients’ development of relatedness. The MI approach assumes that individuals hold within themselves resources for change and aims to identify the strengths and skills that clients possess. As such, the MI approach shares with other indicated interventions a focus on developing pupils’ experiences of autonomy and connectedness, in the context of secure one-to-one partnerships. It could be of particular value as it lends itself to shaping existing one-to-one practices that are already used in schools to address disaffection (but that may lack guiding psychological frameworks), such as mentoring (EEF, 2021).

2.3 The Origins of Motivational Interviewing (MI)

MI has its origins in the 1980s, when it grew out of the experiences of the clinical psychologist William Miller in his work with problem drinkers. (Miller, 1983). Miller
collaborated with Stephen Rollnick to publish the first edition of Motivational Interviewing (1991), which introduced the initial guiding principles for the approach.

MI is best thought of as ‘collaborative conversation style for strengthening a person’s own motivation and commitment to change’ (Miller & Rollnick, 2012a, p.12). As such, it is not a prescriptive therapeutic approach with manualised steps to follow. Rather, it is defined by guiding principles (referred to as the ‘spirit of MI’) (Rollnick & Miller, 1995). Over time there have been significant changes made to the core model (Miller & Rollnick, 2012a). These changes evolved the original three principles of MI (its ‘spirit’ of collaboration, evocation, and autonomy-support) into four principles (collaboration, evocation, compassion, and acceptance). The new principles also elaborated on aspects of compassion, to include absolute worth, autonomy-support, accurate empathy and affirmation (Miller & Rollnick, 2012a).

2.3.1 The Aims and Spirit of MI

Miller and Rollnick outline that the MI approach to supporting client change is about ‘evoking what is present, not installing what is missing’ (2012a, p. 24). In their initial conceptualisation of it, the authors outlined three key conceptual principles as the ‘spirit of MI’ (Miller & Rollnick, 2002):

- Collaboration: counsellor and client are equal partners in a collaborative problem-solving process.
- Evocation: motivation (and resources) for change lies within the client. The role of the counsellor is to guide the client to elicit this motivation.
- Autonomy-Support: the client is free to change, or not.
The authors here accompanied these aims with four *practical* 'principles' as a guide for those facilitating MI interventions. These are expressing empathy, developing discrepancy, rolling with resistance, supporting self-efficacy. More recently, and in light of the continuing practice of MI, Miller and Rollnick (2012a) revised these practical principles to become sequential processes:

- Engaging: rapport-building between therapist and client.
- Focusing: deciding on an agenda, which may involve behaviour change (for example, attending lessons more frequently) or may be around resolution or acceptance (i.e., in case of a personality clash with a subject teacher).
- Evoking: eliciting the client’s motivation to change.
- Planning: development of a sustained commitment to change and thinking about a concrete plan of action to get there.

Whilst the authors propose that these processes represent the ‘flow’ of MI, they acknowledge that, in real application, they may be sequential or recursive (Miller & Rollnick, 2012a, p. 27). Engagement is considered fundamental as the ‘opening process’ (p. 31), and necessary for successful graduation to focusing, and following phases.

### 2.3.2 MI and Disaffection

The MI approach is distinct in addressing the attitudes and beliefs of the individual (i.e., feelings of disaffection), rather than simply the presenting behaviour (Miller & Rollnick, 2009). In this sense, it has potential as an approach to addressing pupil disaffection, a phenomenon characterised by its emotional component (Furrer, Skinner & Pitzer, 2014; Skinner et al., 2008). MI theory may also offer a model for
school cultures that may reduce and protect against disaffection systemically. McNamara (2009) describes pupil disaffection in these terms: where school behaviour policies focus only on modifying pupil behaviour (systems of sanctions and reward), these policies do not account for the thoughts and feelings of the individual. This means that if behaviour change occurs after sanction, it is unlikely to be meaningful or endure (because the change has been imposed rather than sought by the pupil). The MI approach is thought to be especially well suited to young populations because it avoids controlling dynamics that often characterise adult-child or young person (CYP) interactions (Ingersoll, Wagner & Gharib, 2022). Instead, through its focus on collaboration and client autonomy, MI complements key developmental processes characteristic of young populations such as efforts to achieve increased independence (Naar-King, 2011).

Specific technical mechanisms in MI are appropriate to meeting the needs of pupils experiencing disaffection. Authoritarian and autocratic staff approaches, that do not seek or validate young people’s views, have been implicated in disaffection (DCSF, 2009; Hartas, 2011; Hayward & Williams, 2011). The MI approach considers engagement (building a mutually respectful and trusting relationship) as a key initial process, which must be established before the client’s goals can be considered or pursued (Miller & Rollnick, 2012a). Key technical skills are applied by MI counsellors as part of engagement processes. Open questions and reflections (of client statements) emphasise person-centredness, conveying the counsellor’s investment in understanding the client’s perspective. Use of these skills also introduces a dynamic where clients are encouraged to drive counselling conversations and self-advocate, in terms most meaningful for them. A further key skill, use of affirmations, serves to ‘accentuate the positive’ (Miller & Rollnick, 2012a,
in the context of disaffection, this can serve to communicate to young clients
that facilitators respect them and value their strengths. As well as promoting trust
and mutual respect, this strengths-orientation also drives young clients’ sense of
competence, considered key to motivation and engagement (Furrer, Skinner &
Pitzer, 2014; Skinner et al., 2008). Contrasting with other therapeutic approaches,
MI principles emphasise that counsellors should avoid the ‘expert trap’ to promote
client engagement and participation (Miller & Rollnick, 2012a, p.42). Instead, central
to learning to use MI is understanding (and conveying to clients) that the counsellor
cannot give answers or guidance without client collaboration and insight. As such,
MI offers a non-hierarchical power dynamic distinct to other therapeutic approaches,
but also – perhaps more pertinently – different to disaffected pupils’ experiences of
unhelpful, autocratic dynamics in their typical interactions with adults.

2.3.3 Theoretical Frameworks

Miller (1999) noted that MI developed from practice rather than theory, and the
model has been described as ‘atheoretical’ (Atkinson & Woods, 2017). However,
the authors - and others in the field - have acknowledged theoretical frameworks
that influenced MI’s conception, and others that complement the MI model.

The cofounders of MI note the influence of Rogerian client-centred
counselling principles (Rogers, 1951) on their development of the MI model (Miller
& Rollnick, 2002; 2009). Rogers (1957) outlined necessary ‘conditions’ for client
change within counselling relationships, including the therapist adopting a non-
judgemental and empathetic stance. There are parallels here between Rogers’
‘conditions’ and the ‘spirit of MI’, as outlining foundations for client change. Whilst
Miller and Rollnick acknowledge MI as an ‘evolution of client-centred counselling’
(2009, p.135) they suggest a key difference: that MI is more explicitly goal-oriented, with the counsellor consciously working to elicit ‘change talk’ (speech indicative of motivation to change) during sessions (2009, p.135). Nonetheless, the shared Rogerian and MI principles of adopting empathy and abandoning judgement against the client have been recognised by others in the field (Tober & Raistrick, 2007).

Another theory that appears in MI literature is Self Determination Theory (SDT) (Ryan & Deci, 2000). SDT is a motivational model that proposes that specific psychological needs – for autonomy, competence, and relatedness – must be fulfilled and fostered for individuals to reach a state of self-determination (or being motivated to grow and change). Like models of MI, SDT suggests that systemic factors (such as parenting style and teacher approaches) can influence individuals’ development of key resources (autonomy, competence, relatedness) and thus their degree of self-determination or motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000). As such, SDT has informed conceptual frameworks for classroom engagement and disaffection, such as the SSMMD (Skinner et al., 2008). Markland et al (2005) proposed that SDT may provide a useful theoretical framework for understanding the efficacy of MI approaches. The cofounders of MI have themselves acknowledged that SDT ‘holds promise for improving our understanding of MI’ (2012b, p 1). However, they have ruled out the possibility of integrating the theory into a new revision of their model (Miller & Rollnick, 2012b, p. 2).

The Transtheoretical Model of Change, or TTM (Prochaska & DiClemente, 1994; 1998) is another model that often appears in MI literature and practice, although the question of whether the TTM influenced the development of the MI model is contentious (Atkinson, 2014). The TTM was originally developed in the
1970s, and proposed that therapeutic (behaviour) change involved progressing through stages from ‘precontemplation’ (not realising or acknowledging there is a problem) to ‘maintenance’ (the client maintains a positive change) (Prochaska, 1979). The model suggests that, when beginning therapeutic interventions, clients may present at different stages of readiness to change. A significant aspect of the intervention may involve supporting the client to explore and overcome ambivalence about change (‘precontemplation’). The model proposes that change involves thinking about the change before deciding to commit to it (or not), then planning and putting into action steps towards goals. The inclusion of ‘relapse’ in the model supports its validity (McNamara, 2009): emphasising that therapeutic pathways to change are not linear, and so it is necessary to plan for setbacks.

In their earlier writing, Miller and Rollnick identified that TTM was a useful model for guiding therapists to understand client behaviour, and plan interventions relevant to the client’s current stage in the change process (1991). The cofounders have since clarified that – although the two may be complementary – MI was not based on the TTM (Miller & Rollnick, 2009) and reference to the TTM was removed in the 2002 revision of their core text. Atkinson (2014) suggests that the more recent division between MI and TTM may be due to criticism aimed at the TTM model, for questions surrounding the accurate measurement and identification of an individual’s stage of change (i.e., Wilson & Schlam, 2004). However, the TTM remains prominent within literature on MI in educational practice. This is partly due to its adoption by the EP and prominent writer on MI, Eddie McNamara, who initially suggested the utility of using the TTM alongside MI in appraising pupil readiness for change (McNamara, 1992).
A more recent revision of the TTM, adapted by McNamara (2009) as The Model of the Stages of Change is shown in Figure 2.

**Figure 2**
*The Model of the Stages of Change (McNamara, 2009)*

McNamara posits that ‘the disaffected pupil is in the ‘precontemplative stage’ of TTM, not having awareness or acceptance that their situation is problematic’ (2009, p.12). Miller and Rollnick (1991) propose four reasons why individuals may be in the precontemplative stage: reluctance, rationalisation, rebellion, resignation. The TTM may provide a helpful theoretical framework for professionals working with
disengaged groups because it assumes pupils will possibly present at different stages of readiness to identifying goals and committing to changes.

2.4 MI in Practice

2.4.1 Intervention Content

Miller and Rollnick define that ‘MI involves the flexible and strategic use of some core communication skills that are shared with many other forms of counselling (2012a, p.32). A set of skills known as ‘OARS’ (open questions, affirmations, reflective listening, summaries) are intended to be used across processes (from engagement to planning) and throughout interventions (Miller & Rollnick, 2012a):

- Open questions: non-leading questions that prompt reflection and elaboration.
- Affirmations: the facilitator looks out for, and identifies, the client’s strengths, abilities, efforts, achievements.
- Reflective listening: (selectively) parroting or rephrasing the client’s words, allowing them to hear their own views and experiences.
- Summaries: extended reflections to ‘sum up’ what has been shared in a session.

In the model’s development, a set of activities known as the ‘Menu of Strategies’ (Rollnick et al., 1992) emerged as another strategy for shaping MI interventions. This approach is dependent on the client’s stage in the process of change and requires rapport and engagement to have been established. The Menu comprises a list of activities that can be built into MI practice, with one or more activities being used per session. Activities can be used depending on the client’s
stage in the change process, for example ‘Opening strategies’ looks at the client’s
general life before the problematic issue is raised (‘how does the truanting fit into
things?’). Following strategies may look at ‘the good things and the bad things’,
which involves exploring the client’s feelings about the issue without raising it as a
problem. Recent publications from Miller and Rollnick don’t mention the Menu of
Strategies (2002; 2012), although it has appeared in MI efficacy studies (Atkinson

Critics have remarked that the non-prescriptive conceptualisation of MI,
alongside a lack of ‘theoretical stability’ to the model, presents issues when
appraising the validity of previous research findings (Atkinson & Woods, 2017).
Some studies have adapted manualised and replicable MI interventions, with
significant results (i.e. Strait et al., 2012). However, it may be argued that
manualising MI undermines the approach’s characteristic flexibility and person-
centredness (Miller & Rollnick, 2012a).

2.4.2 Intervention Duration
Where Miller & Rollnick state that they ‘do not intend to provide (..) a system of
treatment’ (2012a, p.30) and that it should not be considered an approach that
requires a set amount of time (2012a, p.315), their emphasis of the four processes
to MI implies a necessity for interventions in the approach to be longer form. Snape
and Atkinson (2016) conducted a systematic literature review of student-focused
school based MI: one of the outcomes of this indicated the range of intervention
durations from one session (Kittles & Atkinson., 2009; Strait et al., 2012; Terry et
al., 2013) to series of 10 x 60 minute sessions (Shetfel et al., 2014). The outcomes
from this review highlighted the potential value of receiving even just a single
session of MI (Strait et al., 2012). Where there is no agreement as to the ideal length
of intervention, theoretical perspectives suggest the benefit of multiple sessions, as providing the opportunity to build (therapeutic) relationships proposed as necessary for development of motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

2.4.3 Training and Developing MI Competency

Atkinson and Woods (2017) identify that the changing conceptualisation of MI over time, and its limited theoretical foundations, means that (as with evaluating its efficacy) it can be difficult to reliably train practitioners to implement it. However, some guidance exists for best practice for training in MI. The literature on training in MI indicates that key elements should be addressed (Miller & Moyers, 2006; Miller & Rollnick, 2012a): the components of the ‘spirit of MI’; the OARS; and change talk (recognising and responding to it to strengthen motivation to change). Caldwell and Kaye (2014) propose that this is justified because these key technical and affective communication skills (even when used independently) predict positive behaviour changes (Miller & Rose, 2009). Another insight from the literature on training in MI is that, as well as acquiring new skills unique to the approach, developing competency requires new facilitators to abandon practice habits that run counter to MI ideology (Hall et al., 2016; Miller & Mount, 2001). In the context of schools, this may present a challenge for staff attempting to deliver MI whilst also adhering to more authoritarian perspectives on managing behaviour. Furthermore, the MI ideology may create tensions relative to wider school policy e.g., in terms of behaviour management systems and “zero tolerance” behaviour policies (for example, limiting true autonomy in the therapeutic alliance).

The cofounders of MI suggest the practice of MI is ‘not easy’ (Miller & Rollnick, 2009, p. 135) and that its mastery requires ongoing practice, feedback,
and support. This is borne out in studies on the use of MI in schools, with researchers attributing limited effects (of an intervention on pupil motivation) to the limited training received by staff facilitators (Snape & Atkinson, 2015). Scepticism around “one shot” approaches to training is not unique to the MI field but is also evident in literature on training in other forms of evidence-based practice (Fixsen et al., 2005).

The extent to which MI therapists (or facilitators) implement the approach correctly is essential to MI outcomes (Miller & Rose, 2009). As such, fidelity (adherence) measures such as coding instruments are thought to be valuable in MI training. The Motivational Interviewing Treatment Integrity Coding Manual or ‘MITI’ (Moyers et al., 2003; 2007; 2014) is a coding system which appraises practitioner adherence to key MI characteristics (qualities characterising the spirit of MI, and the OARS skills). However, in their review of effectiveness of MI training approaches (for behavioural health practitioners), Barwick and colleagues (2012) identify ‘practice-based limitations’ (p. 1793) of the MITI, in that it requires intensive training to use, and administration is time consuming, making the MITI more suited to research than real world contexts. Where self-reports offer a more accessible method to measure proficiency, previous research indicates trainees’ tendency towards inaccurate appraisal of their own skills (Miller et al., 2004). These insights point toward a need for fidelity measures that are of practical value in real world contexts, but also offer external validity (Barwick et al., 2012).

Tools like the MITI can also function as resources to support skills development. ‘Cycles of learning’ involving coded observations of MI practice followed by feedback and coaching have been shown to be important in enhancing
practitioner proficiency (Miller et al., 2004) and in ensuring that (school-based) practitioners sustain MI in their work (Lee et al., 2014). As with fidelity measures, there is a need for further research into MI training programmes that ensures development of skills proficiency, whilst also being feasible within school contexts.

2.5 School-Based Motivational Interviewing (SBMI)

Previous studies suggest that MI in schools can address a range of outcomes including subject grade attainment (Strait et al., 2012; Terry et al., 2014), mental health (Frey et al., 2011) and attendance (Atkinson & Woods, 2003; Enea & Dafinoiu, 2009). Historically, MI interventions have been delivered by expert practitioners, however a small evidence base is emerging which focuses on the potential of school staff to be trained in MI. Atkinson (2014) highlights some key issues in the debate as to whether school staff could be trained in and integrate MI into their practice. The issues of cost and time for necessary training and development, alongside the day-to-day responsibilities school staff, present as potential barriers. However, school-based practitioners may be at an advantage compared to external practitioners commissioned to deliver these interventions in that, as part of the school community, they bring enhanced knowledge of the young client’s readiness to change and their difficulties and strengths (or resources) that may be important in the change process. The following section examines outcomes of a scoping review conducted to locate research evidence for the efficacy of SBMI in addressing pupil disaffection, and evidence for the training in and application of MI by school staff.

2.5.1 Scoping Review for Research on SBMI Efficacy and Implementation
A scoping review was used to capture existing research on school based motivational interviewing (SBMI). Aims were:

A. To identify literature on the efficacy of motivational interviewing for addressing disaffection (or its indicators), and

B. To identify literature on the training in and use/implementation of motivational interviewing by school-based staff.

The scoping review strategy and detail on outcomes can be found in Appendix A.

Though the terms ‘client’ and counsellor’ can be used to describe parties in the MI therapeutic relationship, this section will refer to them as ‘pupils’ or ‘young clients’ and ‘facilitators’ or ‘interventionists’.

2.5.2 Scoping review: studies located for Aim 1

Eleven studies were located that evaluated the efficacy of SBMI interventions to address pupil disaffection, or its indicators (see Appendix B for summary table).

2.5.2.1 Pupils Receiving SBMI Interventions

Ages of pupils sampled ranged across primary (elementary) and secondary (high school) years. Most papers (N =7) located sampled pupils in the secondary phase (aged 11-16 years). This reflects research evidence that suggests this phase where incidence of disaffection and its indicators increase and peak (DfE, 2022a; 2002b; Ross, 2009; Timpson, 2019). The youngest pupil sampled with age specified – 9 years – appeared in a case study (Cryer & Atkinson, 2015). Henry et al. (2020) sampled 39 pupils from a disciplinary alternative education setting serving ages 5-18 years. The eldest group sampled appeared in a Romanian study which selected 38 adolescents aged 16-17 for an intervention targeting pupil truancy (Enea & Dafinoiu, 2009).
Pupils in studies presented with a range disaffection-related characteristics. Some young clients presented with teacher and self-reported low esteem and perceived academic confidence and competence (Cryer & Atkinson, 2015; Kolbert et al., 2017). In most studies (N = 8), pupils sampled were described as presenting with behavioural indicators of disaffection including truancy (Enea & Dafinoiu, 2009), non-compliance and low effort (Ratanavivan & Ricard, 2020; Snape & Atkinson, 2017). The range in pupil presentation across studies in this review highlights that disaffected groups are heterogenous (Skinner et al, 2008; Wang & Peck, 2013). The lack of criteria for pupil identification between studies limits external validity and comparability of research outcomes.

Of the studies reviewed, three focused on interventions in alternative education settings (Henry et al., 2020; Ratanavivan & Ricard, 2018; 2020), which is important as pupils attending these settings face poorer academic outcomes compared to mainstream peers (Centre for Social Justice, 2020). However, the value of two of these studies is limited in that groups sampled were identified in unspecific terms. In one study, pupils presented with unspecified ‘problematic behaviour patterns’ (Henry et al., 2020). Ratanavivan and Ricard (2018) sampled pupils who had transferred to an alternative placement due to a spectrum of behaviours, some of which were characteristic of disaffection (‘noncompliance and persistent misbehaviour’), but also included behaviours that were more extreme (‘assault’). The sample here may represent more complex pupil difficulties beyond negative feelings and attitudes about school and learning.

2.5.2.2 SBMI Intervention Facilitators
Consistent with findings from a previous literature review on SBMI (Snape & Atkinson, 2016), papers located from the scoping review here illustrate SBMI being
facilitated by professionals from a range of backgrounds. One study trained school-based pastoral staff to deliver an MI intervention (Snape & Atkinson, 2015). The remaining 10 studies involved interventions delivered by professionals with psychology qualifications and training (psychology graduates, doctoral students, school counsellors, trainee, and qualified EPs).

2.5.2.3 SBMI Intervention Structures

Most papers identified used an intervention programme of between five to eight weekly sessions lasting between 45mins to 1 hour, with the longest comprising 10-12 x 30-minute sessions (Henry et al, 2020), though one study included only one session (Kittles & Atkinson, 2009).

Where there is, no conclusion as to the recommended length of a SBMI intervention, randomised control studies on young populations (not specific to disaffected groups) demonstrate dosage effects (Terry et al., 2014a; 2014b) and suggest the value of additional check ins to review pupils’ goal plans. This is consistent with Miller and Rollnick’s conceptualisation of the four key processes in behavioural change (2012a). Theoretical perspectives also suggest at the benefit of multiple sessions, as providing opportunity to build the relatedness proposed as necessary for maintenance of motivation and wellbeing (Ryan & Deci, 2000). This is especially relevant to groups of pupils presenting with disaffection from school and learning, where alliances with school staff may have been eroded (McNamara, 2009).

2.5.2.4 SBMI Intervention Content

Whilst Rollnick and Miller (2012) have emphasised that MI is not a technique which can be manualised, some researchers in the field have suggested the advantages of developing more defined protocols for practice to improve fidelity (Atkinson &
Woods, 2017). Studies located in this review used structured programmes and packages of SBMI. Appendix C details programmes used in the located studies.

### 2.5.2.5 The Efficacy of SBMI Interventions for Pupil Disaffection

In a United States-based study, Henry et al. (2020) used a Randomised Control Trial (RCT) design to investigate the impact of the Motivational Interviewing with At-Risk Students (MARS) intervention on the social, emotional, behavioural, and academic outcomes of pupils attending an alternative disciplinary education setting. Using pre- and post-intervention comparisons, researchers here found that that pupil assigned to the experimental group (N = 21) received significantly fewer disciplinary sanctions applied by teachers in class (-29%), or the pupil being temporarily removed from class (-24%) compared to a waitlist control (N = 18). Statistically significant reductions were found for pupils’ self-reported emotional symptoms, school problems and internalising symptoms, and teacher-reported behaviour symptoms, school problems and externalising behaviours. However, the small number of participants limits the generalisability of findings beyond the setting.

Another United States-based RCT examined the impact of a MI and CBT-informed intervention on middle-school pupils’ development of ‘academic protective factors’ (Terry et al., 2021). Here, analysis of pre and post-test measures showed significant effects for treatment group pupils’ Maths attainment, self-efficacy, academic motivation, self-reports of behavioural and emotional functioning, when compared to a waitlist group. Results here suggest the promise of interventions combining MI and CBT to support pupils presenting with disaffection, although the structure of the intervention here suggests the partial impact of MI as a ‘primer’ for other therapeutic interventions, rather than outcomes here being ascribed to SBMI alone.
Where RCTs may be considered as the 'gold standard' for scientific research in reducing the influence of bias and confounding variables, critics argue for their impropriety in investigating social phenomena. Pawson and Tilley (1997) identify shortcomings of RCTs: their focus on outcomes at the cost of exploring influences that contributed to the relative success or failure of the intervention. Additionally, the outcomes of RCTs may represent limited ecological validity, as the artificially controlled experimental conditions are unlikely to be reproduced when the intervention is used in a real-life context. This emphasises a need for studies undertaken in authentic everyday school settings. The remainder of this section will explore additional, non-RCT evaluation studies located in the scoping review.

Two studies examined SBMI interventions to address specific indicators of disaffection (truancy and school behavioural issues). Ratanavivan and Ricard (2018) explored the use of an SBMI intervention with 10–12-year-olds (N = 15) attending a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DECP). A multiple case study design was used to explore the impact of a six-session intervention on pupil classroom behaviour. Whilst researchers found only a moderate improvement in teacher-reported classroom behaviours, some children reported an increased readiness to change. However, the lack of control or comparison group here means that the impact of extraneous influences or expectancy effects cannot be ruled out.

In a Romanian study, Enea and Dafinoiu (2009) carried out a non-randomised pilot design to evaluate the efficacy of an eight-week MI intervention facilitated by the school psychologist and designed to reduce truancy on adolescents aged 16-17 years. The intervention comprised strategies for fostering extrinsic (reinforcement, behaviour contracting) and intrinsic motivation (MI, solution-focused strategies). Whilst the intervention proved effective by the measure
adopted to evaluate it (truancy rates decreased in the experimental group by 61% compared to no change in the control), there were some important limitations to note for this study. Non-random group assignment may have introduced bias. Additionally, the sole use of attendance rates to measure efficacy means that benefits (or shortcomings) for affective outcomes of the intervention were left unexplored.

Some studies were located that explored the use of SBMI in promoting positive change for pupils explicitly identified by their schools as being ‘disaffected’. Six papers co-authored by Atkinson were identified through the scoping review, all using case study or mixed methods research designs. In all studies here, pupils receiving interventions had been identified by school staff (school special educational needs coordinator [SENCO]) as ‘disaffected’ by virtue of a range of characteristics including low motivation and esteem (Cryer & Atkinson, 2015) showing behavioural noncompliance (Snape & Atkinson, 2015) and being generally apathetic towards school (Atkinson & Woods, 2003). Differently from the studies discussed so far, measures of attitudes towards the intervention itself were collected, rather than focusing solely on discrete learning outcomes. Three of these studies used single case studies, each focusing on an individual child (aged 9 – 14 years). Atkinson and Amesu (2007) found that an MI and Solution Focused intervention with a 12-year-old boy resulted in improvements in the pupil’s attendance and self-reported sense of competence and on-task/positive class behaviour. The illustrative nature of this study – however – means that helpful information about data gathering and analysis is not provided to inform our understanding of the chosen research design. Atkinson and Woods (2003) concluded an ‘overall shift’ in their case pupil’s perception of school. Significantly,
discussion content in this paper includes a summary of ‘process and practitioner issues’ helpful for consideration when using the intervention in practice (i.e., researchers noted that the pupil raised personal issues relating to home life that prompted the EP to reflect on the propriety of their involvement and choice of intervention). A final single case study to note is that conducted by Cryer and Atkinson (2015). Here, Thematic Analysis was applied to interview data gathered from teachers and the pupil (a nine-year-old boy). Identified themes related to increased pupil self-efficacy and autonomy.

An additional two papers co-authored by Atkinson used exploratory mixed methods multiple case study designs with slightly larger samples (Snape & Atkinson, 2015; 2017). Both studies used the Pupils Feelings about School and School Work Inventory (PFSSW) (Entwistle & Kozeki, 1985) alongside interview methods. In both studies, significant effects were not evidenced through PFSSW scores. However, qualitative approaches to evaluating efficacy yielded information which suggested some benefit. Some positive process-oriented outcomes were found. Paraprofessionals from the 2015 study reported that facilitating the intervention gave them an improved understanding of pupils’ needs, reiterating evidence elsewhere for the efficacy of SBMI as an assessment tool as well as an intervention (Kittles & Atkinson, 2009). They also reported that the intervention was effective in fostering good relationships with pupil participants. Semi structured interviews with pupils post intervention in the 2017 study yielded insight that pupils found the sessions enjoyable (as well as reporting improved behaviour and receipt of fewer detentions). Despite offering limited generalisability because of their sample sizes, they do evidence the value of adopting qualitative methods in allowing scope for participants to reflect on and shape their own perceptions on perceived
intervention outcomes – rather than having these imposed by researchers as in quantitative measures.

A final two studies located in the review serve as illustrative case studies. Whilst these designs offer limited generalisability and carry risk of bias, they offer in-depth exploration of phenomena (McDuffie & Scruggs, 2008) and can produce transferable knowledge if the research process is documented in detail. They may be argued to be especially valuable in research on SEN support as they offer rich data on pupil voice and experiences, and so offer an approach compatible with legislation on inclusive educational practice (DfE, 2015). Kolbert and colleagues (2017) reported improvements in pupil self-reported self-belief and confidence post-SBMI intervention. The transferability of observations from this paper is enhanced by its detailed narrative of a counsellor’s use of specific MI skills (i.e., OARS) prompting a young client to overcome ambivalence around their (teacher reported) low effort and academic underachievement. However, the descriptive nature of this paper (with no reference to the chosen methods for data gathering or analysis) means that its credibility is limited. A more detailed illustration is provided by Ratanavivan and Ricard (2020). Researchers here used a case study – with a 10-year-old boy - to illustrate implementation of an intervention evaluated by the authors in an earlier multiple case study (Ratanavivan & Ricard, 2018). Process descriptions here show how use of case examples (hypothetical instances involving other children experiencing behavioural difficulties) prompted change talk in the young client and allowed him to set shorter term goals (‘He told the counsellor that he would do his work and behave in class until the end of the school day’, p.169).

The paper demonstrates how the use of particular MI-oriented activities – looking at decisional balance and identifying personal strengths and goals - facilitated
improvements in the young client’s self-reported confidence to change (a rating of five in his first session shifted to a rating eight in his sixth/final session).

As evidenced here, there is currently only a small research base exploring the use of SBMI to address disaffection and specific indicators or outcomes of it, including truancy. Studies located showed mixed results regarding the efficacy of SBMI in promoting positive emotional, behavioural, and academic outcomes for pupils. However, the literature to date suggests the potential for SBMI to facilitate improved confidence and self-efficacy in pupils, to reduce attendance issues, and to support improved pupil behaviour and effort.

2.5.3 Scoping Review: Studies Located for Aim 2

Because the use of SBMI is not widespread, implementation studies are valuable in exploring what happens when MI programmes are transferred from research to real world settings (Killerby & Dunsmuir, 2018). This perspective is important in intervention evaluation research, given existing evidence suggesting that implementation variability can influence intervention outcomes (Humphrey et al., 2016; Killerby & Dunsmuir, 2018). Specifically, it is important to understand the feasibility and acceptability of school-based interventions to facilitators and pupil clients in school settings. With this, it is possible to discern not only whether benefits will impact outside of research/experimental conditions, but whether new approaches to intervention and support are of practical use to those applying and receiving them in the real world (Fixsen et al., 2005).

Six studies were located that evaluated the training in and/or implementation of SBMI by school-based staff (see Appendix D for summary table).
2.5.3.1 School Staff Being Trained to Facilitate SBMI

Across the studies, staff involved in MI training and implementation were employed in 14 different school-based roles including subject teaching (Svennson et al., 2021), pastoral leadership (Pennell et al., 2020) and SEN/inclusion (Sheftel et al., 2014; Snape & Atkinson, 2015). One study noted that all participants held Masters qualifications in counselling psychology (Rochat, 2019) although other papers did not identify participants as having prior qualifications or training in psychology.

The studies located in the search demonstrated staff being trained in MI towards a range of pupil outcomes. In one study, teaching staff had received training in MI to use in their everyday practice including classroom management (Svensson et al., 2021). Studies also showed staff being trained to use MI towards specific outcomes: tackling bullying (Pennell et al., 2020); addressing pupil disaffection (Snape & Atkinson, 2015); raising attainment and aspirations amongst disadvantaged youth (Simon & Ward, 2014); raising self-determination and efficacy in young people with disabilities (Sheftel et al., 2014).

2.5.3.2 Training in MI for School Staff

Training programmes in located studies varied in length and content: the shortest comprising one 90-minute training session focusing on the spirit of MI (Snape & Atkinson, 2015) and the longest entailing workshops, booster sessions and regular supervision over a period of five months (Simon & Ward, 2014). Of the studies that described training content (N = 5), four used lectures as well as at least one other dynamic approach. Three studies used role play practice (Rochat, 2019; Simon & Ward, 2014; Sheftel et al., 2014), three involved supervision (Pennell et al., 2020; Rochat, 2019; Simon & Ward, 2014) and three used observation and feedback processes to support participants’ skills development (Pennell et al., 2020; Rochat,
2019; Simon & Ward, 2014). This demonstrates that SBMI training programmes in this review largely adhere to guidance from the approach’s cofounders: that ongoing practice and feedback is necessary for development of MI proficiency (Miller & Rollnick). For the Snape and Atkinson study, the authors concluded that (due to limited effects yielded in motivation amongst pupil participants) a one-off training session is potentially insufficient to support proficiency – citing the Rollnick et al. (1992) view of two three-hour training sessions as the minimum training required.

2.5.3.3 Measuring MI Implementation

Three studies located in the search evaluated the extent to which participants used MI-oriented behaviours and skills during and following training (Rochat, 2019; Sheftel et al., 2014; Simon & Ward, 2014). To measure facilitators’ MI adherence, two studies used the Motivational Interviewing Treatment Integrity Manual (Moyers et al., 2010) in its original (Simon & Ward, 2014) or adapted forms (Sheftel et al., 2014). The MITI has been identified as a reliable and valid tool for testing MI proficiency and has been used as a method elsewhere in the SBMI research base (Frey et al., 2013), although its accessibility to users beyond research contexts has been questioned (Atkinson & Woods, 2017). Rochat (2019) used the Motivational Interviewing Skills Code (MISC) (Miller, Moyers, Ernst & Amrhein, 2008), a tool which explores MI adherence using a similar structure to the MITI (behaviour counts for MI behaviours and skills, and global ratings for spirit of MI), although it appraises client responses as well as facilitator skills and behaviours.

Despite a variation in training received by participants (participants in Sheftel and colleagues’ study receiving 50% of the training period delivered in the other fidelity studies), development of MI-adherent behaviours and skills (including compliance to the spirit of MI) were found across all three studies. Participation in
supervision (following training and booster sessions) appeared as a strategy that yielded significant effects in facilitators' MI-adherence (Simon & Ward, 2014). Timing of training and support also appeared to make a difference. Dips in and overall deterioration in application of MI skills were noted in two studies (Rochat, 2019; Simon & Ward, 2014). In both cases authors attributed this to months (two plus) having elapsed between receipt of training and fidelity measurement. This implies that, as well as school staff requiring ongoing professional skills development following initial MI training, there is a need for these opportunities to occur soon after training, and with regular occurrence (perhaps monthly or more). An interesting finding from one study was that staff experience negatively predicted MI proficiency (Rochat, 2019). This implies the benefit for early-career training in MI, and it also reflects previous evidence that suggests MI training is as much about suppression of habitual non-MI-adherent behaviours as it is about acquisition of new MI-adherent skills and behaviours (Hall et al., 2016).

Only one study (Simon & Ward, 2014) incorporated measures of participant responsiveness alongside fidelity measures. This provides a fuller evaluation of MI implementation, and the study’s application to real life contexts, because it gives insight not only into whether school staff can be trained in MI, but also whether they feel inclined to sustain it in their practice. No qualitative assessment of participant attitudes was taken, which may have provided information about factors that influenced motivation (for example, was it the breadth and depth of the programme here that ensured participants’ positive experiences?).

2.5.3.4 Measuring Facilitators’ Experiences of SBMI Training and Application

Three identified studies (Pennell et al., 2020; Snape & Atkinson, 2015; Svensson et al., 2021) focused on school staff perceptions of SBMI’s feasibility (is the MI
approach acceptable to users) and their responsiveness (engagement) to it. Both aspects are considered important in establishing how and why new interventions work – or not (Humphrey et al., 2016). Tentative but positive conclusions can be drawn from this review regarding responsiveness, with school-based facilitators reporting the value of MI for strengthening pupils’ motivation and self-awareness, for helping conflict resolution, and fostering higher quality staff-pupil interactions (Snape & Atkinson, 2015; Svensson et al., 2021).

Barriers and facilitators to implementation of SBMI have also been identified in previous research. A key feasibility issue reported across the three identified studies related to time: to access training and ongoing professional development, and to prepare for and deliver interventions. A further barrier, parents’ willingness to consent to their child receiving SBMI interventions, was identified in one study (Pennell et al., 2020). However, the authors here attribute this barrier to factors specific to the intervention’s target group (here, stigma relating to bullying, and parents’ resistance to conceding that their child may be bullying peers) rather than the SBMI intervention itself. Previous research has also indicated factors that enable school staff to implement MI in their practice, including timetabling for intervention planning and delivery (Snape & Atkinson, 2015) and administrative support to prepare for and arrange sessions (Pennell et al., 2020). Pennell and colleagues’ study produced additional insight into facilitators. Personal characteristics were identified as influential, with prior experience working one-to-one with pupils reported as a factor that made implementation easier.

The results of this part of the scoping review demonstrate that there is currently very little existing research on the implementation of MI in schools by school staff. Research to date provides some evidence to suggest that school staff
can be trained to use some MI-adherent skills and behaviours with fidelity. The literature also points towards specific facilitators (experience and systemic support) and barriers (time and capacity) that can impact on implementation. However, conclusions here are limited by the very small research base available to date.

In the research to date there is only one small multiple case study that explores the implementation of MI by school support staff to address pupil disaffection (Snape & Atkinson, 2015). Support staff are arguably well placed to use MI in schools as they are commonly deployed to provide direct pastoral support to pupils, including those identified as showing signs of disaffection. Additionally, research into their deployment and training indicates that they do not always receive the support and development opportunities required to maximise their impact. As such, training in MI could address two issues: pupil disaffection in schools, and the development of the support staff role.

2.6 In-School Support for SEMH and Behavioural Needs

In recent decades, public health and education policymakers have highlighted the potential for schools to build capacity to meet their pupils’ behavioural and SEMH needs internally (Brown, 2018; DH & DfE, 2017; Ofsted, 2008b). Reviews of current school practice and policies suggest one-to-one pastoral support (from a nominated member of staff) as a common approach used by schools to support identified pupils’ social and emotional wellbeing (Brown, 2018), including disaffection (Ofsted, 2008a). It appears then that the strategic deployment and training of support staff may be key to addressing issues such as disaffection.

2.6.1 Support Staff Deployment
Reviews of large-scale studies into school support staff deployment and impact have grouped them broadly into two groups: teaching assistants (including TAs and special needs support staff) and pupil welfare roles (including learning mentors, behaviour mentors, home liaison and attendance officers) (Whitehorn, 2010). In pastoral education research, the roles of ‘pastoral support staff’ have been identified as a specific subgroup of staff whose primary role is to support the behavioural, social, and mental health needs of pupils (Rice O’Toole & Soan, 2020). Elsewhere, DfE research into support staff deployment in England suggests that one-to-one ‘withdrawal intervention delivery’ (including SEMH support) are also commonly carried out by teaching assistants, alongside their learning support duties (Skipp & Hopwood, 2019). It appears that pastoral support features across a range of support staff roles including learning support and pupil welfare. The remainder of this section will refer to two subgroups of support staff who have direct roles in pupil support: teaching assistants and pupil welfare staff, inclusive of the individual titles identified by Whitehorn (2010).

The Deployment and Impact of Support Staff in Schools (DISS) study was a large-scale project devised to explore how support staff are currently being utilised in the UK, and how their practice impacts on outcomes for pupils (Blatchford et al., 2009). Research data here suggested support staff responsibilities included communication and administration jobs as well as direct learning and pastoral support. Another smaller scale study by the DfE (Skipp & Hopwood, 2019), informed by interviews with Heads and Senior Leaders (N = 60), suggested three main responsibilities held by teaching assistants: providing whole class support, in-class targeted support, and delivering interventions. Perhaps unsurprisingly, intervention work was typically being delivered to pupils with EHC (Education, Health and Care)
plans or identified SEN. The survey indicated that the intervention work itself was broad and sometimes specialised in nature (including emotional literacy (ELSA) support, speech and language interventions and curriculum support).

Ofsted (2008a; 2010) have produced a series of reports which demonstrate effective deployment of support staff working with pupils identified as showing disaffection. Reports were based on inspections carried out in 2008 (of 13 primary schools and 10 secondary schools) and 2010 (16 primary schools and 14 secondary schools) to explore how schools had implemented reforms in light of the 2003 National Workforce Agreement (for raising standards and tackling teacher workload). Good practice observed included employment of learning mentors specifically to re-engage pupils showing signs of disaffection, with some schools identifying units in school for this work to take place. Examiners noted that, in effective schools, learning mentors worked closely with other members of support staff and teaching staff to review pupil progress and identify and address barriers to pupil reintegration to their mainstream classes (Ofsted, 2010). They also recognised the value of the support staff workforce in bringing a range of skills, experience and expertise that allowed them to make unique contributions in supporting pupils experiencing learning disaffection.

Researchers of support staff practice suggest that their relative success should be viewed in the context of the decisions school leaders make about their deployment (Ofsted, 2008b; Blatchford et al., 2009). Researchers from the DISS study conclude that training and guidance (to deliver targeted interventions) is important to ensure that support staff can impact positively on pupil outcomes (Blatchford et al., 2009).
2.6.2 Support Staff Training

Previous evidence indicates significant variability in the training support staff receive to allow them to carry out their roles effectively. The Training and Development Agency for School’s Support Staff Study (TDA’s SSS) explored the training and development of support staff in England (Teeman et al., 2009). Outcomes from support staff surveys (N = 3261) indicated that 25% of respondents reported they had received no training relating to their role in the previous year. Conclusions from this are limited, however, in that break downs by specific role were not given, meaning that statistics reflect the experiences of support spanning admin, site and technical roles as well as welfare-oriented roles. The DISS study (Blatchford et al., 2009) provides more insight here. The majority of support staff (for learning and welfare) surveyed had received (school-based or external) training over the previous two years, when measured over three survey time points from 2004-2008. However, data was not collected on whether this training was considered relevant to their role, which may again limit comparability with the SSS outcomes.

Skipp and Hopwood’s more recent, but smaller scale, research (2019) shows school leaders report their teaching assistants as receiving training with three focuses: whole school teaching and learning strategies; types of SEN and potential support; intervention or programme-focused training. The only evidence-based intervention training programme named by the report is ELSA, although it also indicates that staff were receiving support to use tools for SEMH teaching and assessment such as Social Stories and the Boxall Profile. A limitation here was that school support staff views were not gathered, meaning their perceptions of their training and development is missing.
2.6.3 Support Staff Training for Direct Pastoral Activities

Evidence discussed so far suggests variability in training support staff access to enable them to carry out their roles. Although we know that direct pastoral work is a responsibility that appears across support staff roles (Blatchford et al., 2009; Skipp & Hopwood, 2019; Whitehorn, 2010) there is very little existing research focus on the training they receive towards this, and how this impacts pupils’ non-academic outcomes.

The 2017 Green Paper ‘Transforming children and young people’s mental health provision’ stated that, with appropriate training and supervision, non-clinical professionals such as teaching assistants could apply evidence-based interventions to address mild-to-moderate SEMH difficulties, ‘leading to outcomes comparable to those of trained therapists’ (DH & DfE, 2017, p.38). However, there has been no national mandate for widespread training of school-based staff in evidence-based approaches to support their one-to-one pastoral practice. In fact, research into senior leader and teacher perceptions highlights concerns that (support) staff given responsibility for the pupils with highest levels of need are often those with the fewest educational skills and qualifications (Rice O’Toole & Soan, 2019; Skipp & Hopwood, 2019). Some smaller studies suggest similar concerns from support staff themselves. Rhodes (2007) explored perceptions of learning mentors regarding their professional development and identity. A key finding here was that, whilst professionals expressed satisfaction at their experiences of induction, participants who had limited educational experience expressed awareness of gaps in their knowledge – and an eagerness for this to be addressed through training and networking.
Staff training has been identified as a key aspect of the EP remit (Fallon, Woods & Rooney, 2010; Lee & Woods, 2017). In the last two decades, UK-wide training programmes for school staff have emerged – devised and facilitated by EPs – that focus on staff skills development to address pupils’ social and emotional difficulties. Emotion Coaching (Gus et al., 2015) offers training for non-clinical school professionals in an approach that helps children to develop improved emotional regulation. Emotion Coaching programmes use a ‘cascade’ model, wherein selected school staff (for example school leaders or inclusion managers) receive external training, and later return to their schools to share their new skills more widely within their teams. Research into the application of Emotion Coaching by staff in schools has been positive, with facilitators reporting that training in this approach had improved their confidence and sense of competence when working with pupils (Gus et al., 2017; Romney et al., 2022; Rose et al., 2015). The ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant) programme was devised to train teaching assistants in supporting pupils’ emotional development (by helping pupils to recognise their own and others’ emotions). To practice as ELSAs, staff must complete six full days’ training led by an EP and engage in ongoing group supervision. Once registered, ELSAs can be deployed to deliver 6–12-week intervention programmes with pupils. Research into ELSAs’ views shows that the programme’s group support and leadership by an EP improved trainees’ confidence to practice autonomously supporting pupils (McEwen, 2019), and the supervision element has been reported as especially helpful to support staff (Osborne & Burton, 2014)

The evidence discussed in this section suggests that direct pastoral work features in the remit of pupil learning and welfare support staff in UK schools. When
deployed strategically, there is potential for support staff to impact positively on outcomes for pupils presenting with disaffection. Access to training to deliver interventions is considered important, although the available evidence suggests that support staff access to relevant training is variable. Perhaps for this reason, support staff have been described as a ‘vital, but largely neglected’ group in the educational workforce (Webster, Blatchford, & Russell., 2013, p.79). Staff responses to established EP-led training programmes have been positive, which implies a readiness amongst school-based staff to receive training in psychology-based approaches and to apply newly-acquired skills in their practice. The following section will explore literature on models of staff training, and draw on evidence for the value of implementation research.

2.6.4 Models of School Staff Training

DfE Standards for teachers’ professional development (2016) differentiate between professional development programmes (focused, sustained training) and activities (as one-off standalone training). The guidance suggests the superiority of the former in allowing scope for collaboration, refinement of approaches and effective embedding of imparted strategies. The DfE standards also set out five standards for effective professional development:

1. Professional development should have a focus on improving and evaluating pupil outcomes.

2. Professional development should be underpinned by robust evidence and expertise.

3. Professional development should include collaboration and expert challenge.
4. Professional development programmes should be sustained over time.

And all this is underpinned by, and requires that:

5. Professional development must be prioritised by school leadership.

(DfE, 2016, p.6)

The guidance above is based upon an ‘umbrella review’ of existing systematic reviews of evidence on effective teacher professional development and learning (CPDL) (Cordingley et al., 2019).

There are key challenges that can arise with professional development and learning to use evidence-based approaches. One is the issue of training transfer: that practitioners will not always sustain new skills following initial training.

2.7 Training Transfer

Training transfer research is concerned with the issue that new knowledge and skills acquired in training are not always adopted into practice. Studies into factors influencing this ‘transfer problem’ are partly driven by the consequences of this issue for leaders’ decisions as to whether to invest in training within their organisations (Blume et al., 2010). This is particularly pertinent for schools, who face increasing cost pressures following ongoing cuts to funding (Sibieta, 2021).

A review by Baldwin and Ford (1988) resulted in a training transfer model which suggested that trainee characteristics, training design and work environment are three key factors or ‘inputs’ determining training transfer. Blume and colleagues
(2010) conducted a metanalysis of 89 empirical transfer studies to explore further the impact of trainee characteristics, training design and work environment on training transfer to different contexts. The review indicated several factors as predictive of transfer, including trainee motivation, conscientiousness, and experience of support from colleagues. Concluding their review, the authors identified that although there may be no ‘magic bullets’ for ensuring training transfer, specific measures could be taken by training facilitators and employers to better support trainees to sustain learning beyond training. Suggested approaches included fostering trainee motivation and facilitating improved peer and supervisor support for trainees in their workplace. It is important that EPs are mindful of ‘protective’ measures to support training transfer, so that they can support schools to incorporate these into professional development opportunities for staff and ensure training investment is worthwhile.

Grossman and Salas (2011) used Baldwin and Ford’s model of the three training ‘inputs’ to inform their own model for the training transfer process, incorporating factors that have been proven to influence the acquisition, retention, generalisation, and maintenance of new skills. In providing a concise model for the ‘bottom line’ (p. 105) on factors influencing transfer, the authors propose their model as useful to researchers but also to organisations in their planning and decision-making for staff training. Factors identified by Grossman and Salas are given in Table 1. These may be especially important to consider in the context of training school support staff, who are deployed daily across multiple tasks (Blatchford et al., 2009; Skipp & Hopwood, 2019), therefore any ‘opportunities to perform’ newly-acquired skills (and activities) may be limited.
Aside from training transfer issues, there are other challenges that arise for educators aiming to establish evidence-based approaches in schools. Even if new skills and behaviours are sustained by staff beyond the training context, systemic influences can impact upon whether evidence-based programmes produce benefits in real world settings. Implementation science is useful in exploring the conditions required for programmes to produce positive outcomes beyond research conditions. The following section will outline implementation research frameworks and suggest its value as a perspective in the current study.

### 2.8 Implementation Science

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Influence on transfer</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Trainee characteristics</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Cognitive ability</td>
<td>Trainees higher in cognitive ability have more success in processing, retaining, and generalizing trained skills.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Self-efficacy</td>
<td>Trainees higher in self-efficacy have more confidence in their ability to learn and apply trained competencies and are more likely to persist when performing difficult tasks.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Motivation</td>
<td>Transfer is facilitated when trainees are motivated to learn and transfer throughout the training process.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Perception of training usefulness</td>
<td>Trainees who perceive training as useful and valuable are far more likely to apply new competencies in the workplace.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Training content</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Modelling</td>
<td>Behavioural modelling facilitates transfer when both positive and negative models are used, and when opportunities to practice are provided.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Error management</td>
<td>Error management promotes the transfer of training by allowing trainees to anticipate potential issues, providing them with knowledge of how to handle such problems, and highlighting the negative outcomes that can occur if training is not transferred.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Realistic training environment</td>
<td>Conducting training and practice in environments that resemble the workplace increases the likelihood that trained competencies will transfer.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Work environment</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Support</td>
<td>Both supervisor and peer support are critical for the transfer of training.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transfer climate</td>
<td>Situational cues and consequences largely determine whether learned competencies are applied in the workplace.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Opportunity to perform</td>
<td>For training to successfully transfer, trainees need the resources and opportunities to apply their new skills and abilities to the workplace.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Follow-up</td>
<td>To facilitate transfer, the formal training period should be followed by additional learning opportunities (e.g., after action reviews, feedback, job aids).</td>
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*Table 1: Key factors for the transfer of training, from Grossman and Salas (2011)*
Blase and colleagues (2012) suggest that for intervention research to be useful, we need to appraise the value of the intervention (the ‘what’), but we also need to understand how to implement and sustain these interventions (the ‘how’). The second question is addressed through implementation science and this field addresses the ‘research practice gap’ (Ogden & Fixsen, 2015). As such, implementation scientists focus on what evidence-based programmes look like when they are used in real settings (Durlak & Dupre, 2008). Education researchers have noted that implementation is rarely examined in evaluation studies of school-based interventions (Killerby & Dunsmuir, 2018), even though it is now considered best practice by the Education Endowment Foundation (Humphrey et al., 2016; Sharples et al., 2019). There are eight key implementation domains (see Table 2).

Table 2
Implementation domains, Durlak and Dupre (2008), referenced by Humphrey and colleagues (2016, p. 6)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Implementation domain</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fidelity</td>
<td>The extent to which implementers (e.g., teachers) adhere to the intended treatment model</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dosage</td>
<td>How much of the intended intervention has been delivered and/or received</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quality</td>
<td>How well different components of an intervention are delivered</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reach</td>
<td>The rate and scope of participation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Responsiveness</td>
<td>The degree to which participants engage with the intervention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programme Differentiation</td>
<td>The extent to which intervention activities can be distinguished from other, existing practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring of control/comparison groups</td>
<td>Determination of the ‘counterfactual’ (e.g., that which is taking place in the absence of the intervention)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adaptation</td>
<td>The nature and extent of changes made to the intervention</td>
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Guidance for implementation process evaluations produced by the Education Endowment Foundation (Humphrey et al., 2016) suggests that researchers should
identify domains for study that are relevant to individual programmes, their settings, and desired outcomes, so they can better monitor and evaluate school-based interventions (Killerby & Dunsmuir, 2018).

The EEF also outline guidance specifically for implementation studies of programmes in their pilot stage. Alongside the eight domains outlined above, research at this early stage may also explore evidence of promise (does the programme look like it is working) and feasibility (are facilitators able to set up and deliver the programme). Gathering evidence on these factors can help establish the social validity (Wolf, 1978) of programmes: are they deemed important for facilitators and stakeholders? This is especially important to consider in the context of programmes which are delivered via traded EP services and require schools to invest in both initial training and ongoing supervision for participating staff.

2.8.1 Why is Implementation Important?
Implementation researchers emphasise a shift from solely exploring the efficacy of evidence-based approaches (benefits in research contexts) to looking at their effectiveness (positive effects under real life conditions). There are several arguments for adopting this perspective. Durlak and Dupre outline some of these in their 2008 review of implementation literature, which appears as a key paper in the field (Humphrey et al., 2016; Killerby & Dunsmuir, 2018). The reviewers note that prior to evaluating outcomes for target groups, we need to understand which aspects of the programme were delivered. As such, implementation research offers a valuable method for ensuring the internal and external validity of research-based interventions. Another benefit to examining implementation noted is that monitoring interventions at the early stage of set up and delivery means that practical issues
can be addressed and overcome. Finally, the review (comprising five meta-analyses and additions of 59 additional papers) identifies that implementation affects outcomes, with ‘good implementation’ increasing the chance of intervention success by 2-3 times and improved outcomes for populations. A limitation of this review, acknowledged by the authors, is that less than a third of studies were interventions with children and young people. Nevertheless, the literature sample is large and diverse, with patterns between implementation and outcome noted across programmes, settings, and facilitators – implying the reliability of conclusions.

2.8.2 Which Factors Affect Implementation?
Both individual and systemic factors are thought to affect implementation. Blase and Fixsen are key figures in this field, producing frameworks for understanding implementation processes. They propose three ‘implementation drivers’ that interact to influence programme outcomes: competency, leadership, and organisational drivers (Fixsen & Blase, 2008). Here, facilitator competency (to deliver evidence-based skills) is determined along with training quality and ongoing support, but it is also influenced by person characteristics. They argue that selection processes should account for experience and qualification, when necessary, but attitudinal factors are also important: is the individual motivated to try new skills, and be receptive to ongoing monitoring and feedback (Blase et al., 2012)?

Aspects of context are also considered to affect implementation. EEF guidance on implementation evaluations identifies that the level of need and readiness to change within the school can make a difference (Humphrey et al., 2016). This implies that whilst individual attitudes towards the intervention make a difference, school culture and collective attitudes (towards innovation and practice
development) are also key. Blase and Fixsen (2008) identify practical factors that influence implementation. The writers here identify that use of process (i.e., satisfaction reports from pupils, assessments of programme content and fidelity) and outcome data (i.e., behaviour reports or attendance figures) can inform decision making about referrals to interventions, and for monitoring intervention progress, improving implementation consistency. Elsewhere, school leadership is identified as influential in implementation. Blase and colleagues (2012) cite evidence that showed teachers were more likely to implement classroom practices they perceived as valued by leaders (Klingner et al., 2003).

It is important too to consider the contextual challenges specific to support staff implementation of novel skills and programmes following training. One challenge identified by schools nationally relates to their capacity to allocate to support staff appropriate training and planning time, whilst ensuring staff are available to support pupils with identified needs (Skipp & Hopwood, 2019). This is particularly pertinent in the context of rising numbers of children with EHCPs (who support staff are often deployed to work with), with data showing a trend of increases in numbers of CYP with EHCPs year on year since 2015 (DfE, 2023). As such, developers of new programmes will need to consider the specific challenges experienced when training this staff group, and ensure robust protocols for professional development (including protection of time for planning and implementation) are in place. Government guidance proposes that support staff may be able to implement evidence-based mental health interventions towards outcomes comparable to trained therapists if appropriately trained (DH & DfE, 2017). However, programme developers should carefully consider with school leaders whether it is truly feasible for them to support their staff to access necessary
training and support, important in ensuring any new interventions are implemented safely and ethically.

Given the multiple factors influencing implementation, at individual and systems levels, EPs may be well placed to support teams setting up and delivering interventions (Blase et al., 2012). They can contribute through assessing competency drivers (through supervision, for example), and attend to organisational and leadership drivers (perhaps through whole school training or through school planning meetings). Having good insight into school systems and staff structures, EPs are also well placed to bridge the research-practice gap when implementing school-based programmes. In the context of support staff training, this will involve anticipating how support staff may experience unique challenges when training in and using new skills, and establishing with school stakeholders systems for avoiding or overcoming these potential barriers.

2.9 The Present Study

2.9.1 The Reach Programme

The SBMI programme at the centre of this research (‘Reach Coaching’, described in section 3.3) arose as a response to challenges identified by professionals at a London local authority’s EPS. The researcher’s EP supervisor shared that, within their team, professionals were considering ways to upskill school support staff, who were observed and reported to often have responsibilities for supporting more vulnerable pupils in local schools. Part of the present research involved examining views in the wider EP team as to the need for a new training and intervention programme. The programme was developed to tackle key issues identified: incidence of pupil disaffection (including exclusion) and the identified need for training and development of school support staff. Whilst alternative relational
approaches are acknowledged as valuable in addressing pupil disaffection, MI was adopted as it offered (as a focus for training and intervention) distinct principles and processes to refine the existing practices of school support staff working one-to-one with pupils. Compared to alternative, whole-school approaches (such as compassionate school policy development and implementation), Reach was also considered an appropriate approach in terms of feasibility for schools (capacity to release staff for training), for facilitating EPs (staff availability and time to deliver training) and for the researcher (the time available to gather data on implementation).

The Reach programme trained school staff in MI theory and practice, after which participating staff began to apply the skills through a six-to-eight-week intervention with a chosen pupil (identified by staff as disaffected). The programme training and intervention spanned June 2022-December 2022. The structure of Reach will be outlined further in Chapter 3.

2.9.2 Summary and Research Questions
Research to date shows that MI shows promise as an approach to addressing pupil disaffection and its indicators. There is also evidence to suggest that MI can transfer from clinical settings and be delivered in schools by internal staff, following robust programmes of training and ongoing supervision. School support staff (including those in learning and pastoral roles) appear as a group well-placed to be trained in and to deliver MI, as studies of their deployment shows one-to-one intervention as a core aspect of their remit. Existing research indicates that training and support for this group is highly variable, and that improved opportunities for access to training in evidence-based approaches is important in ensuring their positive impact on pupil outcomes.
However, receiving training in new intervention approaches does not assure that new skills and strategies will be implemented and sustained in trainees’ professional practice. Implementation science offers a valuable framework for exploring the transfer of training into professional contexts: whether new approaches are deemed useful and engaging to school staff, and what the factors are that help and hinder them applying new knowledge and skills in their work? It is also important to carry out implementation research prior to fully evaluating intervention outcomes, so that we understand the extent to which users apply interventions as originally intended. This information allows us to understand how observed effects might be attributed to the programme as originally intended, or to adapted versions of it. As such, we can begin to understand how interventions may need to be adapted to become feasible and appropriate for the contexts they are implemented in.

There is currently limited evidence on the training and implementation of SBMI interventions by school support staff. This study aims to contribute to this research base by examining the implementation of an SBMI training programme in a London LA. An initial aim of the study is to understand the need for a new training and intervention programme in this specific LA context and to then document the implementation of a SBMI training and intervention programme devised by EPs to attempt to meet these needs (‘Reach’). This study aims to understand what the process of MI training transfer and implementation looks like, including how staff who had participated in Reach training (Reach coaches) adopt or adapt the prescribed intervention in practice. Additionally, the research aims to better understand factors which influence the implementation of MI interventions in schools following staff training. Specifically, it will explore staff perceptions of
facilitators and barriers (feasibility) to setting up and delivering SBMI, its perceived usefulness to them in their one-to-one work, and how engaging the approach is for staff and pupils. These aspects of implementation have not been explored in a study on SBMI for addressing disaffection before and are appropriate for DEdPsy Doctoral research timescales (which limit opportunities for monitoring and evaluating longer term impact). In investigating the specific conditions that influence the implementation of Reach, this study ultimately aims to provide valuable information as to how the facilitating EPS can further develop the programme towards maximising its impact.

The four overall research questions that this study sought to answer were:

RQ1: What are EPs’ views on the context for the development of a new training (and intervention) programme in the local authority?

RQ2: How do school staff implement and adapt Reach in their practice following training?

RQ3: What factors are perceived by staff to be facilitators and barriers to the implementation of Reach in their practice?

RQ4. To what extent and in what ways is Reach considered to be useful to support staff, including their perceptions of its impact on pupils?
Chapter 3 – Methodology

3.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter begins with an overview of philosophical worldview for this research, and a description of the Reach training and intervention programme. The rationale for this study’s three phase design and the researcher’s approach to qualitative analysis are discussed, alongside ethical considerations. Recruitment processes and research tool development, for each of the studies’ three phases, are outlined. The chapter closes with discussion of adaptations made in the process of developing the study.

3.2 Philosophical Worldview

Creswell and Creswell (2017) suggest that researchers should make decisions about methodology appropriate to their philosophical perspective. This philosophical perspective may be seen as a ‘worldview’, or a set of beliefs that determine researcher actions (Creswell & Creswell, 2017; Guba, 1990). Pragmatism in research is commonly characterised as the study of ‘what works’ (Weaver, 2018) and emphasises exploring solutions to problems (Patton, 2005). The pragmatist philosopher Dewey proposed the concept of inquiry: a cyclical process of identifying problematic situations, developing possible solutions and reflecting on possible outcomes, and developing actions that might address the issue (Dewey, 1910/2008). This is pertinent to the aims of the present research: examining needs in a LA, and exploring how training in, and delivery of a programme in schools might address these needs.

The pragmatic perspective has been deemed particularly useful in qualitative research into organisational processes, due to its emphasis on creating ‘actionable knowledge’ through exploration of individuals’ experiences (Kelly & Cordeiro, 2020,
Specifically, it is often concerned with evaluation of aspects of real-world educational, social, and psychological phenomena (Weaver, 2018). The pragmatic paradigm also carries moral principles, advocating for the voice of individuals and communities in identifying the issues, and solutions, that are most meaningful for them in the research process (Morgan, 2014).

Pragmatism is concerned with real life actions, beliefs and experiences as opposed to metaphysical discussions around truth or reality (Patton, 2005). This is relevant to this study, which is oriented towards exploring the real-world potential for an EP-devised training programme to address challenges experienced by schools in a local area. This framework is appropriate given the practical aims of the study, and its contextual specificity (the programme and the LA where the research takes place).

### 3.3 The Reach Training and Intervention Programme

The Reach programme was devised in response to needs identified within a London LA’s schools. Sections on methodology and results for research phase one outline research processes and analyses towards identifying the local context for the programme. Reach was devised by a member of the LA’s EPS: the ‘Reach Lead’ EP (referred to in this study as the ‘RLEP’), supported by the researcher. The programme structure and content is given in Table 3. Training content and resourcing was drawn from MI core texts (Miller & Rollnick, 2002; 2012a) and Facilitating Change 2 (Atkinson, 2013). Results from the scoping review (Chapter 2) were used to inform training planning, including guidance on intervention length, and teaching for coaches on the SBMI evidence base. An intervention checklist devised by Snape and Atkinson (2018) in response EP experiences of facilitators
and barriers when implementing SBMI (Snape & Atkinson, 2017) was also included. This specified some key elements that should be in place when delivering SBMI (to best ensure positive outcomes for pupils):

- a quiet room
- support from another staff member (line manager)
- allowance for session planning time (this being timetabled for coaches)
- ensuring pupils don’t miss the same lessons to attend weekly sessions
- sessions include time for rapport-building
- ensuring the pupil has average or above language abilities
- ensuring pupils chosen are not experiencing significant personal factors that might be affecting their behaviour/presentation

A suggested session plan and intervention structure (devised by the RLEP) were also included to support consistency of implementation across individuals and schools. Criteria for enrolment in the programme were having experience working one-to-one with children and young people of at least secondary age, in schools, for at least one year. A record of attendance can be found in Appendix E.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reach Training Days</th>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Aims</th>
<th>Between Session Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Training Day 1 (June 2022)</td>
<td>Whole group presentation by the RLEP and the researcher</td>
<td>• To understand the psychological theory that underpins Reach Coaching (Miller &amp; Rollnick, 2002; 2006; 2012a)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Exploring resources for building pupil engagement and use these for planning an initial session with a pupil</td>
<td>• To learn about the evidence-base that supports the approach</td>
<td>Coaches to try out OARS and engagement strategies in their existing one-to-one pastoral activities in advance of Reflection Morning 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Demonstration of OARS using role-play and video clips</td>
<td>• To consider who Reach coaching is for and what it aims to do (addressing pupil disaffection).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Opportunities to practice OARS in paired activities</td>
<td>• To begin to consider what needs to be in place for a Reach Coaching intervention (checklist from Snape and Atkinson (2018))</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• To understand and apply the principles and philosophy behind Reach Coaching including MI principles (autonomy-support, collaboration, evocation) and processes (engaging, focusing, evoking, planning) (Miller &amp; Rollnick, 2002; 2012a)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• To practice Reach Coaching strategies towards the first key process in MI (engaging), including Agenda Mapping (Miller &amp; Rollnick, 2012a) and resources from Facilitating Change 2 (Atkinson, 2013)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• To practice Reach Coaching active listening skills (OARS) (Miller &amp; Rollnick, 2002; 2012a)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• To plan for an initial session with a pupil (building a ‘Reach toolkit’) using resources from Facilitating Change 2 (Atkinson, 2013)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflection Morning 1 (July 2023)</td>
<td>Coaches are divided into smaller groups (N = 3-5) for the following activities:</td>
<td>Supervision provides support to coaches in relation to three areas, based on Proctor’s three functions of supervision (1997): educative (learning and development), managerial (practical aspects of the work - what and how) and supportive (the emotional aspects of the role). Each coach has 10-15 minutes to share on a subject where they would like support. This includes times for describing the issue, and for comments, questions and ideas from the leading EP and other coaches.</td>
<td>Coaches to identify 1-2 pupils for Reach coaching in the new school year. Coaches to run at least one Reach session with the pupil (for engagement and rapport building) prior to Training Day 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>One hour focus group (research activity)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>One hour supervision led by an EP</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training Day 2 (September 2022)</td>
<td>Whole group presentation by the RLEP and the researcher</td>
<td>• To recap learning from Training Day 1</td>
<td>Coaches to continue the Reach intervention with their chosen pupil(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Demonstration of OARS to support focusing, using role play</td>
<td>• To understand the remaining key processes in MI (focusing, evoking, planning) (Miller &amp; Rollnick, 2012a)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Applying the Wheel of Change to case studies</td>
<td>• To understand psychological models of behaviour change, using the Wheel of Change (McNamara, 2005; Prochaska &amp; DiClemente, 1994; 1998)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(where is this CYP in terms of readiness for change?)</td>
<td>• To identify tools and resources for Reach interventions (Atkinson, 2013) and to practice skills in using them</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Planning intervention sessions using focusing, evoking, and planning resources</td>
<td>• To explore a suggested 6–8 week intervention plan, and a suggested structure for individual sessions, and use this to plan upcoming Reach sessions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflection Morning 2 (October 2022)</td>
<td>Coaches are divided into smaller groups (N = 3-5) for the following activities:</td>
<td>As with Reflection Morning 1</td>
<td>Coaches to carry on with Reach intervention (6-8 weeks) with their chosen pupil(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>One hour focus group (research activity)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>One hour supervision led by an EP</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Humphrey et al (2016, p.9) suggest that our understanding about implementation and intervention efficacy must be grounded in detailed knowledge of ‘what is’ (being evaluated). The EEF’s Template for Intervention Description and Replication (TIDieR) offers a framework for this, enabling a shared understanding of training and intervention content for evaluation stakeholders. Appendix F gives a description of Reach using the TIDieR.

3.4 Research Design Rationale

The pragmatic worldview emphasises the freedom of the researcher to select methods and procedures that best fit their research needs, aims and objectives (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). Mixed methods designs and pragmatic worldviews are often associated in social science research literature (Creswell & Creswell, 2017; Tashakkorie & Teddlie, 2010). However, Morgan (2014) emphasises that the pragmatic approach involves careful reflection on ‘why to’ as well as ‘how to’ do research in particular ways, and so this worldview can complement quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods approaches.

A qualitative approach was chosen for this study, consistent with views that researchers in this field are concerned with making sense of phenomena – here support staff practice - in their ‘natural settings’ (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p.3). This approach was also chosen due to its emphasis on capturing subjective experiences, with situations being described from the perspectives of all involved (Robson, 2011), for example, stakeholder views on interventions (Humphrey et al., 2016). A qualitative approach also acknowledges and values the existence and values of the researcher (Robson, 2011). This was significant to the researcher’s role in the development and facilitation of the Reach programme. Merriam and Tisdell (2015)
characterise qualitative research designs as ‘emergent and flexible, responsive to changing conditions of the study in progress’ (p.15). These practical characteristics were essential in the development of this study’s design to include observational data, which required building trusting relationships with participants.

This study adopted a qualitative multiphase design, informed by Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) guidance on Implementation and Process Evaluations (IPE) (Humphrey et al., 2016). IPEs are commissioned by the EEF alongside their impact evaluations, and are valued as a way to understand how new programmes are used in their real-world settings, and what is needed to ensure successful delivery. Guidance on IPEs suggests data collection at several time points to allow a progressive focus on different phases of implementation (Fixsen et al., 2013). A description of implementation phases, as identified by Fixsen and colleagues (2013), is given in Table 4.

**Table 4**

*Phases of Implementation, from Fixsen and colleagues (2013)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Implementation Phase</th>
<th>Research Focus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exploration</td>
<td>Looking at readiness, perceptions of needs in the context, perceptions of benefits of the new programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Installation</td>
<td>Acquiring resources including training, building towards initial implementation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initial Implementation</td>
<td>First use of the intervention, attempts to integrate it with existing processes and practices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full Implementation</td>
<td>Scaling up the programme in schools, ensuring it becomes sustained and embedded across settings</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Within the time constraints of this research, this study focuses on the first three phases of Reach implementation only. These aligned with this study’s aims and research questioned, which were addressed across the progressive phases. A diagram showing the three phases of this study can be found in Figure 3.
Figure 3
Research Phases

Participant Group → Pre-Programme Stage (Exploration) → Programme Stage (Installation and Initial Implementation)

- Reach training and supervision days
- Reach intervention period in schools

Pre-pupil intervention (July 2022) → Mid-pupil intervention (October 2022) → Post-pupil intervention (December 2022)

Research Phase 1:
- Educational Psychologists
- Interviews (N = 6)

Research Phase 2:
- Focus Groups (N = 14)
- Focus Groups (N = 11)
- Observations (N = 0)

Research Phase 3:
- Interviews (N = 7)

Research Timeline
3.5 Ethical Considerations

Ethical approval for this research was sought and granted by the UCL Institute of Education Doctoral Research Ethics Committee in June 2022. The application was updated (to seek approval for further data collection) in July and October 2022. The application, including updates, included a project overview, proposed methods, and ethical considerations including data storage. The researcher adhered to the British Psychological Society (BPS) Code of Human Research Ethics (BPS, 2021) and Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) Guidance on Conduct and Ethics for Students (HCPC, 2016). UCL Institute of Education protocols for research ethics were followed, including gaining initial approval for the application from my research supervisors prior to submission to the UCL Institute of Education Doctoral Research Ethics Committee. As a final stage to the application process, the research was registered with the UCL’s Data Protection Office, where the ethics application was screened to ensure it was compliant with the UCL policies around data protection and GDPR. Please see Appendix G for all information sheets and consent forms devised for the study.

3.6 Overview of Research Phases

The present research comprised three phases, all using methods for qualitative data collection. Phase 1 was devised to focus on the ‘exploration’ phase of Reach implementation (Fixsen et al., 2013). Research phase 1 explored EPs’ perceptions of needs within the LA’s school context, and how Reach could offer value in addressing these challenges. Semi-structured interviews (SSIs) were used to gather views. This phase began during the development of the Reach programme, before participants had begun the training.
Research phase 2 occurred over the Reach coach training period and initial implementation, spanning July to October 2022. Phase 2 focused on ‘installation’ and ‘initial implementation’ of Reach (Fixsen et al., 2013). This phase aimed to understand how coaches set up and used Reach in their settings, including facilitators and barriers encountered. It also examined how coaches integrated the approach into their everyday practice (including the degree to which they followed the Reach intervention structure, or made adaptations to this, and whether coaches applied MI skills and processes with fidelity). This phase was devised to access initial insight into factors influencing Reach training transfer (Grossman & Salas, 2011) and implementation. Focus groups undertaken at two points (see Table 3 and Figure 3) explored coaches’ access to resources in their school to allow them to set up Reach, and their perceptions of how useful MI was to them as an approach to one-to-one pupil support. Observations of Reach sessions were also planned, to gather data on whether coach practice showed MI-adherence.

Research phase 3 focused on coach reflections on Reach training and intervention delivery, following initial implementation. This phase sought coach reflections on specific domains of Reach implementation (Humphrey et al., 2016): adaptation (how coaches had used Reach) and responsiveness (how engaged coaches were with the approach, and their perceptions on their pupils’ responses to it). Phase 3 was also informed by training transfer frameworks (Grossman & Salas, 2011), and used SSIs to capture coach experiences of transferring and sustaining their Reach skills over time.

3.6.1 Research Phase 1 Methodology
This initial phase aimed to address the first research question: what are EP views on the need for the development of a new training (and intervention) programme in the LA? This phase took place during the pre-programme implementation: the Reach programme had been commissioned within the service to target specific groups (training support staff in MI, to use with pupils identified as experiencing disaffection) however the programme structure and content was still at planning stage.

Interviews are a helpful method for accessing participants’ reflections on their behaviours, beliefs, and attitudes (Robson, 2011). Structured interviews follow set question protocols, and therefore allow participant responses to be compared more easily. King and Hugh-Jones (2018) argue that this fixed approach is at odds with the purpose of much qualitative research, which aims to evoke participants’ personal reflections on their life experiences, identities, and emotions. Instead, unstructured and semi-structured interview approaches are often favoured in qualitative research (King & Hugh-Jones, 2018; Robson, 2011). SSIs offer adaptable guides for topics to be covered with participants, which can be followed up with supplementary questions according to participant responses (Robson, 2011). This considered important as, whilst EPs interviewed came from the same LA EPS, they were in different roles and had experienced different specialisms, which the researcher anticipated may impact on the insights they would produce about best practice for tackling needs in the LA.

3.6.1.1 Research Phase 1 Recruitment

Purposive criterion sampling was used to recruit participants for this phase. Criteria for recruitment included being a qualified EP working in the LA; having had a
minimum of one year’s employment at the LA; having some knowledge of the aims and intended structure of the Reach programme. In the process of developing a research focus, the researcher had been connected with the RLEP, who proposed, and later devised, the Reach programme. A collaborative relationship was formed between the researcher and the RLEP. As a gatekeeper to the programme, the RLEP became the first interview participant. A snowball approach was taken from this point: the RLEP and Principal EP (PEP) were asked to share research and recruitment information with EPS team members who met selection criteria, thereafter the researcher communicated directly with consenting EPs.

3.6.1.2 Research Phase 1 Participants

Five further EPs, including the service’s PEP, responded to the researcher by email and gave consent for interview. This meant that the EP sample group represented 38% of the total EPS. Interviews were arranged to take place online (using Microsoft Teams) following correspondence between EP participants and the researcher.

Qualitative research guidance suggests that the process of deciding an adequate sample size is necessarily dynamic and involves continual reflection on whether the data reflects some consensus on themes relating to the research questions (Mertens, 2010). Braun and Clarke (2021a) identify the practical incompatibility of saturation approaches with reflexive and inductive TA, as in this analytical approach themes ‘are usually difficult to identify in advance of deep analytic work’ (p. 208). Following initial interviews, the researcher reflected on the richness of the existing data and the extent to which this addressed RQ1. Given the contextual specificity of the phase’s aim and sample, and the quality of existing dialogue, a sample of six interviewees was deemed sufficient.
3.6.1.3 Research Phase 1 Tools – Development of an SSI Schedule

The researcher developed a short interview schedule of open-ended questions (see Appendix H for the full schedule). Some items were included that related to groups targeted by the Reach programme (“In your view, what are the issues and challenges that schools face with addressing disaffection?”). These questions were worded carefully to allow deeper exploration of key issues, whilst best ensuring they were not leading. Whilst this is considered important in reducing the influence of bias (King & Hugh-Jones, 2018; Robson, 2011), it was particularly important in the context of this study and phase. The researcher had come to the study with an awareness of the RLEP’s rationale for the programme, but steps had to be made to ensure this did not significantly shape or dominate exploration of other professionals’ views. To this end, further items were included that prompted reflections on other needs in the local authority (“How far do you feel the Reach programme has the potential to address the issues experienced by schools?”).

To encourage comprehensive and detailed accounts from interviewees to address RQ1, the researcher incorporated different question types including descriptive, contrast and evaluative items (Spradley, 1979). Descriptive questions were used to access EP accounts of needs within LA schools (“In your view, what are the issues and challenges that schools face…?”). Evaluative questions were used to explore the extent to which EPs felt Reach may have potential to address schools’ needs. A contrast question was included to explore the extent to which EPs felt Reach was distinct to anything else currently available to schools, via the EPS or LA. Alongside some items, question probes were included in the schedule to
ensure sufficient depth of responses relating to the research question (King & Hugh-Jones, 2018; Robson, 2011).

The schedule was piloted to ensure questions generated responses relevant to the research question. Given the researcher was not known to the LA and EPS team, it was anticipated that it might not be easy to recruit participants. To ensure their views would not be ‘used up’ as part of the piloting process (as in coach interview transcripts being excluded from analysis), the researcher followed contingency piloting guidance from King and Hugh-Jones (2018, p. 122). This involved piloting the schedule with a colleague from the researcher’s placement EPS, who led on the service ELSA programme and had been briefed on the current research. Following use with the first two participants, minor adjustments were made to the wording of some questions to support clarity.

3.6.2 Research Phase 2 Methodology

Phase 2 was devised to answer research questions 2, 3 and 4, relating to coach initial experiences of setting up and implementing Reach. School staff who had participated in Reach training (Reach coaches) formed the participant group for this phase. The design for this phase incorporated focus groups and observations. Focus groups took place at two time points over the course of the Reach training period (see Table 3). Observations were scheduled to take place in the period October-December 2022.

Focus groups were selected as one method of data collection for research phase 2. Focus groups are thought to complement the pragmatic process of problem solving through inquiry (Dewey, 1910/2008). Willig (2013) suggests the power of focus groups to ‘mobilize’ participants to comment and respond to others’ comments, which might involve attitudes being developed or changed following
debate, critique, and reflection. In this study, coaches were invited to share their experiences of Reach, including the factors that enabled them to implement it, which allowed colleagues within the group to consider tried and tested strategies to support their own implementation efforts.

Focus groups offered other advantages relevant to this study phase. They offered an efficient method for capturing the attitudes of multiple coaches at one time (Robson, 2011), and can contribute additional insight arising from the interaction of views and ideas between group members (Mertens, 2010). Another advantage of using focus groups is that having a collaborative discussion may reduce bias caused by demand effects – which can occur in interviews (Humphrey et al., 2016). There was a risk of biased responses when exploring coach views of initial implementation: because the researcher collaborated with the Reach programme developers and was present during training, coaches may have felt reluctant to share less positive views.

Observations were incorporated into the design for this phase to investigate a specific domain of Reach implementation: the extent to which coaches used MI with fidelity in their school contexts (Humphrey et al., 2016). Observations offered potential to capture ‘naturalistic data’ (Humphrey et al., 2016) on the initial implementation of Reach – including how context might make a difference to this process. Observations were also considered to be an effective way of capturing data on coach competence to use Reach, with facilitator competency thought to be a key implementation ‘driver’ (Fixsen & Blase, 2008). The use of observation was planned to supplement focus group data and increase researcher understanding of what Reach looked like in practice. As such, triangulation of observation with other qualitative data was planned to strengthen the validity of findings on how MI was
used, and to what perceived effect (RQs 2 & 4). The scoping review illustrated too that observations have been used elsewhere in MI implementation studies involving school-based staff (Rochat, 2019; Sheftel et al., 2014; Simon & Ward, 2014). Therefore, by using observation there was an opportunity to add to the very small research base focused on whether school staff can be trained to use MI with fidelity.

There were two main aims for Reach session observations:

1) To observe the extent to which observed staff were using behaviours and skills adherent and non-adherent to the Reach intervention and then use these observations to facilitate discussion with staff about their experience of using the intervention, including perceived confidence, barriers to use and perceived effectiveness.

2) To evaluate the extent to which observed staff’s Reach practice adhered to the spirit of MI (researcher rated after the session) and comparison of this to coaches’ perceptions of their adherence to the spirit of MI (staff rated after the session)

3.6.2.1 Focus Group Recruitment

The research element of Reach was included in materials marketing the programme (see Appendix I), so participants were informed of this at the time of enrolling for training. The researcher’s position in the training was reiterated to participants during the first training day. The researcher explained study aims, and coaches were invited to ask questions about participation. Information sheets and informed consent forms were shared with participants at this point (see Appendix G). All consented to participate in research phase 2 (focus groups). Participation in one-to-one interviews (research phase 3) was optional. All but one agreed to be contacted
for interview. Table 5 shows the final list of Reach Coaches (RCs) who enrolled and participated in the first training day.

**Table 5**  
*Reach Coaches Attending Training Day 1*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Setting</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>Participant/Reach Coach</th>
<th>Role</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Specialist settings</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>RC1</td>
<td>Pastoral Key Worker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>RC2</td>
<td>Key Worker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>RC3</td>
<td>Key Worker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professionals working with CYP</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>RC4</td>
<td>Key Worker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEET (Year 10 onwards)</td>
<td></td>
<td>RC5</td>
<td>Key Worker – SEND</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainstream school settings</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>RC6</td>
<td>Family Liaison Officer (FLO)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>E</td>
<td>RC7</td>
<td>Lead LSA Support and Intervention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>RC8</td>
<td>Lead LSA and ELSA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>RC9</td>
<td>LSA/ELSA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>RC10</td>
<td>Mentor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>RC11</td>
<td>LSA/ELSA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>RC12</td>
<td>LSA/ELSA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>RC13</td>
<td>Inclusion Manager/Deputy Designated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>RC14</td>
<td>Inclusion Support and Deputy DSL (DDSL)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>RC15</td>
<td>SENCO/Deputy DSL (DDSL)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>G</td>
<td>RC16</td>
<td>Sports Coach/Mentor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>RC17</td>
<td>Behaviour Mentor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Criterion for involvement in Reach included having experience working one-to-one with children and young people of at-least secondary age, in schools. As such, the group had been purposively sampled using criteria during enrolment. This
means that some generalisability could be derived from findings, as the group represented staff working pastorally, in schools, with children and young people. However, the RLEP considered it would be valuable to leave training participation open to all staff. This meant that the final group attending the programme comprised coaches in other school roles (RC15) and those whose roles were not school based (RC4 and RC5). These participants were included in the training to ensure viable running of the programme, and to allow for potential drop out during the training period – and all took part in phase 2 (focus groups). In the process of coding and analysing focus groups, however, only the experiences of school-based staff were included (RC4 and RC5 contributions were excluded during coding). RC15 was included as the researcher considered their contributions may offer insight as to factors influencing setting up and running new interventions in schools – and perhaps how status in school systems may impact here.

3.6.2.2 Focus Group Participants

Final numbers of focus group participants (N = 14 in July groups; N = 11 in October groups; N = 10 participated in both July and October groups) reflected absence (due to sickness or work emergencies) or drop out from Reach training days as the programme progressed. The researcher assumed that a degree of group homogeneity would pre-exist due to participants’ shared professional field and participation in training. However, the researcher considered that focus groups comprising people who know each other well can be problematic in influencing contributions, for example in ‘Groupthink’ (Brown, 1999, p. 115, cited in Robson, 2011, p. 296). As such, focus groups were organised to ensure no whole groups comprised all staff from the same setting. The composition of focus groups conducted at the two timepoints is shown in Tables 6 and 7.
Table 6  
**Focus Groups July 2022**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus Group Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RC1 (Pastoral Key Worker)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RC2 (Key Worker)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RC3 (Key Worker)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RC4 (Key Worker)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RC5 (Key Worker - SEND)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7  
**Focus Groups October 2022**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus Group Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RC1 (Pastoral Key Worker)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RC3 (Key Worker)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RC4 (Key Worker)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RC10 (Mentor)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.6.2.3 **Development of Focus Group Schedules**

Two short focus group schedules were constructed for data gathering in July and October (see Appendix J). The schedules differed in focus to reflect the different phases of implementation at the time of data gathering (pre-intervention at time point one; mid-intervention at time point two). As such, the first focus group schedule focused more on initial responses to the Reach training and approach (RQ4) and planning for implementation (RQ3), whereas the second schedule was devised to capture participants’ formative experiences of transferring Reach training into practice and using it with pupils (RQs 2,3 and 4).
Training transfer and implementation domain frameworks were used when developing focus group schedules (Grossman & Salas, 2011; Humphrey et al., 2016). The schedules included descriptive and evaluative questions exploring participant contexts (“Are there already programmes/interventions in place in your schools to help to support these pupils/what do these programmes look like?”) and initial perceptions of the Reach’s impact (“How have your pupils responded to the MI approach – and can you give examples?”). In keeping with the research’s pragmatic viewpoint and concern with training transfer, focus group schedules also incorporated evaluative questions about what they would need to support their implementation efforts (“What resources and/or guidance documents would help you to set up and begin facilitating the intervention?”). The researcher’s notes on these items were shared with the RLEP shortly after focus groups were conducted so that, when possible, resources could be located and shared with participants during initial implementation.

As focus groups were conducted simultaneously during scheduled Reach supervision days (by the researcher, the RLEP and an EP from the LA’s EPS), it was not possible to pilot the focus group schedules. Instead, contingency piloting was conducted with a colleague from the DEdPsy course who had previously worked in school pastoral support, as well an EP colleague of the researcher who was also an ELSA trainer (therefore having experience of supporting support staff training and programme implementation). This resulted in minor changes to wording of items in the schedule.

It was necessary for the researcher to have support in running focus groups, due to the number of groups and the limited time allotted during this activity alongside supervision. To ensure parity in focus group delivery, the schedule was
shared with the RLEP and supporting EP a week before data collection. On data collection days, the RLEP and EP were both briefed again on the schedules.

### 3.6.2.4 Observation Recruitment

Purposive criterion sampling was used to identify observation participants. Eligibility criteria included having attended both Reach training days and being school-based. This was to ensure observations reflected coaches’ use of Reach following receipt of full programme content (on theory, MI-skills, principles, and processes).

Efforts to recruit for observations were made in person (during Reflection Morning 2). Recruitment efforts afterwards were made by email and telephone, and the researcher communicated with Senior Leadership in one school to attempt to organise observations of coaches employed in that setting. The researcher continued to pursue recruitment beyond the planned observation period, and into December 2022 and January 2023. Unfortunately, it was not possible to recruit for the observation aspect of phase 2. The process of efforts to recruit, and the reasons a sample could not be identified for observation, is shown in Figure 4.
3.6.2.5 Development of an Observation Schedule

The researcher devised two measures to support Reach session observations. Measures were chosen and adapted towards the study’s aims: to explore the implementation of MI by participating school support staff (including the extent of their adherence to key skills and behaviours introduced during Reach training, and participant/pupil responsiveness to the approach) including experienced barriers and facilitators. A semi-structured observation protocol (‘Reach Session
Observation Protocol’ or RSOP) was designed to support observations of Reach sessions. This was adapted from the MITI 2.0 (Moyers et al., 2003). Rating scales from the MITI 3.0 (Moyers et al., 2007) were also chosen to support observations.

The RSOP was designed to appraise coaches’ adherence to behaviours and skills distinct to Motivational Interviewing, which had been incorporated into coaches’ Reach training. The measure was designed to check for the presence of MI adherent skills and behaviours which coaches had received training on (including practice of application) during their two-day training. The measure also included checks for MI non-adherent behaviours that Reach coaches had been advised were inconsistent with MI ideology. The inclusion of both MI adherent and non-adherent behaviours (in the Reach training and protocol) was considered important in the light of previous research findings: that training to competence in MI involves the suppression of habitual (non-adherent) practice as much as adoption of a new style and skills (Miller & Mount, 2001; Hall et al., 2016).

Following the RSOPs completion by the researcher during observation, the plan was to use the information to scaffold reflective discussions with the interviewee focusing on the following:

- Which MI adherent behaviours and skills were observed within the Reach session, and to what perceived effect?
- MI adherent behaviours that were not observed, what were the barriers to their use during the session?
- Any non-adherent behaviours observed: exploring factors behind their adoption.

Rating scales from the MITI 3.0 (Moyers et al., 2007) were also adopted to appraise interviewees’ adherence to the spirit of MI in their interactions with pupils.
during Reach sessions. The MITI 3.0 scales are three five-point scales that appraise practitioner adherence to the three components of the spirit of MI: autonomy support, evocation, and collaboration. Looking at adherence, it was important to take a measurement of the spirit of MI as this has been emphasised as a distinctive and core feature of Motivational Interviewing (Miller & Rollnick, 2009; 2012; Rollnick & Miller, 1995) and was central to Reach Programme training content. In the MITI 3.0 these scales were designed for observer use only. They were adapted here to be used as self-report measures for data gathering on adherence and as a framework for supporting coaches’ reflection on their practice.

A description of the choice and development of the RSOP, and the observation tools (RSOP, rating scales and reflective discussion schedule), can be found in Appendix K.

3.6.3 Research Phase 3 Methodology

Phase 3 took place in December 2022, when two months had elapsed since participants had completed Reach Training Day 2 (see Table 3 and Figure 3). This phase focused on participants’ experiences and reflections on transferring their Reach training into practice, and implementing the approach with pupils. Interviews were conducted online using UCL Microsoft Teams.

SSIs were selected for this phase of the research. This method was appropriate to this study’s focus on exploring coaches’ unique experiences of applying Reach in their different settings, including the contextual factors that helped or hindered implementation. SSIs were chosen over focus groups because, as well as producing more detailed individual accounts, they offered confidentiality for coaches in sharing their experiences. Humphrey and colleagues (2016) note
several advantages to using SSIs in implementation studies: they have the potential to produce detailed explanations on contextual factors influencing implementation, and they can offer insight into stakeholder beliefs about intervention programmes.

One disadvantage of interviews is that they may reflect demand effects and therefore threaten response trustworthiness (Humphrey et al., 2016, Lincoln & Guba, 1985). However, this phase occurred following a period of five months where the researcher had interacted with coaches through training days and focus groups (see Table 3 and Figure 3). This meant that there had been opportunities for a familiarity and rapport to be established between the researcher and coaches (via formal and informal interactions on training days), which assured more authentic responses in interview (Mertens, 2010). To further address risk of demand effects and ensure trustworthiness, the researcher emphasised to coaches the focus on experiences of implementation (including whether they found Reach useful), with one objective being identifying steps that could possibly be taken by the EPS to further develop the programme.

3.6.3.1 Coach Interview Recruitment (Research Phase 3)

Purposive criterion sampling was used to identify interview participants. Eligibility criteria for interviews were as follows:

- Having attended both Reach training days, and at least one supervision session
- Being a member of school staff

This was to ensure parity amongst the sample, when reflecting on skills and strategies acquired through training and applied/adapted in practice (RQ2 and RQ4). In the original participant group, two coaches worked in schools in community
roles, but were not school based (RC4 and RC5). However, it was not necessary to actively exclude these participants from interview as neither completed the two training days. One other coach – RC15 (a SENCo) – was included in the sample because, despite not being a member of support staff, the researcher considered that they may have offered a more strategic perspective on the implementation of Reach in schools. Additionally, RC15 shared with the researcher that they had not been able to implement Reach at all since the training period. As such, RC15’s views were valuable in the context of RQ3 (facilitators and barriers to implementation). Coaches who agreed to be contacted were approached during the second training day (September 2022) to arrange times for interview. Six were agreed at this time. Email correspondence was used to secure a further two interviews. Figure 5 illustrates the recruitment process for phase 3.
3.6.3.2 Research Phase 3 Participants

Building the participatory group for phase 3 was necessarily limited by the eligibility criteria for this phase, applied to an already relatively small Reach coach group. The researcher prioritised inclusion of as many eligible coaches as possible to get a good range of perspectives from this group. RC15 was considered a valuable addition, as their inclusion offered an opportunity to explore how staff role impacted
on how Reach was applied and perceived as impactful. A total of 8 participants agreed to interview: 7 were conducted as one participant (RC10) had fallen ill shortly in late October and then was unavailable due to long term sick leave throughout the remainder of the research period. Table 8 shows participants for Phase 3.

Table 8
Research Phase 3 (Interview) Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Participant/Reach Coach</th>
<th>Role</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>RC2</td>
<td>Key Worker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>RC3</td>
<td>Key Worker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>RC6</td>
<td>Family Liaison Officer (FLO)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>RC13</td>
<td>Inclusion Manager/Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>RC15</td>
<td>SENCO/Deputy DSL (DDSL)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>RC16</td>
<td>Sports Coach/Mentor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>RC17</td>
<td>Behaviour Mentor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.6.3.3 Research Phase 3 – Development of an SSI Schedule

Interviews were conducted in December 2022, when two months had elapsed since the second Reach training day. This phase was scheduled to ensure that participants would have had time to run a 6-8 week Reach intervention (as instructed in the training programme) with at least one pupil. All interviews were conducted on UCL Microsoft Teams.

The researcher developed an interview schedule comprised of open-ended questions that explored Reach adaptation and responsiveness (Humphrey et al., 2016) and factors influencing training transfer (Grossman & Salas, 2011). As with development of the EP interview schedule, questions were worded to ensure they were not leading. Additionally, the researcher began each interview by explaining the exploratory nature of the research aims (to understand what implementation
looks like, and to explore how its impact might be maximised in future) to manage the possible occurrence bias due to demand characteristics (Robson, 2011). As with focus groups, this was important to emphasise to participants as they had come to know the researcher as associated with Reach and the RLEP.

The interview schedule (see Appendix L) was devised to incorporate descriptive, contrast and evaluative questions (Spradley, 1979). This was towards the aims of this phase: to capture more in-depth individual insight – building on focus group outcomes – towards research questions 2 and 3, and to gather new, post-intervention reflections towards research question 4. As such, the interview schedule incorporated a higher proportion of evaluation questions than the focus group schedules.

Given the relatively small number of potential participants (determined by Reach participation and training completion) the researcher again adopted contingency piloting. This involved piloting the schedule with a colleague from the DEdPsy course who had previously worked in school pastoral support. Some minor adjustments, and addition of question probes (King and & Hugh-Jones, 2018), were added to encourage more detailed responses. The researcher followed guidance by Willig (2013) to restate interviewees’ comments, and to ask follow-up questions based on these comments, to support rapport building by showing motivation to accurately understand and record participant views. This process during the first interview (with RC2) led the researcher to build a further contrast question (“To what extent has your approach to one-to-one conversations with pupils changed since participating in Reach?”) into the final schedule.

3.7 Qualitative Analysis
Qualitative data gathered across the three research phases were analysed using Braun and Clarke’s approach to Thematic Analysis (TA) (2006; 2021b). This involves a process of identifying themes within data, which are ‘patterns anchored by a shared idea, meaning or concept’ (Braun & Clarke, 2021b, p.8). A key advantage of Thematic Analysis is its conceptual flexibility and adaptability to different research aims and forms of data (Braun & Clarke, 2021b; Willig, 2013). This aligned with the characteristic flexibility of pragmatic research. A reflexive approach to TA was taken, which involved acknowledging researcher subjectivity in knowledge production (Braun & Clarke, 2021b). A reflexive approach was appropriate given the active role of the researcher across phases of Reach implementation, including activities that did not involve data collection (for example, supporting training facilitation). To this end, the researcher maintained an ongoing reflexive journal throughout the data gathering and analysis period. This involved recording perceptions of participants and their attitudes/positions during data collection, and logging observations about coach participation and contribution during Reach training days. This helped with decision-making during the research development (i.e., considering approaches to recruitment that would best promote coach participation in observations and SSIs). Insights gained by the researcher as an active member of the implementation process were also considered valuable as a ‘resource’ to support data analysis (Gough & Madill, 2012) – particularly of coach perspectives on the programme. Maintaining the reflexive diary enriched the analysis process because it enabled recourse to themes and reflections that struck the researcher throughout the course of programme development, implementation and data gathering. An example of the researcher’s reflexive journal notes can be found in Appendix M.
TA lends itself to both inductive and deductive orientations to data, with guidance suggesting that analysis can include both approaches (Braun & Clarke, 2021b). For EP interviews (research phase 1) an inductive or ‘data driven’ approach was taken, appropriate to RQ1’s focus on professionals’ perspectives on local need. When analysing coach perspectives (phases 2 and 3), an inductive orientation was applied to specific parts of transcripts, driven by the research interest in coach application of Reach and facilitators and barriers to implementation (RQs 2 and 3). This was important to the research’s pragmatic worldview, in seeking actionable knowledge (Kelly & Cordeiro, 2020) on Reach towards developing and sustaining it beyond the research context. RQ4 required an inductive approach to analysis, focused on coach perceptions, to explore attitudinal dimensions of implementation (responsiveness to or engagement with the programme).

Thematic Analysis was applied separately to EP interviews (phase 1) and coach focus groups and interviews (phases 2 and 3). NVivo analysis software was used following transcription by the researcher. Braun and Clarke’s guidance on the six-stage approach to TA (2021b) was applied during these separate processes, summarised below.

**Stage 1: Familiarisation with the data set**

This process of ‘immersion’ in the data involved reading and re-reading transcripts and mapping out initial impressions of key ideas and concepts. Hand-written notes were produced for individual transcripts, and later separate notes that considered shared common insights across the data sets, as suggested by Braun and Clarke (2021b). Through this process, the researcher also used the reflexive journal to record initial responses to the data.
Stage 2: Coding

This stage involved working systematically through transcripts to identify small, focused sections of data that appeared interesting or significant to the research questions. Transcripts were coded fully, one by one, by adding short descriptive code labels (or ‘nodes’ within NVivo). Semantic coding (based on what explicitly stated ideas, beliefs, etc.,) was used, to retain meanings expressed by participants. For focus groups and interviews, inductive coding was applied – with some active focus on adaptation, facilitators, and barriers to Reach implementation. An excerpt from a codes transcript can be found in Appendix N.

After coding a full data set, the researcher reviewed the list of codes generated. Some codes were collapsed where nodes with very close meaning had been applied. The researcher then engaged a DEdPsy course colleague to review by hand two pages from three transcripts, and code labels from the two processes were compared during an inter-coder discussion (Creswell, 2007). Some codes were renamed whilst working towards intercoder agreement (Creswell, 2007; Campbell, 2013). For example, during analysis of EP data, ‘Mentoring activities are not embedded in school cultures’ became ‘Mentoring activities occur in isolation in school systems’. By engaging a colleague who was ‘blind’ (Braun & Clarke, 2021b) to the topic, this was a valuable reflexive exercise and developed the specificity and clarity of the code set.

Stage 3: Generating Initial Themes

This stage involved initial efforts to identify patterns of codes in the data set, and thinking about how they formed larger patterns of meaning or ‘themes’ relevant
to the research questions. To support this process, the list of codes was reviewed again in NVivo and the researcher began to organise these into clusters where a shared meaning or idea was identified. Thematic mapping, by hand, was applied next, as encouraged by Braun and Clarke (2021b). This allowed the researcher to consider how clusters of codes connected as potential themes, and to reflect on relationships between these provisional themes. An iterative approach was necessary here, with the researcher reviewing and amending code clusters and potential themes, and returning to extracts connected to codes, multiple times. This produced sets of initial candidate themes and subthemes (Braun & Clarke, 2021b).

Stage 4: Developing and Reviewing Themes

This stage involved reviewing candidate themes, subthemes and associated codes and extracts to ensure they captured the most significant patterns of meaning in the data set relating to my research questions. In this phase of EP data analysis, some subthemes were discarded (i.e., for RQ1, relating to academic focus and priorities in schools) as they were recognised as less relevant to phase aims.

Stage 5: Refining, Defining and Naming Themes

This stage involved reflection on themes devised, considering their pertinence and relevance to the research questions, and ensuring they shared a ‘strong core concept’ as opposed to summarising a topic (Braun & Clarke, 2021b, p.36). During application of TA to EP data and later coach data, intercoder credibility checks (Elliot et al., 1999) and discussion took place to support theme development through TA phases 3 -5. The researcher’s academic supervisor and a DEdPsy course colleague supported here. Inter coder discussion at phase 5 of EP data
analysis prompted minor changes to theme labels, for example the subtheme ‘intervention environment factors’ became ‘barriers at school level’. Examples of themes and associated codes can be found in Appendix O.

**Stage 6: Writing Up**

Before and during results write-up, the researcher considered how the data illustrated a ‘story’ relevant to the research questions (Braun & Clarke., 2021b, p. 36). The researcher also returned to reflexive diary entries made during coding and analysis to consider if and how initial ideas had been borne out in final themes and subthemes.

**3.8 Adaptations to Research**

Some adaptations to research were made across Phases 3. This was due in part to factors beyond the researcher’s control and reflected flexibility that is demanded when conducting real world research (Robson, 2011, p.406).

During the recruitment period for phase 3, one Reach coach (RC15) raised with the researcher that they had been unable to use Reach at all in their practice over the initial implementation period, and they were unsure whether they were still eligible for participation. They were assured that their participation was valued, especially for offering important information on barriers to implementation (RQ3). However, the original interview schedule was adapted to remove a series of questions on perceived impact on pupils. The approach to analysis was not impacted by this amendment.
Chapter 4 - Findings

4.1 Introduction
This chapter will present findings from this study’s three phases. Section 4.2 will present findings from SSIs with EPs. Section 4.3 will present findings from focus groups with coaches, held during the Reach training period. Section 4.4 will present findings from the study’s final stage, which involved SSIs with coaches following Reach training and initial implementation.

4.2 Phase 1 Findings
This section outlines results for Phase 1 of the study, which used SSIs to investigate EP views (N = 6) on needs within local authority schools. Following a process of inductive TA, three themes were identified in the data:

1. Disaffection as a Neglected Issue in Schools
2. The Need to Develop In-School Mentoring
3. The Need to Invest in Support Staff Development

Themes identified are illustrated in Figure 6. Transcript excerpts illustrating themes and subthemes can be found in the table in Appendix P. In text references (i.e., ‘P.1.a’) denote the Appendix (‘P’), the relevant theme number (‘1’) and the transcript excerpt illustrating the subtheme (‘a’).
Figure 6
Phase 1 Themes

Theme 1: Disaffection as a neglected issue in schools
- Recognition and accountability for disaffection as an SEMH need
- Limitations of existing approaches to address disaffection
  - Relevance and specificity of existing approaches
  - Timing of existing approaches

Theme 2: The need to develop in-school mentoring
- The mentor role as valuable
- Mentoring as widely used but poorly defined
- Barriers to implementation of in-school mentoring
  - Barriers to implementation at school level
  - Barriers to implementation at the intervention level
  - Barriers to implementation at the mentor level

Theme 3: The need to invest in support staff development
- Absence of recognition of support staff contribution and the impact of this
- Concerns about support staff training and development
  - Absence of training frameworks and opportunities
  - Schools’ reluctance to invest in support staff training
- Opportunities and role potential
4.2.1 Theme 1: Disaffection as a Neglected Issue in Schools

This theme captured EP perceptions of issues with schools’ current efforts to address incidence of disaffection. EPs identified school failures to recognise disaffection as an SEMH need, and they perceived schools as showing a lack of accountability for affected pupils. EPs also highlighted limitations of existing approaches to addressing disaffection, including relevance, specificity, and the timing of interventions.

Recognition and Accountability for Disaffection as an SEMH Need

EPs highlighted that they found, through their work in schools, that disaffection was not conceptualised as a need, and therefore was not being addressed as such. EPs remarked that whilst they personally perceived disaffection as an SEMH issue, they had found that their schools ‘sometimes see it as behavioural, in inverted commas’ (EP1). They noted too that schools’ concerns about affected children arose from concerns about impact on attainment as opposed to pupil wellbeing (P.1.a). Furthermore, EPs highlighted that schools often appeared to hold within-child
conceptualisations of disaffection, placing accountability for the issue with the pupil rather than considering the potential impact of school culture (P.1.b).

EPs highlighted issues with school systems of accountability (or lack of these systems) for pupils experiencing disaffection. This was partly seen as an issue on individual and team levels, with EPs noticing the absence of a joined-up or holistic approach to pupil support. Rather, EPs perceived that sometimes key staff did not recognise their potential contribution to supporting pupils in this group, or reneged responsibility to others:

I think that it seems like sometimes the view of the SENCO is that I am a SENCO and that is the role of perhaps like a family liaison officer or someone else that works with the family (...) this isn't just my role, and I'm not going to touch that bit. Someone else that will liaise with the family and handle that side of things. (EP2)

EPs also recognised issues with accountability at school leadership and levels. Participants suggested that a lack of perceived incentive meant that some schools did not develop systems for identifying and addressing incidence of pupil disaffection. EPs raised concerns that perhaps some schools did not see addressing disaffection as a priority, partly because it was not perceived as relating to school outcome measures (P.1.c). In fact, some EPs remarked that for some schools, the strategy that most aligned with their priorities was not to intervene at all, seeing exclusion as an inevitable outcome for these pupils. One EP commented that leaders could become more inclined to exclude than support inclusion for disaffected pupils (P.1.d).

**Limitations of Existing Approaches to Address Disaffection**

EPs commented on issues with available approaches to supporting pupils experiencing disaffection. Limitations identified formed two subthemes: one relating
to approach relevance and specificity, another relating to issues with the timing of adopted interventions.

**Relevance and Specificity of Current Approaches**

EPs commented that they did not know of any specific approach or intervention available to professionals to tackle disaffection. Simply, ‘the resources aren’t there’ (EP5). As a result, school efforts to address disaffection could be generic. ELSA was noted by several EPs as an approach that was sometimes applied by schools, although this intervention was viewed as insufficient to address disaffection as a specific need. Some EPs saw ELSA as incompatible with the difficulties associated with pupil disaffection, and perceived that using this approach may even have a detrimental impact (P.1.e).

**Timing of Existing Approaches**

EPs identified that disaffection could develop and persist as approaches to tackling it tended to be reactive rather than proactive. The reactive approach was seen as less effective, partly because motivation and engagement difficulties associated with learning disaffection would occur too in the intervention context (P.1.f). One EP was sceptical about staff motivations when deciding when intervention should occur, and suggested activities could be used superficially – to highlight needs rather than to address needs:

> A lot of the time when it comes to these interventions, they leave it too late in the day or it's put in as a tick box for an EHCP application just to say, well, look, we've done this, and it didn't work. (EP3)

EPs also commented that when schools requested their involvement, this was to mitigate rather than prevent incidence of disaffection. This meant that affected pupils’ associated difficulties were more entrenched, presenting further challenges
for promoting positive change (P.1.g). Acknowledging the deficiency of reactive approaches, participating EPs agreed there was a need for preventative approaches to addressing pupil disaffection in schools (P.1.h).

4.2.2 Theme 2: The Need to Develop In-School Mentoring

This theme captured EP views on in-school mentoring. Participating EPs saw mentoring as an approach that held promise, but they recognised various issues with its existing use. EPs noted that, whilst mentoring was a popular approach used by schools, it tended to be poorly defined. EPs also highlighted current barriers to effective implementation of mentoring (on school, intervention, and mentor levels).

The Mentor Role as Valuable

EPs described the value of the mentor role, as offering an attachment figure for pupils. This was seen as particularly beneficial for pupils whose family circumstances may have affected their development of protective emotional bonds with primary caregivers:
Additionally, EPs saw mentoring relationships as valuable in promoting pupil belonging, and other positive social and emotional outcomes (P.2.a). More specifically, EPs suggested the value of school staff assuming mentoring roles. They suggested several advantages to this, including practical and relational benefits (P.2.b).

**Mentoring as Widely Used but Poorly Defined**

Recognising the value of mentors and mentoring, EPs commented that they often recommended this to schools as an approach for supporting SEMH difficulties (P.2.c). EPs also found that schools sometimes adopted mentoring as an approach to managing pupil disaffection (P.2.d). Where mentoring was commonly recommended and adopted, EPs remarked that it was a poorly defined practice. Some EPs recognised this in the language used to label mentoring work (P.2.e). Other EPs found that a loose conceptualisation of mentoring also presented difficulties understanding its application in more detail, as this was seen as varying from school to school. This suggests too that, despite its promise, there may be issues when attempting to evaluate the efficacy of mentoring as an approach to supporting SEMH needs – unless it is connected to a specific programme (P.2.f).

**Barriers to Implementation of In-School Mentoring**

As well as identifying issues with poor conceptualisation of mentoring, EPs involved in this study also commented on barriers to implementation of mentoring practices in schools. This subtheme was formed of three further subthemes, representing
barriers on three different levels of implementation: school level, intervention level, and mentor level.

**Barriers to Implementation at School Level**

Some EPs highlighted logistical barriers to implementation at the school level, including time pressures and limitations experienced by mentors and school inclusion teams. Some EPs commented on workload issues in schools, and how this impacted on the time staff had to invest time planning and delivering mentoring interventions. As EP5 described:

> It may be so variable based on what the expectation is around time, you know, is that adult going to be given time to prepare for those sessions, or is it just something that they do between other activities? (EP5)

EP5 also noted that – depending on the mentor's role in school – competing workload priorities could impact on the quality of the mentoring delivered (P.2.g). However, other EPs recognised that more senior members of staff – such as Heads of Year and SENCOs – may experience fewer barriers to implementing mentoring (than support staff) as they can hold more autonomy in their deployment (P.2.h). One EP also spoke about how schools may experience mentoring time pressures in terms of needing to produce 'results' from interventions after defined periods (P.2.i).

Other EPs highlighted attitudinal barriers at the school level: ‘I think people have kind of pay lip service to being you know, supportive of it, but yeah, on the ground I'm not sure if they value it to the extent that they should’ (EP5). Perhaps owing to this, EPs commented that they saw an absence of a colleague support system for mentors to support implementation (P.2.j).
A further reported barrier to implementation related to the observed tendency for mentoring to occur in isolation in school systems, rather than as part of a holistic approach to pupil support and inclusion. As EP3 described:

When they do have that one-to-one work or whatever, people are very quick to kind of say, okay, well, that's what they're doing with that person. And, you know, almost like that person is in charge of their behaviour. And that's it, kind of thing. (EP3)

This was seen as impacting implementation as, outside of the mentoring relationship, staff lacked understanding of strategies being used, and of outcomes that had been achieved (P.2.k). This suggested that mentoring progress and success may be limited when learning from the one-to-one partnership is not generalised beyond it, and incorporated by other relevant staff in their practice with key pupils.

**Barriers to Implementation at the Intervention Level**

Some EPs felt that issues with in-school mentoring programmes themselves impacted on implementation. One issue was the lack of a supportive framework or evidence base for the mentoring programmes EPs saw being used. Where mentoring was widely used, interventions often appeared as ‘very generic’ (EP5) and lacking structure towards specific goals (P.2.l). EPs recognised the need to establish better evidence for implementation and efficacy of mentoring. EP2 noted a key first step here:

Even if it is quite broad, I think if there was a training that all mentors in secondary schools have to go through, things that would give us a better sense of how things are being used, what skills are being applied. (EP2)

Training for mentors could serve multiple benefits: offering professional skills development for staff, whilst also building consistency in mentoring programmes.
across settings. This could then offer the opportunities for professionals and researchers to examine the implementation and efficacy of in-school mentoring, and be better assured of the validity of conclusions drawn.

**Barriers to Implementation at the Mentor Level**

Participating EPs perceived that mentor characteristics could impact on in-school mentoring implementation. Professionals perceived that mentors ‘often don’t have any training’ (EP1) and that there was no existing ‘(…) standard that they need to meet to be able to become a mentor’ (EP2). This was seen as impacting on the consistency and quality of programmes delivered, which depended on the existing skills and previous training that mentors had received relating to their ‘everyday’ role in school (P.2.m). One EP found, perhaps due to this lack of training, (what they perceived as) unhelpful strategies were being applied within mentoring activities (P.2.n).

Other EPs noted mentor-level barriers relating to mentors’ attitudes towards their roles. Often mentoring was not the staff member’s main role or remit, and so this pastoral responsibility had been delegated to them rather than them actively pursuing it. This was seen as impacting on mentors’ clarity about their role, and as well as their engagement with it (P.2.o).

**4.2.3 Theme 3: The Need to Invest in Support Staff Development**

The final theme identified from EP interviews captured views on support staff, and the perceived need to invest in professional development for this group. Given content limits of this project, this theme is reported fully in Appendix Q.
4.2.4 Summary of Findings

This research phase formed the pre-programme exploration phase (Fixsen et al., 2013) of this implementation study, and aimed to examine professional perceptions of schools’ needs in the LA context. Findings from EP interviews suggest that there were significant gaps in provision for pupils experiencing disaffection in the local authority, which meant that this issue remained a challenge faced by schools. EPs highlighted that mentoring was an approach used in schools to address pupil SEMH needs, including disaffection. However, they saw that the potential for this approach was currently impacted by widespread poor conceptualisation, and barriers to implementation at school, intervention, and mentor levels. From the EP perspective, mentoring approaches in schools tended to lack frameworks, or followed scripted, adult-directed programmes (such as ELSA). In another key finding, support staff were identified as underdeveloped, and currently untapped, resource in schools.

The findings for this research phase established the need for the development of Reach, and its initial trialling in schools. Reach offered a solution to issues experienced in local schools:

- Offering a person-centred, collaborative, and autonomy-supportive – and therefore relevant - approach to addressing pupil disaffection
- Offering a framework for pastoral one-to-one work in schools
- Offering training for school support staff in an evidence-based approach

4.3 Phase 2 Findings

This section outlines results for Phase 2 of the study, which used focus groups to examine Reach coaches’ initial experiences of setting up and implementing Reach in their practice. Following a process of inductive TA, three themes were identified in the data:
1. Strengths of the Reach Approach

2. Adapting and Applying Reach in Practice

3. Potential Barriers when Using Reach

Themes identified are illustrated in Figure 7. Transcript excerpts illustrating themes and subthemes can be found in Appendix R.
Figure 7
Phase 2 Themes

Theme 1: Strengths of the Reach Approach
- The Power of Listening
- Facilitating Pupil Talk
- Recognising Strengths and Progress

Theme 2: Adapting and Applying Reach in Practice
- Reach as a Framework or Style
- Integrating Reach into Existing Practice
- Reflections on Age Group Applicability

Theme 3: Potential Barriers When Using Reach
- The Choice of Coach Matters
- Time Pressures Limit Reach Implementation and Efficacy
- Colleagues’ Understanding of Pastoral Work
- A Lack of Active Support from Leaders and Colleagues
- Resisting Habitual Behaviours and Mindset
- Timetabling and Workload Factors
- Reach Requires Time Investment
- Academic Demands Supersede Pastoral Time with Pupils
4.3.1 Theme 1: Strengths of the Reach Approach

This theme captured coaches’ views on strengths to the Reach approach, and comprised three subthemes linking to its perceived value and usefulness. Coaches highlighted the importance of listening – which they saw as central to Reach. They also identified that the Reach helped support pupils to communicate more openly with them in one-to-ones. Coaches also saw that the Reach approach had helped pupils to recognise their own strengths, and to celebrate the progress they had made, and were making over time.

The Power of Listening

Coaches emphasised the importance of listening to pupils, to ensure their wellbeing in schools. In part, this was seen as holding practical value – in that pupils had opportunity to express their needs, so staff could take appropriate action to meet these needs in the school day. One coach acknowledged that the Reach approach to active listening (using OARS) had shifted their mindset on what ‘supporting’ pupils looked like: activating pupil voice, rather than intervening based on assumptions about the individual’s wants and needs (R.1.a). Coaches also highlighted the emotional impact of applying Reach’s active listening skills. They saw that using skills such as open questions and reflections emphasised to their pupils that they
were genuinely engaged in the one-to-one interaction – which in turn improved their pupils’ engagement with them (R.1.b). This suggested that the Reach approach established a dynamic distinct to the character of ‘usual’ one-to-one pastoral interactions: pupils recognised this contrast, and welcomed it. One coach described how experiencing this difference prompted a powerful – and visible - emotional response in a pupil:

> Because the realisation that there is somebody who just listens, it really helps. And I think some of these questions affirmed their position or their thought process or whatever? I think that’s why they felt permission to cry. (RC10, Oct 2022)

**Facilitating Pupil Talk**

Reach was reported as an approach that promoted pupil talk. Coaches identified the importance of and value of supporting pupils to communicate their experiences (R.1.c). Coaches named specific skills (open questions) and tools (agenda mapping) that were effective in helping pupils to communicate openly. In particular, coaches shared experiences where using open questions had produced powerful and surprising responses. RC8 described on instance:

> I said, what else do you want to tell me about how you’re feeling? And actually, his grief wasn’t about this, it was about the fact that two teachers had left, his tutor had left, and someone from the SEN department that left, and that was his grief. (RC8, Oct 2022)

This highlighted the potential use of Reach skills, including OARS, for assessment as well as for supportive intervention. Using the approach enabled pupils to reflect on and share their inner state and experiences – and this allowed coaches insight into what their pupils might need, or support they may respond best to.

**Recognising Strengths and Progress**
A further strength identified by coaches was that the Reach approach had helped pupils to recognise their accomplishments and progress over time. Coaches commonly described pupil support in terms of a journey, that using Reach tools had helped pupils to see how far they can come (pupil scaling and rating), and helped them anticipate setbacks that may arise (the wheel of change). RC3 described how using Reach skills (OARS) had helped shape their one-to-ones:

Using reflections, thinking about our students, they're coming in and they're doing so well, like comparing how they've been to where they're at now. But they're still in their heads thinking, this is really bad. Because there's usually not enough time to sit back and really go through everything and reflect and say this is how well we're doing, this what you've achieved. (RC3, July 2022)

RC3 described how reflecting on progress and achievement – using Reach - had been especially significant for their work inducting pupils into an SEMH specialist setting. This implies this area of strength may be especially pertinent for pupils experiencing setting transitions, and who may have had adverse prior school experiences.

4.3.2 Theme 2: Adapting and Applying Reach in Practice

This theme encapsulated coaches’ thoughts on and experiences of implementing Reach in their daily practice. Three subthemes were identified. The first concerned coaches’ perspective of Reach as a style or framework that could be applied fluidly, rather than being limited to delivery within a discrete intervention. Another subtheme concerned coaches’ reported integration of Reach into their existing practice. A final subtheme concerned coaches’ views on age-groups they saw Reach being more or less appropriate for.
Reach as a Framework or Style

During the October focus groups, coaches reflected on how Reach might be best delivered. A subordinate theme was identified from focus group discussions at this point, relating to thoughts on the most sensible and relevant way to implement Reach. Coaches shared that, rather than seeing Reach as a package or set programme (as the training programme directed), they saw it more as an adaptable ‘approach or style’ (RC1, Oct 2022). For one coach, treating Reach as a style meant that it could be implemented flexibly, and therefore it would retain relevance for staff in different roles, and in different settings ‘because we all do different things’ (RC1, Oct 2022). Some coaches reflected on who Reach was for, and highlighted its usefulness as a set of tools or skills for the practitioner (‘it’s just for me really’ (RC10, Oct 2022)), rather than a programme to deliver to pupils. Coaches commented that Reach had provided a framework to shape and develop their practice during one-to-ones. This suggested that Reach had impacted the structure of participants’ one-to-one work, although this was because their practice had been refined rather than because distinct Reach sessions had been implemented.

Integrating Reach into Existing Practice

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This subtheme was concerned with coach experiences of integrating Reach into their usual practice, rather than setting up Reach interventions. Coaches described applying Reach skills and processes in existing pastoral one-to-one activities including mentoring, ELSA and ‘listening support’ sessions, and feeling it could also be applied within Anger Management interventions. In this sense, Reach appeared to be being used as a facilitating skill set within existing pastoral activities. Some coaches appeared to have actively chosen to implement Reach in this more dynamic form. For one coach described their rationale for this: their priority when implementing Reach was trying to ensure it felt like ‘usual practice’ for both coach and pupil (R.2.a). This suggested a perception of intervention novelty as detrimental to pupil engagement.

Other coaches appeared to have integrated Reach within existing work because they felt they had not had the time or opportunity to implement the programme in its originally intended form. This suggests coaches being motivated to use Reach: adapting it ensured they would be able to use it – even if not in the way they would have liked to under ideal conditions (R.2.b). However, this might also suggest reluctance to implement the approach in ways that would have required more dramatic shifts away from usual practice (perhaps due to reduced confidence, or poorer understanding of or engagement with Reach principles).

Reflections on Age-Group Applicability

A final subtheme encapsulated coach reflections on age-groups they saw Reach as being more, or less, appropriate for. Coach reflections here were based on their direct experiences of implementing Reach with different age groups, as well as their thoughts on its potential future use. Coaches shared the view that Reach was better suited to KS4 than KS3 pupils. Some made comparisons to ELSA, and considered
that Reach could offer a more mature alternative to better engage older pupils. One coach suggested an existing provision gap (support programmes appropriate for older children) and described the usefulness of Reach in filling this gap (R.2.c). Significantly, by drawing a comparison to ELSA, it appeared this coach perhaps perceived Reach as an emotionally literacy support provision, rather than understanding it as an approach to supporting behaviour change.

As well as seeing the benefit of Reach for older children, coaches described reasons why Reach may be less appropriate or relevant for KS3 pupils. Some coaches suggested that KS3 pupils’ stage of (emotional) development meant they weren’t yet able to engage effectively with Reach (R.2.d). One coach identified how Reach’s theoretical emphasis on autonomy (in the process of change) was potentially incompatible with the lived experience of younger pupils. Coaches saw that, compared to older children, KS3 pupils were characteristically more dependent on adults in their lives, and experienced less agency (R.2.e). This suggested that the impact of Reach for KS3 pupils may be limited, or only superficial.

4.3.3 Theme 3: Potential Barriers when Using Reach

The final theme identified from focus group data highlighted barriers coaches anticipated and experienced when attempting to set up and implement Reach for the first time. This theme comprised five subthemes, concerned with the significance of who facilitates Reach, and time pressures impacting Reach implementation. Subthemes also illustrate how coaches’ colleagues’ understanding of and support for Reach affected implementation. This theme also captures coaches’ difficulties resisting relapse into usual, non-Reach-adherent ways of working.
The Choice of Coach Matters

This subordinate theme captured coach reflections on how the choice of Reach coach may impact on its efficacy. Coaches drew on their experiences of delivering pastoral one-to-one and identified that staff character and knowledge can influence the extent to which a pupil will engage with them. One coach saw this as an issue relevant to all forms of counselling, irrespective of client age:

Anyone who's gone to counselling, we know you might see 10, before you find one that you can work with. You know, so giving the kids the option. (RC14, July 2022)

RC14 raised the value of involving pupils in the process of matching them to staff for one-to-ones, to ensure engagement. However, coaches described that, in practice, pupils were not involved in processes of setting up one-to-one support. Instead, coaches saw that schools tended to treat pupil-adult work as ‘one-size-fits-all’, with support being withdrawn if the pupil did not engage with the first staff
member assigned to them (R.3.a). This suggested that coaches recognised aspects of their schools’ pastoral provision as being at odds with their understanding of best practice – with implications for Reach implementation and efficacy.

**Time Pressures Limit Reach Implementation and Efficacy**

This subtheme comprised three further subthemes, concerned with coaches’ anticipated and experienced difficulties when implementing Reach, in the context of time and workload pressures in their roles.

**Timetabling and Workload Factors**

Common to coach experiences was not having one-to-one work, including Reach, timetabled for them. This had meant coaches were unable to run discrete Reach sessions, or even use it in other one-to-one activities, as time for this was not protected. In this sense, coaches perceived limits to the support the EPS could provide to help them implement and sustain the approach, because their most-needed resource was time (which could only be granted by their own school leaders). One coach highlighted that the profile of Reach (as a new programme) could impact on the potential for them having time to run it (R.3.b). This implied that time was sometimes protected for one-to-one activities, but only when these activities were part of established intervention programmes, such as ELSA. These observations suggested that, interestingly, Reach’s innovation may have presented as a barrier to its implementation.

**Reach Requires Time Investment**

Coaches recognised that, being an approach for behaviour change, Reach required longer-form implementation to be effective. However, they identified factors that undermined this requirement. Coaches described external pressures on them to
produce ‘results’ from one-to-one in a preordained time period (R.3.c). A contrast emerged between reports of cultures of expectation, and coaches’ beliefs about the need for an open-ended approach when implementing Reach (R.3.d). Another coach perceived that using a fixed-period approach to implementing Reach could even be detrimental to pupils receiving it:

You have to have a commitment from SLT to say, these members of support staff are going to have this number of timetabled lessons to work, and they will be one to one, and these are the kids that we are - you are - going to work with. And if they get 10 sessions, and they need more, fine, it rolls on. If they get 10 sessions and they need more, it can't just stop. Because that child is going to get further disengaged. (RC14, July 2022)

This highlighted that time investment, using a flexible approach, would be crucial to ensuring Reach’s efficacy and impact. However, coach views indicated scepticism about whether this expectation was realistic within their school cultures and systems.

*Academic Demands Supersede Pastoral Time with Pupils*

Coaches described barriers when attempting to access pupils to deliver Reach. They highlighted that they were restrictions on which lessons pupils could and could not be removed from for intervention, notably core subjects. Considered alongside their own timetabling challenges (as described in *Timetabling and Workload Factors*), coaches appeared to encounter compounded difficulties when trying to find and secure Reach intervention time.

Some coaches (across different settings) described that they found it especially difficult to secure time with Key Stage 4 pupils due to the curriculum focus on external exams (R.3.e). This suggested that in coaches’ settings, one-to-one implementation was undermined by school cultures and systems that prioritised
academic demands over pastoral ones. A tension was highlighted here between coach beliefs on groups who would benefit most from Reach (see Reflections on Age Group Applicability), and their experiences of barriers when attempting to work with this group.

**Colleagues’ Understanding of Pastoral Work**

This subtheme encapsulated coaches’ views that their school colleagues and leaders often lacked an understanding of their work contribution, which could impact on their ability to implement Reach as intended. Coaches identified how the nature of Reach, as a talking approach, would affect colleagues’ understanding of the intervention, and their recognition of progress being made. As RC12 described:

> Maybe with ELSA they end up with a little key ring with 'think-stop-breathe', and we teach them all these strategies that they can use when they are overwhelmed. With this, they don't have that visual change? Yeah. So, I think it's harder to explain to outsiders, how does this work. (RC12, Oct 2022)

Some coaches saw SLT as preferring the ‘quick fix way’ (RC14, July 2022) and that they lacked an understanding of the longer-term investment pastoral one-to-one required to be effective. Coaches highlighted that managing their leaders’ understanding of Reach aims, and expectations of what it could achieve, and in what time frame, could be a challenge (R.3.f). Coaches also saw that leaders’ misconceptions about pastoral programmes of intervention impacted on their ability to implement them with fidelity and to high quality (R.3.g). As such, poor wider understanding of aims and potential could impact on colleagues’ perceptions of coaches’ professional competency and aptitude. This suggests that the level of wider understanding of Reach in school communities could affect pupil outcomes as well as coaches’ status and positioning amongst colleagues.
A Lack of Active Support from Leaders and Colleagues

This subtheme captured coaches’ reports that a lack of support from colleagues and leaders had impacted, and could further impact, their Reach implementation efforts. Coaches described that SLT support for their pastoral activities could be variable: ‘Hit and miss. Depending on which member of SLT’ (RC15, July 2022). Some coaches inferred that because of their positioning in schools, support staff could be seen by colleagues and leaders as pupils’ ‘allies’, which impacted others’ regard for their views and activities (R.3.h). As well as resulting in their views being dismissed, some coaches identified that colleagues’ actions could sometimes actively undermine their efforts to support pupils (R.3.i).

Coaches described examples of Reach training and implementation being impacted by leaders’ decision-making:

I mean, classic example, yesterday they said oh, there’s a meeting tomorrow, can you go? So, I said no, I’m going on training, and I said RC15 can’t go either, because she’s on the same training with me. And the suggestion was, can’t one of you leave the training early, and get the update from the other, to go to this meeting. And I thought, you’re in school, you’re you can make yourself available. And you’re making a conscious choice not to go because you don’t want to. And you’re going to inconvenience me and ask me to fall short on my training. (RC13, July 2022)

Some coaches described the support they did receive from leaders was incidental or superficial, which created uncertainty and pessimism about ongoing Reach training and implementation (R.3.i). This suggested systemic barriers to Reach implementation, partly owing to the ways (existing and potential) support staff contributions were perceived by others.

Resisting Habitual Behaviours and Mindset
The final barrier identified related to coaches’ experiences of challenges when trying to adhere to the Reach approach, whilst trying to resist relapse into previous thinking and working habits (as non-Reach-adherent). Crucially, coaches articulated that they understood the rationale behind the Reach approach, and the need to shift away from usual, adult-led practices:

With this, I need to shut up because there's no point in me giving them the answer. The answer has got to come from inside of them and it's got to be theirs. They've got to talk themselves through their problems and into their solutions that work for them. And it's no point with me going "if I was to come round and pick you up would that...?" My natural response is, "how can I make this easier for you?" Which is very different to "how can you overcome this, how can you do this?" (RC8, July 2022)

Despite this motivation to alter their practice, coaches described aspects of this shift as challenging. For some, it meant maintaining consciousness of habits or existing practice frameworks, and actively taking steps to discard these (R.3.k).

Focus groups discussions raised specific aspects of Reach practice that coaches found challenging to adopt and implement. Several coaches described finding it difficult to withhold advice and questions (appropriate to Reach’s emphasis on active listening), as these methods had been so integral to their previous interactions with pupils. One coach described this adjustment as feeling unnatural (R.3.I). This indicated habits and discomfort (using new skills) as within-coach barriers in the process of learning and implementing Reach for the first time.

4.3.4 Summary of Findings

This phase aimed to examine coaches’ initial experiences of setting up and using Reach in their settings. Findings from focus groups highlighted coaches’ positive response to and engagement with the Reach approach. Coaches identified multiple
strengths to the approach and highlighted its impact in fostering more open communication and problem-solving in their one-to-one interactions with pupils. Results from this phase suggested that coaches saw Reach as an adaptable framework, and – perhaps owing to this perspective – reports indicated that coaches had implemented Reach by integrating it into their existing activities, as opposed to setting up discrete interventions. Common to coach discussions was the experience of presenting barriers to Reach implementation, including challenges they had encountered so far, and those they anticipated when sustaining the programme. These included systems level barriers (workload and time pressures); systemic level barriers (ensuring the right coach; receiving support from colleagues) and coach level barriers (adhering to Reach and resisting habitual practice).

These findings provided insight into several key dimensions of Reach implementation (Durlak & Dupre, 2008). A high level of coach responsiveness to and engagement with Reach was evident in the data, illustrated by strengths described. Coaches appeared to be striving to use Reach skills with fidelity, although evidence suggested they were not implementing the approach as part of a discrete intervention. Feasibility issues were raised, which appeared to be impacting on coaches’ initial implementation efforts.

4.4 Phase 3 Findings

This section outlines results for Phase 3 of the study, which used SSIs to examine coaches’ reflections on their experiences of training in and using Reach, following an initial implementation period (September - December 2022). Following a process of inductive TA, three themes were identified in the data:

1. The Value/Usefulness of the Reach Approach (MI)
2. The Impact of Reach Training on Staff Practice

3. The Reach Coach Network as a Facilitator to Implementation

Themes identified are illustrated in Figure 8. Additional transcript excerpts illustrating themes and subthemes can be found in Appendix S.
Figure 8
Phase 3 Themes

Theme 1: The Value/Usefulness of the Reach Approach (MI)
- Addressing a range of SEMH needs in children and young people
- Shifting Power Dynamics in Staff-Pupil Interactions
- Potential for Diverse Application of Reach in Schools

Theme 2: The Impact of Reach Training on Staff Practice
- Comparing to Practice Pre- and Post- Reach Training
- Adapting Reach in Practice
- Reach Adherence and Non-Adherence
  - Evidence of Reach Adherent Skills, Tools, and Behaviours
  - Evidence of Reach Non-Adherent Skills, Tools, and Behaviours
  - Barriers to Reach Adherence

Theme 3: The Reach Coach Network as a Facilitator to Implementation
- Benefits of Connections with Other Coaches
- Sustaining the Reach Coach Network
4.4.1 Theme 1: The Value/Usefulness of the Reach Approach (MI)

The first theme identified from coach interviews was the perceived usefulness and value of implementing Reach in schools. Coaches highlighted the adaptability of Reach: to address a range of SEMH needs (to positive effect), and to be used by a range of staff for different purposes. Reach was also perceived as having value in breaking down the uneven power dynamics that often characterise adult-pupil interactions (in schools).

Addressing a Range of SEMH Needs in Children and Young People

Coaches’ reports highlighted Reach being used to address a range of SEMH needs in pupils in their different settings. Coaches described using the approach to support pupils presenting with indicators of disaffection, including behavioural non-compliance, low attendance and learning effort. Coaches described their use of Reach as having a positive impact on pupils’ learning engagement and self-help behaviours (S.1.a), behaviour (reduced sanctions) (S.1.b), and academic attainment (S.1.c). One coach report showed Reach also being applied to support the transition of a pupil who had received a permanent exclusion. In this case, the approach was described as used for ‘preparing him to work differently with the
educators or other adults in his life… in that respect, the motivational interviewing for me was a brilliant tool’ (RC13). This suggests potential for Reach as a tool to promote coping and resilience during pupil transitions.

RC2 reflected on why Reach was helpful in addressing root causes of disaffection, which was seen as occurring when pupils feel misunderstood and emotionally disconnected from others:

At that time, I think I mostly applied Reach and I think what's valuable about it is, they try disengaging and distancing themselves from others because they think others can't connect with them, can't feel for them, and can't understand them. But I think Reach is a great skill for them to show an individual that you actually do understand, to show them that you care, to show them that you're compassionate and empathetic. (RC2)

This suggests Reach could be helpful in addressing disaffection by enhancing relatedness and partnership between pupils and the adults who support them.

Some coaches also described using Reach to address SEMH needs, not in the context of disaffection. Three coaches (RC2, RC3, RC17) reported having applied Reach to addresses cases of Emotionally-Based School Avoidance (EBSA). Coaches perceived that Reach had supported their pupils’ school and lesson attendance, and highlighted aspects of the interactions that supported this change. For RC2, regular communication and child-led goal setting supported the pupil’s attendance to improve. RC17 perceived that using Reach in one-to-ones had helped them to assess the pupil’s needs, and identify additional support required to address the anxiety underpinning the pupil’s lesson avoidance (here, an emotional literacy intervention, and counselling). RC3 shared that using Reach engagement strategies (including Agenda Mapping) had supported a pupil with selective mutism to share their interests, which staff were then able to utilise to build the pupil’s school
attendance plan. In this sense, Reach appeared to have been used both as an SEMH support intervention, and as an assessment tool.

**Shifting Power Dynamics in Staff-Pupil Interactions**

Coaches highlighted that Reach was useful and valuable in dismantling unequal power dynamics within adult-pupil interactions. Coaches suggested that typical, adult-directed approaches to one-to-one were unhelpful, and could trigger emotional dysregulation and defensive behavioural responses in pupils (for example answering back). By contrast, coaches valued Reach as a child-led and child-centred approach (S.1.d; S.1.e).

Reach was described as valuable in helping pupils feel heard, and in promoting relatedness. Several coaches perceived that their pupils responded positively to the approach, as it emphasised to pupils the adult’s genuine interest and investment in their wellbeing (S.1.f). Contrasting with focus group reflections on age-applicability, coaches described the approach as being especially pertinent and valuable for younger pupils, as RC17 described:

> With younger pupils, especially when there's this authority and power difference, that some people feel and some don't, obviously, but I think for the kids, there's a real struggle to come and talk to an adult. And I think that it's always in the back of my mind to listen and to reflect and to make them feel heard in that way by, sort of, you know, reflecting and sort of divining those acknowledgements. (RC17)

This suggests that in prioritising and facilitating the pupil's perspective (rather than that of the adult or school), Reach may have enhanced pupils' trust in and engagement with their coaches.

**Potential for Diverse Application of Reach in Schools**
As well as reflecting on how Reach had been useful to them in their roles, coaches also highlighted how the Reach approach could hold value in the wider school context. Coaches perceived that their colleagues in Inclusion and SEN teams would find the Reach approach useful and relevant to their work. They highlighted that that this would refine practitioners’ existing skills and promote more consistent provision for pupils.

Some coaches also perceived that SLT, teachers and TAs would benefit from Reach training, so that the approach could be implemented for behaviour management (S.1.g). This suggested that Reach could meet a perceived need to take a child-led approach to behaviour management, to better protect pupils’ sense of safety, trust, and belongingness. Elsewhere, coaches suggested how Reach might benefit teachers in other areas of practice, for example to structure progress review discussions, and to promote rapport with pupils. One coach suggested that Reach could be implemented by teachers during pastoral time, and that training in the approach could help refine the form tutor role (S.1.h). This suggested that training in Reach could enable form tutors and teachers to provide more genuine and meaningful support to pupils. This also suggests that embedding Reach in school’s pastoral systems and cultures could reduce the need for standalone one-to-one pastoral interventions.

**4.4.2 Theme 2: The Impact of Reach Training on Staff Practice**

A further theme identified from coach interviews concerned coach reflections on how participating in Reach had impacted their practice. Coaches reflected on the contrast between their approach to pupil one-to-ones before and after Reach training. Coaches also described how they adapted Reach for use in practice.
Examples of Reach-adherent skills, tools and behaviours were also identified. Coach interviews also highlighted evidence of non-Reach-adherent behaviours, skills and tools being used in one-to-ones. Finally, potential barriers to implementing Reach with fidelity/adherence were illustrated.

**Comparing Practice Pre and Post Reach Training**

Some coaches perceived that their practice before training already resembled the Reach approach: ‘I know naturally in my work, I do a lot of these things anyway’ (RC3). However, coaches highlighted how the training had positively impacted their practice. RC17 highlighted that their previous practice may not have been appropriately for age ‘It was all quite young, now I think about it’ (RC17). RC17 also reflected on the contrast between previously used tools, compared to Reach resources: ‘It was it was probably a fair bit more clinical actually, it feels more personable now’ (RC17).

Several coaches highlighted that taking part in Reach training had made their practice more child-led. Coaches perceived that, previously, their practice would
have been more directive and advisory. However, Reach training had caused them
to reflect on more productive ways to interact with pupils, and how to support pupils
to problem-solve more independently (S.2.a). This suggested that Reach training
had prompted practical changes in coach activities, and that it may also have
prompted them to become more reflective practitioners.

Adapting Reach in Practice

Interview data suggested that coaches had adapted Reach by integrating into their
existing pastoral activities. Only one of the coaches interviewed (RC6) had set up
and delivered a 6–8-week intervention as directed in the Reach training programme.
Coaches described using Reach within listening support sessions, mentoring
sessions, and induction sessions (for pupils transitioning into an SEMH setting).
One coach also described using the approach incidentally in their work supervising
their school’s inclusion room: here Reach was used to shape discussions with pupils
about why they had been withdrawn from lessons.

Coaches’ adapted use of Reach may have been influenced by their
perceptions of what it offered as an approach. Reflecting findings from research
phase 2, several coaches perceived Reach as an adaptable approach or style,
rather than as an intervention to deliver. Some coaches described that this adapted
use of Reach offered them a framework to structure interactions with pupils, but
ensured these interactions felt genuine, natural, and unscripted (S.2.b; S.2.c). This
suggested a preference amongst coaches for working ‘as usual’, whilst
incorporating Reach skills to enhance this practice. It implied too that perhaps some
coaches perceived that taking a formalised approach to Reach intervention would
have felt impersonal for them, and may have alienated pupils they worked with.
However, this adapted approach may also reflect issues accessing time to run the
intervention, or perhaps disinclination or motivation to use the approach as a structured and formalised intervention (due to a lack of confidence in Reach itself, or low confidence in their own abilities to deliver it formally).

Reach Adherence and Non-Adherence

This subtheme theme comprises three further subthemes, encapsulating evidence for coaches’ Reach adherence and non-adherence, and perceived barriers to using Reach with fidelity.

Evidence of Reach-Adherent Skills, Tools, and Behaviours

Coach descriptions of their work with pupils indicated some adherence to the Reach approach. There was some evidence for coaches adhering to Reach principles, and ensuring their approach promoted collaboration and was autonomy-supportive (S.2.d). Coach descriptions of their work also included specific examples of Reach skills (OARS) and tools being used. Affirmations, summaries, and Agenda Mapping were all identified as skills and tools used to promote pupil talk and to structure interactions with pupils. RC17 described an example of using reflections and summaries to close a session, and their perception of this being important and helpful for their pupil:

Using the reflections and things towards the end and giving myself that like 5-10 minutes at the end to really reflect on what was said. With him as well, that really helped. He said he felt listened to, which seems obvious now, going back over what we've just spoken about, it would absolutely make you feel listened to. (RC17)

Self-reports here suggested some adherence to the Reach approach, with evidence of core principles and key skills being implemented.

Evidence of Reach-Non-Adherent Skills, Tools, and Behaviours
Coach descriptions of their work highlighted evidence lapses into Reach non-adherent behaviours, and continued use of tools and resources not associated with the training programme.

When asked about tools and resources they had found especially helpful, coaches sometimes identified activities from their previous or ‘usual’ practice. One coach described consciously using non-Reach adherent activities: ‘Oh, actually the resources that I use with them are not from the course’ (RC2). Another coach showed less consciousness that their approach showed Reach non-adherence:

Um, we use drawing, we use writing, I might put them on a computer to do some research and then feedback to people. It's about shaking it up. You can't just sit and talk for two hours. You've got to have different things, get them moving around, using different tools. (RC13)

Despite reflecting elsewhere on how Reach training had helped them to become more child-led in their practice, descriptions of work indicated some lapses into directing and advising pupils (S.2.e; S.2.f). Descriptions of practice suggested that coaches were highly motivated to support their pupils to change and progress, to the extent that this sometimes prompted them to lapse into lecturing or instructing.

Evidence here implied that perhaps coaches had not developed full understanding of MI adherence versus non-adherence, a lack of fidelity may undermine Reach implementation and efficacy.

**Barriers to Reach Adherence**

Coaches highlighted that they had experienced some challenges implementing Reach with fidelity. Echoing comments from the focus groups, coaches reported that resisting habitual behaviours and skills remained a challenge (S.2.g). Some coaches also highlighted that aspects of their school role responsibilities and remit could conflict with Reach principles and demands (S.2.h). This suggested that
coaches saw that role obligations imposed some limitations on their ability to implement Reach with fidelity. However, they appeared motivated to implement Reach, albeit in a boundaried form.

4.4.3 Theme 3: The Reach Coach Network as a Facilitator to Implementation

The final theme identified from coach interviews related to coaches’ perceptions that connections with other coaches had supported them in implementing Reach with pupils. Coaches described the benefits of being part of a coach network, and reflected on how this network could be sustained.

Benefits of Connections with Other Coaches

Coaches perceived that they had benefited from training in Reach alongside colleagues from their same settings. Coaches in shared settings appeared to have communicated regularly about their experiences. They described experiencing camaraderie with coach colleagues, and shared that these connections had helped with problem-solving relating to Reach support activities (S.3.a). This suggested that having colleagues trained in the same approach had facilitated Reach
implementation. Dialogue with coach colleagues was seen as promoting problem-solving, and it prompted coaches to actively reflect on their own Reach practice.

Coaches also commented on the benefits of accessing the wider Reach coach network through supervision. Supervision was perceived as presenting an opportunity to access peer support, specifically with problem-solving (S.3.b). It appeared that coaches especially valued taking part in supportive conversations with peers, as this was the aspect of supervision that was highlighted as beneficial. Coach reports indicated they found supervision useful, and it appeared that these opportunities for sharing practice had also fostered a sense of community and common purpose in the group (S.3.c).

**Sustaining the Reach Coach Network**

Some coaches shared hopes for future opportunities to access the Reach coach network and maintain communication with other coaches. Ongoing supervision was identified as one approach to maintaining coach dialogue. Some coaches suggested other potential channels for sustaining coach communication. Interestingly, coaches suggested online and digital methods for sustaining the network (S.3.d; S.3.e). This suggested coaches were motivated to continue to access peer support, but perceived that ongoing in-person meetings may not be sustainable for them and their schools. Online methods proposed by coaches were perceived as offering feasibility, whilst also ensuring their ongoing training and development would be met.

**4.4.4 Summary of Findings**

This research phase focused on coaches’ experiences and reflections on transferring their Reach training into practice and implementing the approach with
pupils. Findings from this phase built on findings from phase 2, providing further insight into key dimensions of Reach implementation (Durlak & Dupre, 2008; Humphrey et al., 2016). Reflecting on the approach, coaches perceived Reach to be relevant and useful in addressing a range of SEMH needs, including but not exclusive to disaffection. They also highlighted its promise as an approach that could be implemented more broadly in school systems, by staff in diverse school roles. Findings suggest that coaches perceived Reach training had positively impacted their practice, however there was mixed evidence for coaches adhering to Reach skills and behaviours when working with pupils. Findings also suggested that coaches had largely implemented an adapted form of Reach, rather than delivering a discrete intervention programme using the approach. This could partly be attributed to coach perceptions of Reach as a flexible and adaptable ‘style’ or framework. Finally, coaches highlighted the Reach coach network as a facilitator to their implementation efforts, and they described how online communication channels might help the network to be sustained.

The findings also highlight factors in training transfer (Grossman & Salas, 2011) relevant to coach experiences. Coaches highlighted peer support and supervision as helping them to generalise and maintain their Reach skills and knowledge beyond the training environment. However, mixed evidence regarding Reach fidelity (including use of skills, and limited implementation of Reach as a formal intervention) implies that coaches may have benefited from ongoing follow-up support from the EPS, and from their schools creating opportunities to use the approach.
Chapter 5 - Discussion

5.1 Introduction

The present study examined the need for, and implementation of, a new SBMI training and intervention programme (‘Reach’). The first aim was to gain understanding of the context of need for a new programme, from the perspective of EPs serving the LA’s schools. The second aim was to understand how school staff (Reach coaches) implemented Reach in their one-to-one pastoral practice following training. Specifically, this study aimed to understand the implementation of Reach in the context of its feasibility and value from coaches’ perspectives. It also aimed to understand if and how coaches adapted Reach in practice, and the degree to which they used the approach with fidelity. By addressing these aims, the present research provides insights as to how Reach could be refined to maximise its impact locally, and how similar programmes might be facilitated by EPs in other UK services.

The chapter begins with discussion of insights from EP interviews regarding challenges faced by local schools, which provided the context for the development of the Reach programme. Following this, findings from coach focus groups and interviews are discussed. Next, evidence of Reach being implemented with variable fidelity, and it being adapted for use, are summarised and implications highlighted. Later sections explore insights into coaches’ experiences of facilitators and barriers when attempting to set up and implement Reach in their settings, and coach perceptions of the programme’s usefulness. Implications of the research findings for the LA’s EPS and Reach programme developers are also explored. Finally, research strengths and limitations will be summarised, and future research directions considered.
5.2 RQ1: What are EPs’ views on the context for the development of a new training (and intervention) programme in the local authority?

5.2.1 Addressing Pupil Disaffection
Findings suggested challenges faced by the LA’s schools mirrored national challenges, including disaffection being a widespread and concerning issue (DfE, 2022a; 2022b). Key to findings here was EPs’ experiences of disaffection being conceptualised by schools as problematic behaviour, and not as a SEMH need. This appeared to be a fundamental factor sustaining disaffection incidence. This is pertinent to previous literature on the pervasiveness of within-child views of disaffection (Wilding, 2015), which persist despite compelling evidence for systemic causes and influences (DCSF, 2009; Hartas, 2011). By EP accounts, school staff attitudes towards disaffection meant that inclusive practices were not being implemented as they might be for other SEMH oriented SEN. In fact, EPs recognised practices around disaffection that facilitated exclusion of these pupils. This is pertinent to SSMMD and Self Determination Theory perspectives (Furrer, Skinner & Pitzer, 2014; Wilding 2015), as EPs observed disaffection being facilitated by apparent ‘rejection’ of affected pupils. This implied a crucial role for EPs in reframing schools’ conceptualisations of disaffection, and fostering wider recognition of disaffection as a need.

In EP interviews, disaffection was seen as occurring and persisting because relevant staff, including EPs, were not being deployed or commissioned to support these pupils. EPs described that when they were involved, this tended to occur when disaffection had become more entrenched. This suggested a dual need: for EPs to have enhanced opportunities to support relevant pupils, and for intervention
approaches to be preventative rather than reactive. Previous research has suggested the role of EPs in addressing disaffection by supporting schools to make systemic changes around affected pupils. Wilding (2015) suggested that EPs could facilitate person-centred thinking (PCT) in schools to address disaffection. PCT focuses on identifying the individual’s strengths, skills, aspirations, with this information being central to planning appropriate support for that person. The Reach programme offered an approach in keeping with PCT and offered additional benefits by building school staff skills (another local need identified by EPs). Overall, qualitative analyses of EPs’ views highlighted a clear and context-specific rationale for Reach: a programme to meet pupil provision and training needs in schools, that offered opportunity for EPs to impact systemically, using an evidence-based approach (MI).

5.2.2 Developing In-School Mentoring Practices

Also key to findings from EP interviews were their reflections on the need to develop mentoring practices in schools. Previous research on support staff deployment has suggested pastoral work (including mentoring) as a core part of support staff work (Blatchford et al., 2009; Skipp & Hopwood, 2019; Whitehorn, 2010). However, among interviewed EPs there was a gap in understanding about what these activities look like in practice. EPs commented that they saw staff being deployed to mentor vulnerable pupils, but that implementation was affected by an absence of frameworks to structure sessions. Another important insight here related to EP reflections on the influence of their own practice. EPs shared that whilst they often recommended one-to-one support, they tended not to be prescriptive about what this should look like. This highlighted that EPs perceived themselves as partly
accountable for the underdeveloped mentoring practices they saw in schools. As such, findings here revealed a demand amongst EPs for appropriate training and support programmes or frameworks that they could use in their recommendations for one-to-one provision. This finding contributes to the research understanding of factors influencing issues with support staff deployment and impact, beyond decisions made by internal school teams.

The Reach programme emerged in response to these reflections. It was devised to develop support staff practice, offering a relevant, evidence-based approach to structure one-to-one work. Reach also offered benefits in offering a support programme that EPs could recommend within the LA, therefore enhancing the quality and specificity of their provision recommendations.

5.2.3 RQ1 Conclusions

EP reports highlighted problematic misconceptualisations on the part of school staff: seeing disaffection as a within-child issue, rather than as an SEMH need. This was seen as a factor in escalating incidence of disaffection. Because schools were not acknowledging disaffection as an SEMH need, relevant staff and professionals were not being mobilised to support these pupils. This highlighted a role for EPs: in developing schools’ understanding of the emotional dimensions to disaffection and facilitating person-centred ways of working in schools to reduce incidence of disaffection. Also key here were EPs’ reflections that whilst they valued and often recommended mentoring for pupils, they were not aware of evidence-based frameworks for these activities. As such, Reach offers a way to meet the needs within schools, whilst also offering a package to enhance the specificity of EP provision recommendations around one-to-one support.
5.3 RQ2: How do school staff implement and adapt Reach in their practice following training?

5.3.1 Adapting Reach

A key finding (across focus group and interview reports) was that coaches had implemented an adapted version of Reach in their settings. Coaches described Reach as a ‘style’, and perceived that it could be used flexibly. Rather than using a formal intervention approach (as intended by the programme designers), coaches described incorporating skills and tools from Reach into their existing pastoral activities. This meant that during the initial implementation period aspects of Reach were used in mentoring sessions, in listening support sessions, during setting inductions, and incidentally in discussions with pupils placed in a school inclusion room. Only one of seven coaches interviewed reported having set up a discrete 6–8-week intervention for pupils.

The current literature points towards issues with using MI incidentally or informally. An incidental approach appears inconsistent with Miller and Rollnick’s emphasis on the four processes in MI (engaging, focusing, evoking, planning) (2012a). The evidence base on SBMI suggests positive outcomes can arise from single sessions (Kittles & Atkinson, 2009; Strait et al., 2012; Terry et al., 2013). However, in these cases, MI was facilitated by a specialist counsellor or EP and it is unclear if non-specialists would be sufficiently skilled to produce comparable outcomes. Furthermore, an incidental or one-off approach is not consistent with theoretical perspectives on behaviour change as a ‘path’ rather than an event, as illustrated in the TTM (Prochaska & DiClemente, 1998). This is especially pertinent for approaches to supporting change in pupil disaffection. The SSMMD and Self
Determination perspectives emphasise relatedness within the adult-pupil dynamic as fundamental to development of motivation and engagement. This is significant in light of insight from research into views of CYP experiencing disaffection, where pupils report a desire for their teachers to invest time on pupil relationships and ‘get to know’ them (Hartas, 2011). Viewing Reach from an attachment perspective, an incidental approach is unlikely to provide the conditions for developing the secure bond between coach and pupil, predictive of positive pupil learning and engagement (De Santis King et al., 2007; Murray & Greenburg, 2000; Robinson, 2014).

Alongside the impact on the quality of the therapeutic partnership, coach reports of adapting Reach raise issues around implementation consistency, and therefore the trustworthiness of perceptions around its impact. Atkinson and Woods (2018) suggest the value of manualised approaches to ensure the validity of observed outcomes from MI research. The Reach programme had been devised around a protocol, including a checklist for implementation (Snape & Atkinson, 2018) and Reach resources (Atkinson, 2013; Miller & Rollnick, 2002; 2012a). Whilst coaches perceived their use of Reach as producing positive effects (see RQ4), reports of adaptations (including non-compliance to the checklist) limit the validity of these reports. Existing efficacy studies have examined the use of programmes that used MI alongside other counselling approaches (Terry et al., 2021). However, these programmes were manualised to ensure outcome reliability. These issues mean it would not be valuable or appropriate to conduct an efficacy study on Reach based on its current form and use in schools. Recommendations for future development of the programme are discussed later in this chapter (section 5.6).

Coaches offered a rationale for implementing Reach in adapted form. For some, this occurred by obligation, as they were not given time by school leaders to
deliver a formal intervention. Others argued an adapted version was preferable to ensure their pupils experienced the support as ‘usual’, to better ensure their engagement. In these cases, it may be that coach characteristics affected the training transfer and implementation of Reach (Blase et al., 2012; Grossman & Salas, 2011). It may be that adapting Reach in practice reflected limited coach confidence and perceived competence to deliver the approach. It may also have reflected low motivation to transform their practice to the degree implementation of the full intervention would have required. In future iterations of Reach, it will therefore be important to emphasise to stakeholders the appropriate time and resource investment required to set up and run the programme.

5.3.2 Reach Adherence and Non-Adherence

This study contributes to the small research base on whether school staff can facilitate MI with fidelity following training. It is important to establish this, as evidence suggests facilitator competency as an implementation driver (Fixsen & Blase, 2008). It is additionally important due to evidence from education research that indicates fidelity is positively associated with pupil outcomes (Killerby & Dunsmuir, 2018). In the context of MI, proficiency in MI skills and behaviours is considered key to enhancing clients’ change talk, which itself is thought to be predictive of behaviour change (Miller & Rose, 2009). Coach interviews provided evidence for MI-adherent skills and behaviours, including OARS (Open Questions, Affirmations, Reflective Listening, Summaries) and compliance with principles of MI (autonomy-support and collaboration). This evidence for MI adherence mirrors findings from previous studies on training school staff to develop MI proficiency (Rochat, 2019; Sheftel et al., 2014; Simon & Ward, 2014). However, coach
descriptions of their work also indicated some evidence of non-Reach-adherent behaviours and tools, such as directing and advising (without permission). Where coaches identified some barriers to using the approach with fidelity (such as lapsing into habit), their reports implied that they were often unaware that they were not implementing the approach properly. This highlights that the existing Reach training structure and/or duration may be insufficient to ensure coaches can facilitate MI with fidelity. Previous literature suggests regular ongoing supervision and use of observation are important to promoting MI adherence (Miller et al., 2004; Rochat, 2019; Sheftel et al., 2014; Simon & Ward, 2014). This points towards the need to extend Reach training and place greater emphasis on monitoring of adherence to Reach skills and behaviours and recognising/avoiding non-adherent practice (or ‘error management’) (Grossman & Salas, 2011). Enhanced facilitator guidance and opportunities for supervision could also support coach learning and development in this area.

5.3.3 RQ2 Conclusions

In summary, coach reports suggest lower implementation of Reach than as intended by programme developers. Instead, most coaches implemented key Reach skills and tools within their existing one-to-one work. It was also evident that there was some variability in coach adherence to Reach principles, skills, and behaviours. This suggests issues at facilitator competency levels may have affected implementation processes (Fixsen & Blase, 2008). Coaches reported lacking wider support to facilitate Reach in their schools (RQ3). This appeared to have affected opportunities to run the intervention. However, absent within-school support may also have driven low accountability and motivation amongst coaches for running the
programme as intended. Evidence for variability in MI skills adherence also suggests the need to build coach competency through development of the Reach training content, to include enhanced teaching on adherence and practical opportunities for observation and feedback.

5.4 RQ3: What factors are perceived by staff to be facilitators and barriers to the implementation of Reach in their practice?

Findings for this research question provide context for outcomes from RQ2 (wide use of an adapted version of Reach), and insight into the context of Reach feasibility. They also provide important insight into SBMI implementation feasibility in the context of facilitation by support staff, previously unexplored in this research area.

5.4.1 Facilitators to Implementation

Previous literature on SBMI identified time and administrative resources as facilitators to SBMI implementation (Pennell et al., 2020; Snape & Atkinson, 2015). New to knowledge was the finding (from coach interviews) that communication with other coaches was an important factor in Reach implementation. Coaches described informal discussions with coach colleagues in their settings, and supervision as part of the Reach training programme, were valuable in supporting their problem solving when implementing the approach. Previous research has identified receiving supervision and feedback as facilitators to implementation (Pennell et al., 2020), as a way of receiving support from ‘experts’ leading training. However, in this study coaches emphasised the value of supervision as a channel for peer support. Evident in coach reports was a motivation to sustain the ‘network’ of coaches that had formed, with online forums (such as email groups or virtual
supervision) suggested as feasible options. From the perspective of training transfer, it appears that (peer) support was an important work environmental factor for retention, generalisation, and maintenance of Reach beyond training days. This also suggests the benefit of having multiple coaches within single settings: for wider implementation of the approach (with broader impact on pupil outcomes), and to build in peer support opportunities (to foster coach confidence and competence).

5.4.2 Barriers to Implementation

Thematic analysis of focus group discussions provided insight into barriers to Reach implementation. Coaches reported not having space in the timetable or Reach intervention sessions timetabled for them, which limited their ability to implement the approach consistently with identified pupils. This was also identified as a factor in Reach being appropriated into existing practice, leading to more of a piecemeal or ‘haphazard’ approach. Previous SBMI implementation studies have highlighted staff facilitator difficulties in accessing time to better develop their MI skills (Svensson et al., 2021) and to plan, prepare and deliver sessions (Pennell et al., 2020; Snape & Atkinson, 2015). This implies systemic challenges specific to the experiences of school staff who train to use MI in their practice, whilst balancing other demands of their roles.

Findings from this study raised further factors that may present as barriers to Reach implementation, which need to be considered by the programme’s developers. Coaches raised how the choice of facilitator (taking care to match coach and pupil) could make a difference to Reach impact. They also identified how habit could impact on their ability to deliver Reach with fidelity, which reiterates observations from the field that learning MI is as much about suppressing ‘usual’
practice as it is adopting new behaviours and skills (Hall et al., 2016; Miller & Mount, 2001). Alongside evidence of Reach non-adherence in coach descriptions of their work (RQ2), this suggests again the need for development of the programme to emphasise suppression of non-adherence behaviours and skills.

This study adds to the research base by indicating systemic barriers to implementation experienced by support staff, owing to their positions in non-teaching roles. Coaches described receiving insufficient support from leaders and managers to attend Reach training, and to deliver the approach afterwards. They also described attitudinal barriers that impacted their pastoral activities more generally. Coaches described that colleagues’ engagement with their activities as low. This meant that coach insights into what might help resolve pupils’ disaffection were not being taken on board by other relevant staff (such as pupils’ subject teachers). Leadership, management, and wider colleagues’ support are considered crucial to effective training transfer and implementation (Blase et al., 2012; Grossman & Salas, 2011). Previous evidence also highlights that interventions for disaffection facilitated by school support staff are most effective when facilitators have wider support from colleagues (Ofsted, 2010). Future iterations of the programme will need to consider ways of ensuring that coaches receive necessary systemic support to implement Reach. This will likely entail engagement of coaches’ workplace line managers, and school leaders. Reach enrolment may then entail a process of ‘contracting’ support that will be available for coaches in their settings. It is important that Reach developers, and other SBMI researchers, account for the additional attitudinal barriers experienced by school support staff, and consider how these can be addressed and mitigated when setting up interventions.
Implementation is thought to be affected by the perceived level of need for the new approach, and readiness for the change implementation involves (Humphrey et al., 2016). Evidence also suggests that implementation of new approaches in schools is dependent on how much staff perceive their leaders as valuing these approaches (Klingner et al., 2003). The need for Reach was established from the EP perspective, but need and readiness was not examined at the school level. This likely impacted feasibility of implementation here, including barriers encountered by coaches. To address this, EPs may use a needs analysis with school leaders and SENCos as a precursor to Reach. This would help schools to reflect on where there may be gaps in their SEMH provision and staff training. Helpfully, findings from this study provide some insight into schools’ perceptions of their settings’ needs, which could be leveraged when promoting Reach. EP interviews highlighted that school stakeholders can view disaffection as ‘challenging behaviour’. It may be helpful to offer Reach to schools as a ‘behaviour change’ programme to manage this issue. With this approach, Reach could be commissioned as a solution to meet multiple needs in schools with myriad benefit, as opposed to being viewed simply as a CPD programme for support staff.

5.4.3 RQ3 Conclusions

In summary, coaches perceived their programme colleagues as a resource that helped develop their confidence and competence to deliver Reach. This suggests the importance of relational as well as practical resources in driving Reach training transfer and implementation. A priority for the future of Reach will be establishing channels to sustain peer communication and supervision, perhaps through online methods. Common to coach experiences of implementation were barriers
associated with their status as support staff. This suggests perhaps that support
staff facilitating SBMI will face additional barriers to implementation compared to
school staff in other roles. Development of systems around Reach enrolment, to
include needs analyses and support contracting, could be key to building school
investment necessary to enhance and sustain Reach implementation.

5.5 RQ4. To what extent and in what ways is Reach considered to be useful
to support staff, including their perceptions of its impact on pupils?

5.5.1 Coach Engagement with Reach
Overall, a high level of coach responsiveness to Reach was evident in the data.
Coaches emphasised the usefulness of the approach for enhancing their own
practice and promoting positive pupil outcomes. This mirrors evidence for school
staff engagement with SBMI elsewhere in the literature (Snape & Atkinson, 2015;
Svensson et al., 2021). Findings from this study contribute to this evidence base by
highlighting specific reasons for staff valuing SBMI. Coaches highlighted aspects of
Reach that developed and improved their pastoral one-to-one work: it offered a
framework to structure practice; and OARS were identified as effective for eliciting
pupil voice and promoting pupil problem-solving. Key to the findings were coach
reflections comparing their practice before and after training. It appeared that taking
part in Reach had prompted coaches to reflect on the effectiveness of their practice,
including how aspects of their ‘usual’ approach may have been unhelpfully directive,
and not consistently age appropriate.

Coaches emphasised relational aspects of Reach that they saw as useful in
supporting positive pupil outcomes. This is significant in the context of MI literature
that suggests both technical (MI proficiency) and relational mechanisms in
promoting positive outcomes from MI (Miller & Rose, 2009). Coaches identified strengths to the approach relevant to SSMMD and Self Determination Theory: pupils felt greater autonomy and agency in one-to-one meetings; they recognised their progress over time; they believed and valued that their coach was listening to them. However, there was evidence elsewhere in coach reports of interactions characterised by inconsistency (rather than structure). The SSMMD suggests adult approaches that are responsive and predictable are most conducive to engagement (and protect against disaffection). This suggests an area of focus for coaches’ ongoing training and development to ensure better outcomes for disaffected young clients: the need to establish structure and consistency in interactions.

5.5.2 Reach as an Intervention Approach

Key to findings were coach reflections on who would most benefit from the Reach approach. Coaches perceived Reach as addressing a perceived need for age appropriate SEMH interventions for Key Stage 4 pupils. Previous SBMI research has suggested that the approach can be used to positive effect with pupils as young as primary age (Cryer & Atkinson, 2015; Henry et al., 2020). However, insights from this study highlight perceptions of developmental and social factors which might limit younger pupils’ capacity to be truly autonomous in the process of identifying and working towards change goals. This suggests that it may be more feasible to implement Reach (in its current form) with genuine adherence to its core principles, and to greater likely positive effect, with older children. Observations here are important given that, unlike previous studies examining Reach with younger children, this study sought the perspectives of feasibility and promise from professionals with extensive everyday experiences of supporting secondary pupils.
(and sometimes their families too). To sustain and maximise the value and impact of Reach, the issue of age-propriety must be considered by its developers. Coach reflections on age-propriety for Reach contrast with EP perceptions of the need for early-intervention approaches to tackle disaffection. The EP view on this issue is substantiated in evidence for disaffection incidence rising through Key Stage 3 and peaking during the Key Stage 3-to-4 transition period (DfE, 2022b; Ross, 2009). This implies that to be of genuine value, and to have preventative impact, Reach will need to be adapted for use with younger secondary pupils.

5.5.3 Evidence of Promise in Addressing SEMH Needs

Coach reports suggested Reach being implemented widely to meet a range of pupil SEMH needs. This apparent heterogeneity of the pupils receiving the approach limits the generalisability of observations of positive impact. However, there was some evidence of promise for Reach to positively impact pupil attendance, pupil behaviour and academic attainment, reflecting findings elsewhere in SBMI research (Enea & Dafinoiu, 2009; Henry et al., 2020). Importantly, in previous studies these effects have been found within interventions facilitated by specialist and non-school-based staff. Findings provide some evidence that the same positive outcomes may be facilitated via support staff activities. However, evidence for these outcomes is reported tentatively, given evidence for effects here is drawn only from staff reports.

5.5.4 RQ4 Conclusions

In summary, Reach coaches were highly engaged with programme theory and associated skills and resources. It appeared that coaches were particularly engaged with Reach as a relational approach, and they reported the programme having positively impacted their practice (to become more child-led and autonomy-
supportive). Findings here also build on the evidence base for the positive impact of SBMI for pupil learning and engagement outcomes (Enea & Dafinoiu, 2009; Henry et al., 2020) and the usefulness of SBMI for eliciting pupil voice (Kittles & Atkinson, 2009). Coach reports suggest that Reach could address a specific need in schools: for age appropriate SEMH interventions for older pupils. Developers may use this information when marketing the programme to schools, emphasising how Reach can offer a something unique within schools’ internal SEMH provision. Towards this end, developers may also consider how adaptations could be made to training content and intervention resources to maximise Reach relevance to Key Stage 3 pupils.

5.6 Implications

5.6.1 Implications for the LA’s EPS and Reach Developers

Overall, this research highlights the value of the Reach as a training programme for support staff. Taking part in the programme caused coaches to reflect on the effectiveness of their practice, and they perceived that Reach improved their approach to one-to-one support. Whilst conclusive evidence on outcomes is not yet available, reports suggest promise for the approach in supporting pupils experiencing disaffection and other SEMH difficulties. However, it was apparent that most coaches appropriated Reach into their usual practice, and did not implement (or perceive) it as a discrete intervention. Reach developers could consider several options for future iterations of the programme. One option would be for developers to repackage the programme to train support staff in helpful communication skills to use with pupils, without the associated intervention. Coaches would gain from the programme a helpful ‘MI toolkit’ to use when working one-to-one with pupils. An
advantage of this option is that it would likely promote broad implementation of Reach, by allowing coaches agency in adapting the tools to suit their needs and everyday activities. Compared to training to use a more time-intensive, structured intervention, a flexible ‘toolkit’ version would also potentially broaden the programme’s appeal to schools, thereby maximising the numbers of staff using Reach. This possible version of Reach might therefore enhance the future feasibility and appeal of the programme to users. However, a concern with using this approach is that, if not used in a structured, consistent manner, the probability of the programme achieving desired outcomes would likely be impacted. This is partly because MI thinking emphasises the need for investment in engaging the client, and building up mutually respectful rapport, before change goals can begin to be explored (Miller & Rollnick, 2012a). Taking a structured, consistent approach is particularly important in the context of pupil disaffection, as research suggests these conditions (in staff-pupil dynamics) are important in protecting against disaffection and promoting engagement (Furrer, Skinner & Pitzer, 2014; Skinner et al., 2008). A further key finding from the current study was that coach practice was not consistently Reach-adherent. Together with the findings on a more piecemeal use of Reach, this introduces further questions around whether Reach, in absence of an associated structured intervention, could produce positive outcomes. This is because both adherence and dosage have been found to be important in promoting SBMI efficacy (Miller & Rose, 2009; Terry et al., 2014a; 2014b). Therefore, whilst a flexible version of Reach may offer broad appeal, this would likely be at the expense of impact on pupil outcomes. This suggests that it will be important to retain Reach as a training and intervention programme, although developers must
carefully consider how to enhance and develop coach practice whilst ensuring the programme is feasible to participate in and implement.

When revising the programme, it will be important for Reach developers to take account for coaches’ tendency to see Reach as a ‘style’ that could be incorporated into their usual approach. If it continues to be used piecemeal, it is less likely to impact meaningfully in cases of disaffection, and it is unlikely to be sustained within school systems. Therefore, it is important that coaches and school stakeholders understand Reach as a standalone intervention, and that time and space are allocated for its planning and delivery. This will be important to address in the development of Reach, for the current and future cohorts. Coaches reported that they had not had time, or received support, to set up and implement Reach. These factors appeared to have partly impacted their ability to implement the programme as intended. The RLEP may consider working with EPs linked to coaches’ settings to support a recontracting process prior to the new school year, involving reiterating Reach as a standalone intervention, and identifying line management support for its delivery. The checklist for implementation (Snape & Atkinson, 2018) could be used to support recontracting, to create awareness of conditions required to run the programme, and create shared accountability for implementation. It is hoped that building support systems around coaches would better ensure support and opportunities to perform, necessary for effective training transfer (Grossman & Salas, 2011). Evidence of promise (as documented in this study in coach reports of impact on pupils) may also be shared with stakeholders to promote schools’ motivation to continually support coaches’ implementation efforts.

It may be that the programme was sufficient to foster coaches’ relational MI skills, but coaches did not develop the technical proficiency also needed to promote
client behaviour change (Miller & Rose, 2009). The RLEP may consider offering the existing cohort ‘top up’ sessions focused on developing adherence. This would address guidance elsewhere that training to competence in MI involves support to suppress habit as much as training to adopt and implement new skills (Miller & Mount, 2001; Hall et al., 2016). The RLEP could set up additional monitoring and feedback processes to support coaches to develop proficiency. One approach to this may be to direct coaches to video or audio record sessions and submit these to the RLEP and supporting EPs for adherence appraisal (for example, using the tools developed for this study found in Appendix K). In SBMI implementation research, training programmes that incorporated this approach (alongside teaching and supervision) have produced significant effects for development of MI adherence (Rochat, 2019; Simon & Ward, 2014). Elsewhere, receiving feedback on recorded sessions has been identified by school staff training in MI as helping them overcome discomfort associated with using MI for the first time (Pennell et al., 2020). This is pertinent to coach reports of Reach feeling ‘unnatural’ to use. Engaging in a monitoring and feedback process may then drive coach competency in refining their technical adherence, whilst also enhancing their confidence and motivation to implement the approach as intended.

The RLEP and other EPs supporting Reach may adapt the existing programme training content and processes for future cohorts. Training content would develop to include processes for practice monitoring and evaluation, through termly cycles of observation and feedback. Use of a fidelity measure (Appendix K) could support here. To account for barriers experienced by the cohort in this study, initial enrolment onto Reach might be replaced by a process of contracting the programme with support staff, their managers and school leaders. A precursor for
this may be an EPS-wide needs analysis with schools, looking at their internal resources for supporting SEMH. This would give opportunity to establish need and readiness for the programme from school stakeholders’ perspectives, which is thought to be key to driving implementation (Humphrey et al., 2016). The checklist for implementation (Snape & Atkinson, 2018) may be used to inform Reach contracting, and ensure facilitators to implementation including planning and delivery time were protected for support staff. Line management arrangements would also be emphasised as important for ensuring understanding of pupils’ needs and supportive strategies would be communicated and generalised beyond one-to-ones. Given coach reports of the benefits of coach colleague support, programme developers may consider a peer support model. This might entail setting a minimum enrolment per setting (two coaches or more). Taking this approach would build in the peer support identified by coaches as facilitating implementation. Whilst EPs cannot direct schools towards building support systems around coaches, they may share the evidence base for training transfer and implementation science (Fixsen & Blase, 2008; Grossman & Salas, 2011; Humphrey et al., 2016) to develop schools’ understanding of conditions required to maximise return on their investment in support staff training.

Additionally, the programme developers may consider ways to adapt resources for age-appropriety. Coaches recognised the potential for Reach to meet a need for SEMH provision for older children. To develop this potential, and to ensure its relevance for younger children too, developers may build age-focused resource packages. Reach was partly resourced through Facilitating Change 2 (Atkinson, 2013). Guidance for this package notes resources had been trialled on secondary age children, but that adaptations may be necessary for younger children and those
with SEN. Programme developers may develop Reach relevance and readiness for implementation by pre-empting the need for adaptations, and creating resource packages bespoke to narrower age brackets (for example, 11-12; 13-14; 15-16 years).

The findings from this research highlight a broader need to raise schools’ awareness of disaffection as an SEMH need. Coach reports suggest that Reach supported the development of staff skills, although the impact of their efforts may be undermined if schools lack conceptual understanding of disaffection (as the difficulty the programme targets). Poor understanding of disaffection as an SEMH need may lead to inappropriate Reach referrals, and persistence of disaffection incidence. EPs may highlight disaffection during planning meetings, and encourage schools to engage in planning around early identification and intervention. These discussions may help establish the need for Reach in schools, from the perspectives of staff (SENCos and leaders) who would have important roles in driving its potential implementation.

5.6.2 Implications for the EP Role in Addressing Pupil Disaffection

There are wider implications from this research regarding the broader role of EPs in supporting schools to address and prevent pupil disaffection. Disaffection appears to have multiple systemic influences within the school context (Wilding, 2019). It is therefore appropriate to take a systemic, rather than within-child, perspective on strategies to address this issue. There is an important role for EPs here, with a key part of this professional role involving facilitation of systemic changes to support children and young people (Wagner, 2000).

A key way EPs might contribute to provide support to schools in addressing disaffection is through developing staff awareness of this as an area of need, rather
than merely ‘challenging behaviour.’ Psychoeducational approaches could be used initially with SEN staff, inclusion staff and leadership to enhance understanding of the characteristics of disaffection, and the implications of this for pupils’ wellbeing and educational achievement. EPs could also support schools with setting up systems for (early) identification of pupil disaffection. Research on best practice in schools for addressing disaffection highlights the use of quantitative and qualitative data to continually monitor pupils’ social, personal, and academic outcomes (Ofsted, 2008a). EPs could support with the facilitation of such systems, including advising schools on setting up and implementing pupil voice activities. EPs may also support here by training staff to use scales used to measure disaffection, such as the Pupil Feelings about School and School Work (PFSSW) Inventory (Entwistle & Kozeki, 1985), or adapting these scales to ensure their accessibility for use by school staff. Where schools have existing interventions in place for pupil disaffection, EPs may contribute by facilitating systems for monitoring the efficacy of these interventions. This could help ensure that schools’ investment of resources in interventions is efficient and strategic. Working in this way might also highlight for schools which existing strategies are less effective, and establish the need for investment in new evidence-based approaches such as Reach.

EPs can also support whole school systems in addressing disaffection through teacher training and policy development. One limitation of approaches like Reach is that they may foster for pupils high quality, warm and autonomy supportive relationships in the context of interventions, but not address unhelpful adult approaches across pupils’ wider school experiences. Where possible, EPs may impact a broader change by facilitating caring and compassionate school cultures. This involves schools embedding practices which promote pupil participation and
voice, which enable staff to get to know their pupils as individuals, and where restorative justice approaches are used to repair the sense of class community when challenges arise (Sauve & Schonert-Reichl, 2019). Models such as the Compassionate Schools Framework (Quinn et al., 2021) could be used by EPs to explore with leaders current practices, and consider how policies could be developed further to embody a more relational whole-school approach. Another way EPs may impact whole-school change is through provision of setting-wide staff training in approaches considered valuable in preventing disaffection such as autonomy-supportive instruction (Reeve et al., 2019) or person-centred thinking (PCT) (Wilding, 2015). Whilst this would entail significant school investment, such an approach would ensure that staff practices conducive to school engagement would be generalised across pupils’ school experiences rather than remaining in intervention silos.

EPs may also contribute in schools by facilitating the activities of support staff working directly with disaffected pupils. Solution-focused approaches can be used by EPs to help staff reflect on cases and consider ways forward (Hanko, 2016). The results from the present research suggests coaches valued and benefited from supervision, partly because sharing experiences with colleagues helped with problem-solving. This highlights that EPs may be able to positively contribute by facilitating work discussion groups for support staff in schools, using approaches such as Solution Circles (Forest and Pearpoint, 1996). Whilst support staff can access EP-led group supervision via programmes like ELSA, research on their deployment implies a broader role for this group supporting pupils pastorally. Offering supervision to support staff outside of set programmes (like ELSA and
Reach) is therefore justified in the context of their diverse contribution to supporting vulnerable pupils, including those experiencing disaffection.

5.7 Strengths and Limitations of the Research

5.7.1 Strengths of the Research

This study makes a key contribution to our understanding of the implementation and use of SBMI, as it provides detailed insight into the experiences of support staff facilitators during the training and implementation of an SBMI programme. Previously, Snape and Atkinson (2015) examined the impact and feasibility of an SBMI programme delivered by staff in pastoral roles. However, facilitators in this case (N=5) were from one single school. This study builds upon findings from the previous study by providing insight into barriers and facilitators experienced by a larger number of staff across different settings.

A further strength of this study is its contribution to a programme developed to meet identified needs in real-world school contexts. The insights from this study will contribute towards the ongoing development of Reach. As such, this study provides insight into what happens when MI programmes transfer to real world settings, and therefore contributes to ‘closing the research-practice gap’ (Killerby & Dunsmuir, 2018) within SBMI literature.

By using detailed qualitative analyses across different interview settings (focus groups, semi-structured individual interviews), and applying TA, this study provides rich information on the use of Reach in schools, across multiple implementation domains (Durlak & Dupre, 2008). The dependability of findings from TA was enhanced by an ongoing process of intercoder credibility checking, which engaged two coding partners. By engaging in processes for reflexivity, the researcher was also able to utilise insights gained as an active member of
implementation process, which contributed to richer analyses (Gough & Madill, 2012).

Where it was not possible to conduct session observations as part of phase 2, tools developed for this may be used by the Reach team to monitor coach fidelity, or in a research context to measure Reach fidelity more systematically. With the inclusion of a ‘script’ for reflective discussion following observation, the tools here are of practical use for EPs facilitating Reach, as well as researchers.

To establish the research context and rationale for this study, comprehensive scoping reviews of literature into SBMI efficacy (for disaffection) and implementation were carried out. To the researcher’s knowledge, there has been no previous review of existing research on SBMI training for and implemented by school staff. As such, the review here is a novel contribution to the research understanding of whether school staff can be trained in MI, and how they implement it in their practice.

5.7.2 Limitations to the Research

There are some limitations to the transferability of this study’s findings. EP perceptions of need for Reach reflected their experiences of the local context. The relatively small coach sample size limits the transferability of findings on Reach implementation, although recruitment was limited and predetermined by the number of staff that enrolled on the Reach training. Additionally, inclusion criteria for semi-structured interviews, and the fact that opt-in recruitment was used for this aspect of the research, meant that findings from phase 3 may represent the views of coaches who were more motivated to train in and use Reach. Capturing experiences of the wider group may have given better insight into barriers encountered when attempting to set up and implement Reach. However, the use of
focus groups (integrated into the programme training sessions) helped maximise the number of coach perspectives gathered.

The confirmability of findings regarding aspects of Reach implementation (fidelity/adaptation, responsiveness, and feasibility) and impact is limited because conclusions were drawn from coach self-reports only, and these are likely to be prone to bias. A direct measure of pupil engagement with the intervention was not used, meaning that findings only provide partial understanding of responsiveness to Reach. For the same reasons, evidence of Reach impact on pupil outcomes cannot be directly inferred. Unfortunately, challenges in recruiting for observation of coaches using Reach meant that it was not possible to triangulate data on coaches’ adherence to Reach in the current study. It is unclear why coaches were not willing or able to agree to participate in observation sessions. However, coach reports of incidental or inconsistent use of Reach would have presented as barriers to identifying opportunities to observe. This points towards video or audio recording of sessions as a more practical way of monitoring and measuring coach fidelity, which Reach developers and future researchers may consider. This is also a very good way to collect demonstrations of good and less good practice. Because coaches mentioned practises inconsistent with MI, and at times opposed to the ethos of MI, there is a clear need for future research to directly examine intervention fidelity.

Coach descriptions of their work implied the approach may not have been used exclusively to address disaffection (and may have been used to support a wider range of SEMH needs). Whilst this evidence produced evidence of promise for Reach in promoting some positive pupil outcomes, it is unclear whether these were pertinent to disaffected groups. Taking a more prescriptive approach and
screening coaches’ pupil selections may have helped to address this issue and this is something that could be strengthened in subsequent iterations of this work.

5.8 Future Research

The results of this study suggest Reach feasibility, and evidence of its promise as an approach to addressing signs of pupil disaffection through one-to-one support. The extent of coach proficiency in delivering Reach is less clear. Evidence here suggests variability in coach adherence to Reach, and significant adaptations being made to the intended intervention. This means that further development of the programme, and further investigation of implementation, is required prior to an efficacy trial. A priority will be for the programme to be amended to incorporate robust systems for developing proficiency, and systems for building wider school accountability for Reach once coaches transfer their training into practice. Once necessary amendments have been made, it may be valuable to conduct a longer-form study that takes a more systematic approach to evaluating implementation fidelity. Observation tools, such as those developed for this study, could be used to support this process. This will provide clearer evidence for whether support staff can be trained to become proficient in MI. This remains a research priority in the national context: of support staff requiring training to ensure their positive impact on pupil outcomes (Blatchford et al., 2009). This is important too in the context of insights from this study that attitudes towards support staff and their work can present as barriers to their contributions in school. It is key that research pursues understanding of how support staff can develop specialisms to enhance their work with pupils, and to impact their status in school systems.
Where initial evidence for coach responsiveness to Reach training has been established, there is less understanding of pupil engagement with the approach. This is important to further establish the feasibility of Reach, for young clients as well as facilitators. Of the studies located in the scoping review, none had explored pupil responsiveness to SBMI delivered by school staff. One study (Snape & Atkinson, 2015) mirrored findings here, as facilitators reported pupil engagement with sessions. However, the lack of pupil reports means current evidence for pupil responsiveness is weak. It is therefore important to establish whether pupils themselves value the approach. This research focus would also be consistent with statutory guidance for supporting CYP with SEN: that pupils have a right to participate in discussions and decisions about their support (DfE, 2015).

Additionally, given the Reach is designed with the ultimate aim of improving student disaffection, research will also be required to examine if implementation of Reach results in significant improvements in disaffection compared to standard practice being provided.

5.9 Conclusion

Outcomes from this research highlight Reach as an approach that has promise in building schools’ capacity to meet pupils’ SEMH needs internally (Ofsted, 2008b; DH & DfE, 2017; Brown, 2018). Findings corroborate existing evidence of promise for SBMI to impact positively on pupils, including those experiencing disaffection. This study makes a novel contribution to the SBMI literature in highlighting perceptions of mechanisms underlying these outcomes: coaches felt that Reach was valuable as a listening approach that activated pupil voice, and they perceived it had developed the relational quality of their one-to-one pupil interactions. Current
Reach training appears sufficient to support initial coach development of relational MI skills, but evidence on coaches’ technical proficiency in using Reach remains unclear. In future work it will be necessary to monitor coaches’ MI adherence, and engage coaches in supervision and feedback processes, to support their competency and confidence to implement Reach. Coaches in this study were engaged with Reach as an approach, but several issues with implementation feasibility were identified. Reach may be developed to include contracting processes that build systemic support around coaches, to promote accountability for adherence, and to ensure learning from sessions (as to what works for pupils) is generalised beyond the coach-pupil partnership. Fundamentally, Reach should be developed and contracted to ensure schools understand it as a standalone intervention. These development processes will better ensure the approach is sustained in school contexts, and that it will meaningfully impact on incidence of disaffection. Future research may use outcome measures, using coach, pupil, and teacher reports, to gain a better understanding of the impact of Reach on pupils presenting with disaffection.
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Appendices

Appendix A. Scoping Review Strategy and Outcomes

Eligibility criteria for aim A.: (1) studies must have delivered motivational interviewing (2) Intervention must have been targeted at school-aged children and young people aged 5-17 years (3) Intervention must have taken place in a school setting (4) Studies must have sampled pupils presenting with indicators relevant to learning disaffection (e.g. attendance and punctuality issues; disruptive classroom behaviour; non-compliance; low effort and/or classroom participation; accumulated behaviour points) (5) Intervention must have examined student acceptance and/or included a measure to examine the impact that MI had on an outcome relevant to characteristics of disaffection (e.g. examined student engagement, motivation, attendance, class participation, classroom behaviour or accumulated behaviour points). Examples of eligible measures of student acceptance or outcome relevant to learning include teacher assessments/reports, student completed questionnaires and scales, interviews and focus groups with teachers/facilitators and/or pupils receiving the intervention.

Eligibility criteria for aim B.: (1) studies must have been focused on training of school-based staff in motivational interviewing and/or the implementation of motivational interviewing by school-based staff (2) training and interventions must have been aimed at compulsory school-aged children and adolescents aged 5-17 years (3) training and implementation must have been focused on addressing outcomes relevant to disaffection (e.g. Increasing student motivation, class participation, reducing truancy etc; training related primarily to social, emotional and mental health outcomes foci non-inclusive) (4) Papers must have examined staff experiences of training and/or implementation (i.e. trainees’ knowledge of MI principles and adherence to principles and activities during practice; perceptions of the acceptability and feasibility of using the MI approach in schools).

Google Scholar was used for initial searches. Key education databases were then searched for peer reviewed articles. Search terms used: “Motivational interview*” AND “school*”

Database results:
ERIC = 15 initial results
British Education Index (EBSCO) = 33
SCOPUS = 372
Total = 420

After removal of 16 duplicates = 404 articles remained and were full-text and abstract screened.

Of those 404 articles, 354 articles were excluded based on being clearly irrelevant to the review aims and therefore ineligible. These included a majority of papers with medical or clinical foci, including substance, alcohol and smoking cessation,
and approaches to body weight management. This resulted in 50 articles remaining for full-text screening. Of these, full screening for eligibility took place. The following papers were excluded appropriate to the search’s aims:

- 1 article was ineligible because reason it was focused on development of impact measurement tools.
- 1 article was ineligible because they sampled young people aged 18 plus.
- 1 article was ineligible because it focused on teacher receiving MI interventions (rather than pupils).
- 1 article was ineligible because it focused on a peer support intervention.
- 4 articles were ineligible because they focused on SBMI applied with parents rather than pupils.
- 12 articles were ineligible because they explored SBMI efficacy but were not focused on disaffected groups.
- 5 articles were ineligible because they explored training and implementation of SBMI, but not by school-based staff.
- 9 articles were deemed ineligible for inclusion in the systematic search as they had a theoretical / conceptual – rather than research – focus. These studies were saved by the researcher to inform contextual information gathering.

The scoping review resulted in 16 eligible articles remaining from electronic literature searches that were included in the review:

- 10 articles that explored the efficacy of MI approaches in addressing (indicators of) pupil disaffection (review aim A outcomes)
- 5 articles that explored the training in and/or implementation of motivational interviewing by school-based staff (review aim B outcomes)
- 1 article that examined the efficacy of MI in addressing (indicators of) pupil disaffection AND the training in and/or implementation of motivational interviewing by school-based staff (review aims A&B outcomes)
## Appendix B. Summary of Papers Located for Scoping Review Aim A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author / Year / Country</th>
<th>Sample</th>
<th>Research Design</th>
<th>Intervention</th>
<th>Facilitator</th>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Atkinson &amp; Woods, 2003 UK</td>
<td>1 female pupil aged 14 identified as disaffected by attendance, HMK and general ‘apathy’ towards school, classroom behaviour</td>
<td>Case study</td>
<td>- 5 x 60min weekly MI sessions</td>
<td>Trainee EP</td>
<td>-Myself as a Learner scale (MALS) (Burden, 1998) -Pupils Feelings about School and School Work (PFSSW) Inventory (Entwistle &amp; Kozeki, 1985) -School reports -Teacher evaluation form</td>
<td>* Teacher reports: improved attendance and punctuality; positive changes to pupil’s attitude towards school, academic confidence, and general self-confidence * Self reports (MALS and PFSSW): improvement in academic self-perception; increased ratings of ‘warmth’ and ‘interest’</td>
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<td>Atkinson &amp; Amesu, 2007 UK</td>
<td>1 male pupil aged 12 identified by school as having behavioural and attendance issues</td>
<td>Case study</td>
<td>- Number of sessions not given - Sessions combined MI and Solution Focused Brief Therapy approaches</td>
<td>EP</td>
<td>-Student feedback -Attendance data -Behaviour points -Self report - scaling</td>
<td>*Attendance increases (from 40% pre intervention to almost 100%) *Self-reports: improved behaviour in class and at home; improved sense of competence * Behaviour points increase (attributed to increased attendance)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Enea &amp; Dafinoiu, 2009 Romania</td>
<td>N = 38 adolescents (ages 16-17 years) attending one High School. Participants had self-referred to the school counsellor seeking higher grades in ‘class behaviour’</td>
<td>Non-randomised pilot study</td>
<td>- Experimental group (N = 19) receive group counselling (N = 4 groups) strategies) - 8 x 60min sessions comprising MI, solution focused approaches and extrinsic motivation simulation (i.e., reinforcement)</td>
<td>School counsellor</td>
<td>-Attendance / truancy data -Focus group (on factors influencing truancy, rather than the counselling)</td>
<td>*61% reduction in truancy (versus no difference in the control group)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kittles &amp; Atkinson, 2009</td>
<td>N = 3 pupils (aged 13-15 years) from two schools. Pupils</td>
<td>Case study</td>
<td>- 1 x 60minute session (individual) with</td>
<td>Trainee EP</td>
<td>-Semi-structured interviews immediately following session</td>
<td>*Two participants evaluate the session positively</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country</td>
<td>Study Design</td>
<td>Number of Participants</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Session Intensity</td>
<td>Session Content</td>
<td>Interview</td>
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<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>Case study</td>
<td>1 male pupil aged 9</td>
<td>The child is identified by school SENCO and class teacher as disengaged from classwork, having low self-esteem and motivation.</td>
<td>4 x weekly sessions</td>
<td>MI, Menu of Strategies (Rollnick et al., 1992)</td>
<td>Interview with teacher post intervention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>Mixed methods</td>
<td>N = 5 pupils (aged from 11-16 years)</td>
<td>Students identified as presenting with school related disaffection.</td>
<td>5 x weekly sessions</td>
<td>MI, Facilitating Change 2 (Atkinson, 2013)</td>
<td>PFSSW inventory pre and post intervention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>Case study</td>
<td>1 female pupil aged 12-13 years. Teachers reported drop in grades and effort/enthusiasm for learning. Pupil reports feelings that parent and teachers perceive her as ‘dumb’ and being unfairly treated in school.</td>
<td></td>
<td>6 x weekly sessions</td>
<td>MI, TTM (Prochaska et al., 2007)</td>
<td>Teacher and student reports (measures/method unclear)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>Multiple case study</td>
<td>N = 3 pupils (aged 11-13 years) identified by SENCOs as</td>
<td></td>
<td>5-6 x weekly sessions of MI based on Atkinson (2013)</td>
<td>EP</td>
<td>Pupil self-reports of school-based motivation (part A of the PFSSW) conducted pre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country</td>
<td>Participants</td>
<td>Problems</td>
<td>Intervention</td>
<td>Outcomes</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>disaffected (indicators used: non-compliance, disruptive behaviour, punctuality and attendance issues, non-completion of homework, low interest shown in lessons)</td>
<td>'Facilitating Change 2'</td>
<td>and post intervention and at 3 month follow up -Pupil interviews (post intervention and at 3 month follow up) -EP interviews</td>
<td>*Pupil PFSSW outcomes: no positive changes in students' school-based motivation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>N = 15 pupils (aged 10-12 years) enrolled in a 'Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP). Students had been placed in the setting because of the following issues: noncompliance, persistent misbehaviour, bullying and fighting, substance abuse, assault.</td>
<td>Multiple case study – mixed methods</td>
<td>MI based Making Positive Changes Counselling (MPCC) programme - 6 x 45-50min (consecutive days) individual sessions where a trained counsellor meets with a student to address specifically defined problematic classroom behaviour</td>
<td>The first researcher (counsellor) - Teacher ratings of classroom behaviour - Student ratings of readiness to change (scaling exercises) - Self-report indicators of change talk (short form interviews)</td>
<td>*Teacher ratings: N = 12 students showed some improvements in classroom behaviour; N = 7 students demonstrated a moderate-large improvement in classroom behaviour *Student ratings and self-reports: greater change talk observed in the students who showed moderate-large behaviour improvement (N =7) versus their peers who demonstrated little or no behaviour change.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>N = 39 pupils from a disciplinary alternative school. Pupils had been placed in the setting due to problematic behaviour patterns/identified as at risk of school failure</td>
<td>Randomised control trial - Pupils randomly assigned to treatment or control conditions following matching by behavioural</td>
<td>Motivational Interviewing with At-Risk Students (MARS) Mentoring Program - 30 minute sessions delivered weekly over 10-12 weeks</td>
<td>University graduate students completing training programs in educational school and counselling psychology, social work; - The Usage Rating Profile–Intervention Revised (URP-IR; Chafouleas et al., 2011) - The Behaviour Assessment System for Children–Third Edition (BASC-3; Reynolds &amp; Kamphaus, 2015) - Disciplinary data - Student grades</td>
<td>*MARS group show significantly reduced self-reported school problems, emotional symptoms, and internalising behaviours *Significantly reduced teacher reports of school problems, externalising behaviours, and behavioural symptoms within MARS group *Improved Maths grades amongst treatment group compared to control *Reduced disciplinary incidents amongst treatment group compared to control</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Study</td>
<td>Population</td>
<td>Intervention</td>
<td>Setting</td>
<td>Outcomes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ratanavivan &amp; Ricard, 2020 USA</td>
<td>MARS treatment group N = 21 (6 elementary school age; 15 secondary school age); waitlist control N = 18 and academic competence and special education</td>
<td>Case study - MI based Making Positive Changes Counselling (MPCC) programme - 6 x 50min (consecutive days) individual sessions</td>
<td>The first researcher (counsellor) - Scaling (pupil reports on scale 1-10) in sessions 1 and 6</td>
<td>*Pupil reported confidence in his ability to make changes increases (rating change from 5 to 8) *No change in pupil reported perceptions of importance of making a change (rating 9)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terry et al., 2021 USA</td>
<td>N = 43 students from one middle school (aged 11-14). Sampling based on poor academic performance and/or disruptive behaviour. Random assignment of pupils to 'Footprints' condition (N = 22) and treatment-as-usual waitlist group (N = 21).</td>
<td>Randomised Control Trial - The 'Footprints' programme - 8 sessions based on MI and CBT - Sessions 1 &amp; 2 are individual, and MI based. Remaining sessions are group-based CBT sessions</td>
<td>Doctoral students - Programme attendance - Student participation ratings - Program Experiences and Satisfaction Questionnaire (PESQ) (Bartels et al. 2013) - Academic grades - Perceived School Experience Scale (PSES) (Anderson-Butcher et al. 2012) - Children's Perceived Self-Efficacy (CPSE) (Pastorelli et al. 2001) - Pediatric Symptom Checklist (PSC) - Outcome Rating Scale (ORS)</td>
<td>*Significant improvement in Footprint condition group's Maths grades, self-efficacy, academic motivation, and self-reports of behavioural and emotional functioning *Positive pupil reports of therapeutic alliance</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
Appendix C. Programmes of SBMI used in studies located in Scoping Review A

‘Facilitating Change 2’ (Atkinson, 2013) appears in three studies located (Cryer & Atkinson, 2015; Snape & Atkinson, 2015; Snape & Atkinson, 2017). This resource package is based on the Menu of Strategies (Rollnick et al., 1992), but is adapted for use within educational settings, and comprises a set of activity materials that can be used to build bespoke interventions according to pupil needs. Another study located explored the efficacy of ‘Footprints’, an eight-session programme comprising MI and CBT techniques. Here, two sessions of MI were used to enhance pupil engagement with a subsequent course of six Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) sessions focused on emotional and behavioural change. The two sessions of MI condense the four processes of MI (engaging, focusing, evoking and planning) within the ‘Student Check Up’ format, which showed significant effects for pupil self-efficacy and class participation in a previous randomised control trial (Strait et al., 2017). A final defined protocol identified in located studies was the Motivational Interviewing with At-Risk Students (MARS) intervention (Henry et al., 2020). This comprised four modules (with accompanying resources) devised to be delivered over the course of up to 12 weeks: (a) Getting to Know You, (b) Honest and Positive Reflections, (c) Goal Setting, and (d) Reflection and Goal Reformation. The MARS incorporates behavioural modification methods (Skinner, 1991) alongside MI in the latter stages of the programme, which the authors argue as compatible as ways of ensuring plans for change are sustained.

Of the remaining studies located in the review, two further studies combined therapeutic approaches, both using Solution Focused approaches alongside MI (Atkinson & Amesu, 2007; Enea & Dafinoiu, 2009). Where approaches are used in combination, it may be difficult to disentangle aspects that yielded positive outcomes by experimental means alone. For example, for Henry and colleagues’ study, an RCT was adopted to evaluate whether an MI informed mentoring program could improve pupils’ grades and social, emotional and behavioural outcomes. The lack of a qualitative measure for gathering pupil views (perhaps through open-ended survey questions, interviews or focus groups) means that it is not possible to extrapolate the specific therapeutic approaches or mechanisms (including mentor/mentee relationship) that influenced the study’s positive (improved Maths grades and teacher/pupil reported internalising and externalising behaviours) and null (number of suspensions) outcomes.
## Appendix D. Summary of Papers Located for Scoping Review Aim B

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author / Year</th>
<th>Sample</th>
<th>Research design</th>
<th>Implementation dimensions explored</th>
<th>Training received</th>
<th>Intervention</th>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Simon &amp; Ward (2014)</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>Pilot study</td>
<td>Fidelity (application of MI adherent skills and behaviours)</td>
<td>16 hours of training. Training content: spirit and principles of MI, OARS, eliciting change talk Structure: lectures, role play and videos (including recordings of previously recorded role plays and academic advising sessions)</td>
<td>2 x 60 minute booster sessions, 5 x 120 minute weekly group supervisions. Total training programme period: 5 months</td>
<td>Academic advice sessions with students (number of students not given)</td>
<td>MI Knowledge and Attitudes Test (MIKAT – Leffingwell, 2006) – Video Assessment of Simulated Encounters- Revised - VASE-R, Rosengren, Hartzler, Baer, Wells, &amp; Dunn, 2008 – participants responding to fictional vignettes. - Motivational Interviewing Treatment Integrity Manual (MITI) coding system (Moyers, Martin, Manuel, Miller, &amp; Ernst, 2010) – applied to videos of participants in role plays and in one session recorded with a pupil. - The Change Questionnaire Version 1.2. (Miller, Moyers, &amp; Amrhein, 2005) - Data collected from measures at five time points over the five month programme period. *Participants maintain high motivation to use MI * Significant and large effect found for observed use of MI-adherent behaviours and skills using tests pre and post-supervision participation * A dip in proficiency noted from VASE-R data at time point 3 (2 months after the two day training and following the first booster session); proficiency in specific skills noted: use of reflections, responding to resistance, developing discrepancy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheftel et al (2014)</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>One-group, pre-post-test research design</td>
<td>Fidelity (application of MI adherent skills and behaviours)</td>
<td>8 hours of training in MI and the MEGI intervention led by the first author (a member of MINT – Motivational Interviewing – Motivational Enhancement Group Intervention (MEGI) comprising 10 x 60-minute group sessions</td>
<td>2 x observations for fidelity (using a coding protocol developed for this study: the MEGI Fidelity Observation Tool – MFOT) at two different time points during intervention period (two weeks apart). MFOT adapted from the MITI 3.1.1 (Moyers et al., 2010)</td>
<td>84% of the time</td>
<td>*Observation data: interventionists’ talk was MI-adherent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study</td>
<td>Country</td>
<td>Participants</td>
<td>Methodology</td>
<td>Training Content</td>
<td>Training Structure</td>
<td>Data Collection</td>
<td>Findings</td>
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<tr>
<td>Snape &amp; Atkinson (2015)</td>
<td>UK</td>
<td>N = 5 staff members from one school. Roles included: inclusion manager, assistant SEN coordinator, attendance officer, teaching assistant specialising in Autism Spectrum Conditions and SEMH needs.</td>
<td>Mixed methods</td>
<td>1 x 90-minute training Content focuses on the Spirit of MI (Miller &amp; Rollnick, 2992) and introduction of ‘Facilitating Change 2’ (Atkinson, 2013) intervention resource.</td>
<td>Five one-to-one sessions using ‘Facilitating Change 2’ (Atkinson, 2013)</td>
<td>Post-intervention staff focus group</td>
<td>Participants report the MI approach as being enjoyable and engaging for pupils, effective in promoting pupil behaviour change, and supportive of pupil-staff interactions. Facilitators to implementation identified: positive views of training; resources perceived as accessible. Barriers to implementation identified: lack of preparation time and issues with room availability.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Rochat (2019) | Switzerland | N = 8 school-based career counsellors (from eight different schools) | Quasi-experimental design | -16 hours MI training delivered over two workshops, followed by a one-to-one supervision by the trainer (a member of MINT – Motivational Interviewing) | Non-manualised interviews | -Coding of counsellor and client talk in audio-recorded interviews using the Motivational Interviewing Skills Code 2.1 (Miller et al., 2008). Comparison of coded interviews conducted pre and post staff training. | *Comparing coded interviews pre training (N = 4 per participant) to interviews post training (N = 4 per participant) Percentage of MI adherent behaviours changed significantly and positively pre to post training. Significant decreases in MI-
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Design</th>
<th>Setting</th>
<th>Intervention</th>
<th>Data Collection</th>
<th>Themes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pennell et al (2020)</td>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>N = 10 school staff from six secondary schools. Roles included school psychologists (N = 3); deputy headteachers (N = 2); classroom teachers (N = 2); chaplains (N = 2); student services staff (N = 1)</td>
<td>Qualitative design</td>
<td>Facilitator responsiveness and intervention feasibility</td>
<td>Previous training in MI including opportunities for observation and supervision. Content and frequency not given.</td>
<td>Use in everyday practice (not intervention based)</td>
<td>Facilitators to implementation identified: previous experience of counselling, receipt of admin support in school, practical components of training (observed sessions) Barriers to implementation identified: time pressure and systemic limitations, gaining parental consent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Svensson et al (2021)</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>N = 13 subject teachers (of pupils aged 10-15 years) from five schools</td>
<td>Qualitative design</td>
<td>Facilitator responsiveness and intervention feasibility</td>
<td>Four-day intensive training program delivered by a MINT practitioner (content and structure of training programme not given)</td>
<td>Use in everyday practice (not intervention based)</td>
<td>Participants perceive MI as effective in improving pupil motivation and report using it as a conflict management approach. OARS reported as useful. Barriers to implementation identified: lack of time (to</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
learn MI) and the need for ongoing training
## Appendix E. Reach Training Attendance Figures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coach</th>
<th>Training Day 1</th>
<th>Reflection Morning 1</th>
<th>Training Day 2</th>
<th>Reflection Morning 2</th>
<th>Total Attendance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RC1</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>100%</td>
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<tr>
<td>RC2</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>75%</td>
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<tr>
<td>RC3</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>100%</td>
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<tr>
<td>RC4</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<td>75%</td>
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<td>RC5</td>
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<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>50%</td>
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<td>RC6</td>
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<td>RC7</td>
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<td>RC8</td>
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<td>RC9</td>
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<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>RC10</td>
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<td>RC11</td>
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<tr>
<td>RC12</td>
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<tr>
<td>RC13</td>
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<td>RC14</td>
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<td>RC15</td>
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<tr>
<td>RC16</td>
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<td>100%</td>
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<tr>
<td>RC17</td>
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<td>/</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>75%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Attendance</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
<td><strong>82%</strong></td>
<td><strong>76%</strong></td>
<td><strong>65%</strong></td>
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Appendix F. Description of Reach using the TIDieR

1. Brief name
   Reach Coaching Programme

2. Why: Rationale, theory and/or goal of essential elements of the intervention
   This is a training and intervention programme, devised for school staff whose responsibilities include one-to-one pastoral support for pupils. The training element of the programme involves training participating staff in Motivational Interviewing approaches. The intervention element follows training: staff set up and implement a Reach intervention with a pupil.

3. Who: Recipients of the intervention
   Training recipients: school staff who have experience working one-to-one with pupils.

   Intervention recipients: Secondary age pupils identified by their schools as showing signs of disaffection (including accumulated behaviour points, behavioural non-compliance, low punctuality, low classroom engagement characterised by passivity or off-task behaviours, attendance issues).

4. What: Physical or informational materials used in the intervention
   Training day content includes presentations, role play activities, hard copy, and multimedia learning resources. Training content is informed by Facilitating Change 2 (Atkinson, 2013).

   School staff are given Facilitating Change 2 resources to support their intervention planning.

5. What: Procedures, activities and/or processes used in the intervention
   Training involves the facilitating EP sharing theory and practical guidance on Motivational Interviewing. Participating staff engage in discussion and role play exercises to develop their understanding and skills.

   School staff use Motivational Interviewing skills and strategies to guide talk in one-to-one sessions with pupils.

6. Who: Intervention providers/implementers
   Reach training for staff is provided by EPs.

   The Reach intervention is run in schools by school staff.

7. How: Mode of delivery
   Reach training takes place in person.

   School staff deliver Reach intervention sessions one-to-one with pupils, in person.

8. Where: Location of the intervention
   Reach training location: a local community space.

   Reach intervention location: ideally, intervention sessions should take place in the same place in school, weekly. The space should ensure pupil privacy (i.e., not in a space where other pupils or adults are, or might be, present).

9. When and how much: Duration and dosage of the intervention
   Staff receive two full days of training, and two half days of supervision.

   Staff should deliver 6-8 weekly sessions with pupils. These sessions might last between 30-60mins.

10. Tailoring: Adaptation of the intervention
    All staff are expected to attend two full days training and two half days supervision.

    The intervention itself is not manualised. Staff are encouraged to adapt resources shared with them during training, appropriate to their pupil’s needs.

11. How well (planned): Strategies to maximise effective implementation
    Supervision is incorporated in the training programme. Staff are expected to attend sessions to reflect on their experiences, and to engage in reflective discussion about how implementation can be supported and sustained.

12. How well (actual): Evidence of implementation variability*

   *Included once an intervention has actually been piloted or trialled and implementation has been documented.
Can training in Motivational Interviewing approaches help support staff to reduce pupil disaffection? An evaluation of a Knowledge Exchange Programme.

Participant Consent Form

If you are happy to participate in this study, please complete this consent form by ticking each item, as appropriate, and return to the research team via the contact details at the foot of the page.

1) I confirm that I have read and understood this information sheet, and have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions, and have had these questions adequately answered. □

2) I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason. □

3) I know that I can refuse to answer any or all of the questions and that I can withdraw from the interview at any point. □

4) I agree for the interviews to be recorded, and that recordings will be kept secure and destroyed at the end of the project. I know that all data will be kept under the terms of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). □

5) I agree that small direct quotes may be used in reports (these will be anonymised). □

6) I understand that in exceptional circumstances anonymity and confidentiality would have to be broken, for example, if it was felt that practice was putting children at risk, or there were concerns regarding professional misconduct. In these circumstances advice would be sought from a senior manager from another local authority who will advise us as to the appropriate course of action and as to whether we need to inform the authority of what you have told us. □

Name: ________________________________________________________________

Signature: __________________________Date: __________________________

Name of researcher: Fiona Conway

Signature: __________________________Date: __________________________

Researcher contact details: Fiona Conway
Information sheet for Educational Psychologists

My name is Fiona Conway, and I am inviting you to take part in my research project, ‘Can training in Motivational Interviewing approaches help support staff to reduce pupil disaffection? An evaluation of a Knowledge Exchange Programme.’

I am a Trainee Educational Psychologist currently in my second year on the Doctorate in Educational, Child and Adolescent Psychology (CEAP) programme at the Institute of Education (IOE).

This information sheet will try and answer any questions you might have about the project, but please don’t hesitate to contact me if there is anything else you would like to know.

Who is carrying out the research?
Main Researcher: Fiona Conway

Why are we doing this research?
‘Pupil disaffection’ describes children and young people who hold a set of negative attitudes, beliefs and behaviours relating to education and school. The issue of pupil disaffection draws much attention amongst educators and policy makers. It is associated with negative consequences spanning school years (lower educational attainment, exclusion) and into adulthood (poorer employment outcomes and risk of criminal activity). Rates of permanent exclusion, as a visible result of disaffection, have remained stable in recent years, implying that current initiatives aiming to reduce it are not sufficient to impact significant positive change in this area. Recent evidence also suggests the adverse effects of the covid-19
pandemic on pupil engagement and motivation – indicating that this is an area where recovery support may be helpful.

There is evidence to suggest that the MI approach can be effective in tackling disaffection in school pupils. Previous research also indicates that school staff can be trained in MI, and that this approach can be helpful to those using it in educational settings.

context to the programme from the EPS perspective: how might it address an identified need in the Local Authority, and what factors do EPs think might help promote its success and sustained application in schools? This will serve as an initial phase to the research: later

What will happen if I choose to take part?

Interviews will be conducted via UCL MS Teams and will last approximately 30-45mins. You will receive a meeting invitation via email. Participants may choose whether to be recorded both on video and audio, or audio only. You will only be required to meet once with the researcher for a single interview session. During interview, you will be asked a series of open-ended questions on the research focus area. Some exemplar questions follow:

- What are your hopes for the programme and what it might achieve?
- How will you know it has been successful (what would you hope to see)?

Will anyone know I have been involved?

No, not at all and your information will be stored confidentially, and names will be replaced by pseudonyms. The identity the Local Authority will also not be recorded during transcription and write-up to ensure anonymity.

Could there be problems for me if I take part?

Interviews will aim to capture your professional perspective and identifying personal information will not be sought by the researcher. You can decline to answer questions or to opt out of the interview at any time.

What will happen to the results of the research?

Video and/or audio files will be destroyed as soon as they have been transcribed by the researcher, and you will be pseudonymised in transcription and write-up. Pseudonymised transcripts will be shared with one other member of the EarlyDay cohort during the inter-coder reliability process. The pseudonymised transcripts may also be shared with the researcher’s IOE supervisor during data analysis. During data collection and transcription, audio files and transcripts will be saved via UCL Connect on a password-protected laptop.
A short summary of research findings will be shared with the Local Authority participating in the study. Results of the research and pseudonymised transcripts will be held within the University for a period of 10 years, complying with UCL data protocol.

Do I have to take part?
It is entirely up to you whether you choose to take part. If you choose not to take part, there will be no repercussions for you or the researcher. I hope that if you do choose to be involved then you will find it a valuable experience.

Contact for further information
If you have any further questions before you decide whether to take part, you can reach me at [redacted].

This project has been reviewed and approved by the UCL IOE Research Ethics Committee.

Thank you very much for taking the time to read this information sheet.

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 data.protection@ucl.ac.uk

This ‘local’ privacy notice sets out the information that applies to this particular study. Further information on how UCL uses participant information from research studies can be found in our ‘general’ privacy notice for participants in research studies 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 will be used to process any personal data is: ‘Public task’ for personal data.

Your personal data will be processed so long as it is required for the research project. If we are able to anonymise or pseudonymise the personal data you provide we 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 contact us about your rights, please contact UCL in the first instance at dataprotection@ucl.ac.uk.
Can training in Motivational Interviewing approaches help support staff to reduce pupil disaffection? An evaluation of a Knowledge Exchange Programme.

Participant Consent Form

If you are happy to participate in this study, please complete this consent form by ticking each item, as appropriate, and return to the research team via the contact details at the foot of the page. If you would only like to participate in Phase 1 of this research (focus groups), please tick boxes 1-6. If you consent to be contacted to participate in an online interview for Phase 2, please continue and tick boxes 7-8.

1) I confirm that I have read and understood this information sheet, and have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions, and have had these questions adequately answered. □

2) I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason. □

3) I know that I can refuse to answer any or all of the questions and that I can withdraw from the group discussions and interviews at any point. □

4) I agree for the group discussions and interviews to be recorded, and that recordings will be kept secure and destroyed at the end of the project. I know that all data will be kept under the terms of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). □

5) I agree that small direct quotes may be used in reports (these will be anonymised). □

6) I understand that in exceptional circumstances anonymity and confidentiality would have to be broken, for example, if it was felt that practice was putting children at risk, or there were concerns regarding professional misconduct. In these circumstances advice would be sought from a senior manager from another local authority who will advise us as to the appropriate course of action and as to whether we need to inform the authority of what you have told us. □

7) I consent to be contacted with a view to arranging an individual follow up interview via Microsoft Teams. □

If so, please provide your preferred email address here: ________________________________

Researcher contact details: Fiona Conway
8) I understand that I am consenting to be contacted about arranging an interview but that I can withdraw my consent at any time. ☐

Name:  

Signature: .......................................................... Date: ........................................

Name of researcher: Fiona Conway

Signature: .......................................................... Date: ........................................
Can training in Motivational Interviewing approaches help support staff to reduce pupil disaffection? An evaluation of a Knowledge Exchange Programme.

June 2022 – November 2022

Information sheet for school support staff

My name is Fiona Conway, and I am inviting you to take part in my research project, ‘Can training in Motivational Interviewing approaches help support staff to reduce pupil disaffection? An evaluation of a Knowledge Exchange Programme.’

I am a Trainee Educational Psychologist currently in my second year on the Doctorate in Educational, Child and Adolescent Psychology (D(Ed)Psy) programme at the Institute of Education (IOE).

I am exploring whether training in Motivational Interviewing (MI), an approach to counselling, can benefit school staff in supporting disaffected pupils. I am interested in exploring staff experiences of training in MI, and how staff experience using it in their work with pupils. I very much hope that you would like to take part. This information sheet will try and answer any questions you might have about the project, but please don’t hesitate to contact me if there is anything else you would like to know.

Who is carrying out the research?
Main Researcher: Fiona Conway

Why are we doing this research?
‘Pupil disaffection’ describes children and young people who hold a set of negative attitudes, beliefs and behaviours relating to education and school. The issue of pupil disaffection draws much attention amongst educators and policy makers. It is associated with negative consequences spanning school years (lower educational attainment, exclusion) and into adulthood (poorer employment outcomes and risk of criminal activity). Rates of permanent exclusion, as a visible result of disaffection, have remained stable in recent years, implying that current initiatives aiming to reduce it are not sufficient to impact significant positive change in this area. Recent evidence also suggests the adverse effects of the covid-19 pandemic on pupil engagement and motivation – indicating that this is an area where recovery support may be helpful.

Why am I being invited to take part?
There is evidence to suggest that the MI approach can be effective in tackling disaffection in school pupils. Previous research also indicates that school staff can be trained in MI, and that this approach can be helpful to those using it in educational settings. This study will involve focus groups and interviews during and following your MI coaching programme. I aim to identify useful information on the contexts and conditions under which school-based MI interventions work best. The outcomes of this study will contribute towards ongoing development of school staff training programmes devised by the Education and Professional Standards Service (EPS).

What will happen if I choose to take part?
The MI coaching Programme consists of training, supervision, and discussion groups – and is structured to allow you time to begin to apply MI strategies in your practice.

You will take part in focus group discussions during two sessions of your programme (Phase 1). Each focus group will consist of 4-6 participants: you will be asked to discuss various issues relating to the programme including your reflections on pupil disaffection in your school settings, your thoughts about MI as an approach, how you think you could apply MI in practice, and how your pupils respond to MI strategies. Discussions will be led by the research team. There are no right or wrong answers in focus group discussions – the research interest is into your opinions and experiences. Focus group discussions will be audio recorded. Each focus group will last no more than 45 minutes.

You will also be asked take part in a one-to-one interview following your participation in the MI coaching Programme (Phase 2). Questions will explore some of the themes raised in focus group discussions in more detail. Interviews will be conducted via UCL MI Teams and will last approximately 30-45mins. You will receive a meeting invitation via email. Participants may choose whether to be recorded on video and audio, or audio only. You will only be required to meet once with the researcher for a single interview session. During interview, you will be asked a series of questions on the research focus area. Some exemplar questions follow:
- Which aspects of the programme did you find most useful?
- How could the programme be developed further?

Will anyone know I have been involved?
No, not at all and your information will be stored confidentially, and names will be replaced by pseudonyms. The identity of the school and Local Authority will also not be recorded during transcription and write-up to ensure anonymity.

Could there be problems for me if I take part?

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Interview and focus group questions will aim to capture your professional perspective and identifying personal information will not be sought by the researcher. You can decline to answer questions or to opt out of the focus group or interview at any time.

What will happen to the results of the research?
Video and/or audio files will be destroyed as soon as they have been transcribed by the researcher, and you will be pseudonymised in transcription and write-up. Pseudonymised transcripts will be shared with one other member of the DEEclay cohort during the inter-coder reliability process. The pseudonymised transcripts may also be shared with the researcher’s IOE supervisor during data analysis. During data collection and transcription, audio files and transcripts will be saved via UCL Creative, on a password-protected laptop.

A short summary of research findings will be shared with the Local Authority participating in the study. Results of the research and pseudonymised transcripts will be held within the University for a period of 10 years, complying with UCL data protocol.

Do I have to take part?
It is entirely up to you whether you choose to take part. If you choose not to take part, there will be no repercussions for you or the researcher. I hope that if you do choose to be involved then you will find it a valuable experience.

Contact for further information
If you have any further questions before you decide whether to take part, you can reach me at [contact details removed]

If you would like to be involved, please complete the following consent form and return to [contact details removed] by Wednesday 29th June 2022.

This project has been reviewed and approved by the UCL IOE Research Ethics Committee.

Thank you very much for taking the time to read this information sheet.
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 data-protection@ucl.ac.uk

This ‘local’ privacy notice sets out the information that applies to this particular study. Further information on how UCL uses participant information from research studies can be found in our ‘general’ privacy notice for participants in research studies [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 will be used to process any personal data is: ‘Public task’ for personal data. We will be collecting personal data such as: ‘What is your role in your school?’

Your personal data will be processed so long as it is required for the research project. If we are able to anonymise or pseudonymise the personal data you provide we 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 contact us about your rights, please contact UCL in the first instance at dataprotection@ucl.ac.uk
Dear Headteacher,

I am Fiona Conway, a trainee Educational Psychologist studying for my professional doctorate at the Institute of Education at UCL. I am currently completing research for my doctoral thesis on the implementation of [Redacted], a training programme for school staff facilitated by the Educational Psychology Service at [Redacted] (please see the attached leaflet).

Some of your staff began the [Redacted], which involves training in Motivational Interviewing approaches, in June 2022. This term, [Redacted] have started to use the approach in their practice in one-to-one work with pupils. [Redacted] are targeted at pupils who have been identified as finding school challenging: through one-to-one sessions, staff will support these pupils to identify and plan towards positive changes. To identify ways of improving this service in schools, I am conducting research with [Redacted] to understand how their skills are developing and how they are using their skills in practice and how this training can be used to benefit pupils in schools. This next phase will involve undertaking some observations of [Redacted] using the skills in their one-to-one meetings with children.

I would be really grateful if your school would consider taking part in this aspect of my research. If you agree, the next steps will involve gaining informed consent from all parties involved, and agreeing appropriate opportunities to observe sessions with [Redacted]:

- Step 1: Approaching [Redacted] individually to gain consent to observe a session where they are supporting a pupil one-to-one.
- Step 2: Through participating [Redacted], approaching parents of pupils receiving [Redacted] gain informed consent for their child to be observed during the sessions.
- Step 3: Through [Redacted], approach the pupils to gain their informed consent for me to observe a one-to-one session.
- Step 4: Agreeing with participating [Redacted] an appropriate time/date to come into school to observe them in a one-to-one session.
- Step 5: Post-observation, [Redacted] will engage in a reflective feedback session with me focused on their application of Motivational Interviewing skills.

Also attached with this letter is an information sheet, which provides some more detail about my research, and what observations will involve for participating [Redacted]. If you have any questions, please get in touch.

Kind regards,

Fiona Conway
Trainee Educational Psychologist
How can Motivational Interviewing be implemented in schools to support pupils experiencing challenges with learning engagement? Exploring school staff experiences of facilitators and barriers.

**School Staff Consent Form**

If you are happy to participate in this study, please complete this consent form by ticking each item, as appropriate, and return to the research team via the contact details at the foot of the page.

1) I confirm that I have read and understood this information sheet, and have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions, and have had these questions adequately answered.

2) I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason.

3) I know that I can withdraw from observation and/or reflective discussion at any point.

4) I agree for the reflective discussion to be recorded, and that recordings will be kept secure and destroyed at the end of the project. I know that all data will be kept under the terms of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

5) I agree that small direct quotes may be used in reports (these will be anonymised).

6) I understand that in exceptional circumstances anonymity and confidentiality would have to be broken, for example, if it was felt that practice was putting children at risk, or there were concerns regarding professional misconduct. In these circumstances advice would be sought from a senior manager from another local authority who will advise us as to the appropriate course of action and as to whether we need to inform the authority of what you have told us.

Name: .......................................................... ..........................................................

Signature: .................................................. Date: ..................................................

Name of researcher: Fiona Conway Signature: .................................................. Date: ....18.09.2022...........

Researcher contact details: Fiona Conway

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How can Motivational Interviewing be implemented in schools to support pupils experiencing challenges with learning engagement? Exploring school staff experiences of facilitators and barriers.

June 2022 – November 2022

Information sheet for school support staff

My name is Fiona Conway, and I am inviting you to take part in my research project, ‘How can Motivational Interviewing be implemented in schools to support pupils experiencing challenges with learning engagement? Exploring school staff experiences of facilitators and barriers.’

I am a Trainee Educational Psychologist currently in my second year on the Doctorate in Educational, Child and Adolescent Psychology (DEdPsy) programme at the Institute of Education (IOE). I am exploring whether training in Motivational Interviewing (MI), an approach to counselling, can benefit school staff in supporting pupils who are finding school challenging. I am interested in exploring staff experiences of training in MI, and how staff experience using it in their work with pupils. I very much hope that you would like to take part. This information sheet will try and answer any questions you might have about the project, but please don’t hesitate to contact me if there is anything else you would like to know.

Who is carrying out the research?
Main Researcher: Fiona Conway

Why are we doing this research?
The programme aims to support school staff in developing MI skills to help them to support pupils who are finding school challenging. This may appear as low effort or participation in the classroom, off-task behaviour, persistent lateness, low aspirations for the future, amongst a range of other indicators. The programme has been developed in the context of a school’s desire to help grow the capacity of schools to manage some of these challenges experienced by pupils (sometimes referred to as ‘disaffection’). The present research will follow the implementation of MI training in schools to get a better understanding of factors that may hinder/support its implementation, and how the programme may be implemented more widely.

Why am I being invited to take part?
There is evidence to suggest that the MI approach can be effective in supporting a range of learning outcomes including improved classroom participation, improved classroom behaviour, and reduced truancy. Previous research also indicates that school staff can be trained in MI, and that this approach can be helpful to those using it in educational settings.

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aim to identify useful information on how staff experience training in and using MI in their practice, and the factors that either support or undermine staff being able to use it in their pupil intervention work. The outcomes of this study will contribute towards ongoing development of school staff training programmes devised by the Emotional Psychology Service (EPS).

What will happen if I choose to take part?
You will agree with the researcher a time and date when you are happy to be observed delivering a session with a pupil. Observations will aim to capture information on how Motivational Interviewing strategies are being used by staff who have received training. After the observation, you will meet with the researcher for a reflective discussion to discuss the MI strategies used in the session: how you experienced using them, and what you perceived the impact to be on the pupil. The reflective discussion following the observation will be audio recorded. You can opt out of the observation and reflective discussion at any time.

Will anyone know I have been involved?
No, not at all and your information will be stored confidentially, and names will be replaced by pseudonyms. The identity of the school and Local Authority will also not be recorded during write-up to ensure anonymity.

Could there be problems for me if I take part?
If you feel uncomfortable at any point during the observation or reflective discussion, you are entitled to stop.

What will happen to the results of the research?
The researcher’s observation notes will be typed and pseudonymised in the write-up. Audio files will be destroyed as soon as they have been transcribed. Pseudonymised observer notes and transcripts will be shared with one other member of the PGCE cohort during the inter-coder reliability process. The pseudonymised notes and transcripts may also be shared with the researcher’s IOE supervisor during data analysis. During data collection and transcription, all audio files, notes and transcripts will be saved via UCL OneDrive on a password-protected laptop.

A short summary of research findings will be shared with the Local Authority participating in the study. Results of the research and pseudonymised transcripts will be held within the University for a period of 10 years, complying with UCL data protocol.

Do I have to take part?
It is entirely up to you whether you choose to take part. If you choose not to take part, there will be no repercussions for you or the researcher. I hope that if you do choose to be involved then you will find it a valuable experience.

Contact for further information
If you have any further questions before you decide whether to take part, you can reach me at

UCL Institute of Education
20 Bedford Way, London WC1H 0AL
If you would like to be involved, please complete the following consent form and return it by Monday 31st October 2022.

This project has been reviewed and approved by the UCL IOE Research Ethics Committee.

Thank you very much for taking the time to read this information sheet.

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 data-protection@ucl.ac.uk

This ‘local’ privacy notice sets out the information that applies to this particular study. Further information on how UCL uses participant information from research studies can be found in our ‘general’ privacy notice for participants in research studies 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 will be used to process any personal data is: ‘Public task’ for personal data. We will be collecting personal data such as: ‘what is your role in your school?’

Your personal data will be processed so long as it is required for the research project. If we are able to anonymise or pseudonymise the personal data you provide we 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 contact us about your rights, please contact UCL in the first instance at dataprotection@ucl.ac.uk.
How can Motivational Interviewing be implemented in schools to support pupils experiencing challenges with learning engagement? Exploring school staff experiences of facilitators and barriers.

Parent Consent Form

If you are happy to participate in this study please complete this consent form by ticking each item, as appropriate, and return to the research team via the contact details below:

1) I confirm that I have read and understood this information sheet, and have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions, and have had these questions adequately answered. 

2) I understand that my child’s participation in the pupil/teacher observation is voluntary, and participation can be withdrawn at any time without giving a reason.

3) I understand that all information will be stored confidentially and that all data will be kept under the terms of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), as outlined in the information sheet.

4) I understand that in exceptional circumstances anonymity and confidentiality would have to be broken, for example, if it was felt that practice was putting children at risk, or there were concerns regarding professional misconduct. In these circumstances advice would be sought from a senior manager from another local authority who will advise us as to the appropriate course of action and as to whether we need to inform the authority of what you have told us.

Name: ..................................................................................................................................

I give permission for my child/ward to take part in this study ........................................yes □ ..........no □

Signature: .............................................................................................................. Date: .............................................

Name of researcher: Fiona Conway Signature: .............................................. Date: ...18.09.2022.........
How can Motivational Interviewing be implemented in schools to support pupils experiencing challenges with learning engagement? Exploring school staff experiences of facilitators and barriers.

June 2022 – November 2022

Information sheet for parents

My name is Fiona Conway, and I am inviting school staff and their pupils to take part in my research project, ‘How can Motivational Interviewing be implemented in schools to support pupils experiencing challenges with learning engagement? Exploring school staff experiences of facilitators and barriers.’

I am a Trainee Educational Psychologist currently in my second year on the Doctorate in Educational, Child and Adolescent Psychology (DEdPsy) programme at the Institute of Education (IOE). I am exploring whether training in Motivational Interviewing (MI), an approach to counselling, can benefit school staff in supporting pupils who are finding school challenging. I am interested in exploring staff experiences of training in MI, and how staff experience using it in their work with children and young people. This information sheet will try and answer any questions you might have about the project, but please don’t hesitate to contact me if there is anything else you would like to know.

Who is carrying out the research?
Main Researcher: Fiona Conway

Why are we doing this research?
The programme aims to support school staff in developing MI skills that they can apply in their one-to-one work with pupils. This research will explore staff experiences of training in and using MI, so we can get a better understanding of how to improve.

What will happen if my child agrees to take part?
The researcher will sit in on one of your child’s sessions in school. The researcher will observe the child’s interactions with the member of school staff in practice and make notes on how they are using MI skills to support your child in their one-to-one session. The observation will focus on the Coach and their skills, it will not focus on your child. Whilst the researcher may note how your child responds to the strategies, the observation will not involve observing or recording anything directly about your child.

You and your child are entitled to withdraw consent at any time. Verbal and written consent will be sought from your child before the observation takes place, and verbal consent will be sought again on the day of observation.

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20 Bedford Way, London WC1H 0AL
Will anyone know my child has been involved?
No, not at all: all information will be stored confidentially, and names will be replaced by pseudonyms. The identity of the school and Local Authority will also not be recorded during write-up to ensure anonymity.

What will happen to the results of the research?
A short summary of research findings will be shared with the Local Authority participating in the study. Results of the research and pseudonymised transcripts will be held within the University for a period of 10 years, complying with UCL data protocol.

Do I have to take part?
It is entirely up to you and your child whether your child will take part. If you choose not to take part, there will be no repercussions at all for you or the researcher.

Contact for further information
If you have any further questions before you decide whether to take part, you can reach me at [REDACTED]. If you would like to be involved, please complete the following consent form and return to [REDACTED] by Monday 31st October 2022.

This project has been reviewed and approved by the UCL IOE Research Ethics Committee.

Thank you very much for taking the time to read this information sheet.

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 data-protection@ucl.ac.uk

This ‘local’ privacy notice sets out the information that applies to this particular study. Further information on how UCL uses participant information from research studies can be found in our ‘general’ privacy notice for participants in research studies 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 will be used to process any personal data is: ‘Public task’ for personal data.

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

If you are concerned about how personal data is being processed, or if you would like to contact us about your rights, please contact UCL in the first instance at dataprotection@ucl.ac.uk.
How can Motivational Interviewing be implemented in schools to support pupils experiencing challenges with learning engagement? Exploring school staff experiences of facilitators and barriers.

Pupil Consent Form

If you are happy to participate in this study please complete this consent form by ticking each item, as appropriate, and return to the research team via the contact details below:

1) I confirm that I have read and understood this information sheet, and have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions, and have had these questions adequately answered. □

2) I understand that my participation in the pupil/coach observation is voluntary, and can be withdrawn at any time without giving a reason. □

3) I understand that all information will be stored confidentially and that all data will be kept under the terms of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), as outlined in the information sheet. □

4) I understand that in exceptional circumstances anonymity and confidentiality would have to be broken, for example, if it was felt that practice was putting children at risk, or there were concerns regarding professional misconduct. In these circumstances advice would be sought from a senior manager from another local authority who will advise us as to the appropriate course of action and as to whether we need to inform the authority of what you have told us. □

Name: ......................................................................................................................................................

Signature: ............................................................................ Date: ......................................................

Name of researcher: Fiona Conway    Signature: ............................................................................ Date: ....18.09.2022..............
Information sheet for young people

Who am I?
I'm Fiona Conway and I am a Trainee Educational Psychologist at the Institute of Education. As part of my studies, I am exploring how a psychological approach called 'Motivational Interviewing' might be helpful for school staff to use in their work with children and young people. I hope that you will be interested in taking part in my research project: 'How can Motivational Interviewing be implemented in schools to support pupils experiencing challenges with learning engagement? Exploring school staff experiences of facilitators and barriers.'

What is this study about?
- I want to gather information on how adults who work in schools support pupils one-to-one, for example through coaching sessions.
- I would like to understand what coaching sessions look like in your school, and explore the strategies your coach uses to support you.
- I hope that this will support schools to support more pupils in the future.

What does the study involve?
- If you decide to join this study, I will join one of your weekly sessions with your coach. I will sit in on the session and observe your coach supporting you – I'm interested to see how they have planned the session, and to see how they guide your conversation. I will sit in the room but away from you and your coach, so hopefully this will not distract you.
- I will make some notes during the session – these will be about what I see your coach doing and saying and how this supports your conversation. I might make some notes on things I notice about how you and your coach work together (for example, who is speaking more, and how your coach responds to things you say).
- I will not make any notes on your experiences, feelings and thoughts that you share with your coach. Nothing at all that is personal to you or about you will be recorded or written down during the session.
- If you decide to take part, you can stop at any point.

What will happen afterwards?
- I will meet with your coach and we will talk about the way they guided your session.
- All the notes I take will be kept safe and secure, and your name, your coach’s name and your school’s name will not be used at all when I write my research report. The only time I would tell someone about what I had observed is if I was worried about your safety.

Do I have to take part?
- No, it is up to you. Speak with your parent or carer about taking part in this study. You can also contact me if you have any questions.
- If you decide that you would like to take part, please sign this form and let your parents know, they will tell me. Also, there is a box for you to sign below if you would like to take part.
- If you do not want to take part, let your parents or carers know and they will tell me. Even if you decide to take part, you can stop at any time.

Put a tick by the answer you want:

☐ Yes, I want to take part in the study.
☐ No, I do not want to take part in the study.

Your name: ______________________
Date: ______________________

For more information, please visit this website:
https://www.ucl.ac.uk/legal-services/privacy/ucl-general-research-participant-privacy-notice
Appendix H. SSI Schedule for EP Interviews

**Interview schedule: EPs (views on the LA context)**

- A bit about my study. I am interested in incidence of pupil disaffection (those who hold negative beliefs and attitudes about school and education) and approaches that educators and other professionals – including EPs – can adopt to prevent and reduce it.
- I am interested in the potential for training in psychological approaches to develop the practice of school support staff – with the understanding that their work often involves one-to-one intervention work with more vulnerable pupils.
- I am interested in hearing about the background to the programme being commissioned within the local authority, and your hopes for the impact it might have. This insight will be helpful for me to consider in later evaluation phases.

This schedule is to be used as a guide and prompt *only*. I intend to pick up cues from what the participants say and follow their lead and order of topics/issues.

**Protocol Summary**

- Prior to meeting send out consent form; stress confidentiality/anonymity
- Explain that I want to hear their views on pupil disaffection and professional experiences within the LA.
- Gain verbal consent to record the interview
- Ask if there are any questions about the project/interview
- Check how much time they have available (up to 45mins has been booked in advance – but check this)
- Conduct interview covering issues to be included (see full protocol)

1. In your view, what are the issues and challenges that schools face with addressing disaffection?
   a. (probe: what extent do you feel that there is a need within this local authority to help support schools with pupils showing signs of disaffection?)

2. In your view, what are the issues and challenges that schools face with training and development of support staff?
   a. (To what extent do you feel that there is a need within this LA to help schools with training and development of support staff?)

3. How far do you feel the Reach programme has the potential to address issues experienced by schools?
4. To what extent do you feel that there are challenges that may limit the success of the programme? What do you think these may be?

5. What factors or processes do you think would help ensure or promote the success of the programme?

6. Do you have any other comments on the potential value or usefulness of a new training programme for school staff in the LA?

- Thank the participant and ask if there are any further requests regarding supplying them with more details or data
Appendix I. Marketing Materials for the Reach Programme

Training and Research Project

What is the aim of this project?
This project offers training and support to key adults who are working with young people to enhance their... Once trained... Coaches will work 1:1 with young people to explore and enhance their motivation and engagement relating to topics such as education, employment and future aspirations. They will be trained and supported by... The project is being researched by a doctoral student and Trainee Educational Psychologist at the Institute of Education (IOE).

The training draws upon the psychology of ‘Motivational Interviewing’. It uses a person-centred approach, which aims to support young people to consider what is important to them, what they want in life and how to achieve good outcomes for themselves, as well as considering how to overcome barriers.

The approach is fundamentally different to traditional, external ‘rewards and sanctions’ approaches, and it is not about giving motivational speeches or ‘lectures’ to young people. This approach is a compassionate, person-centred, listening approach, in which coaches empower young people to think for themselves about what is important to them, what they want to work towards and why (building autonomy).

Which young people does this project aim to support?
Interventions are suitable for young people of secondary school age and post-16 students (aged 11-18+). It is aimed at those who:
- present as disengaged, withdrawn or low in motivation (‘disaffected’)
- have low attendance and/or persistent lateness
- those who are NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) or at risk of becoming NEET
- have experienced school exclusions, or are at risk of exclusion
- present with limited/no aspirations
- have experienced adverse life events impacting their motivation
- have low ‘effort’ ratings from teaching staff
- have low task completion/homework completion
- present with low level off task behaviours or ‘persistent disruptive behaviour’.

This intervention is ideal for students with Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs, either at the ‘SEN Support’ level (Special Educational Needs) or those with an EHCP (Education Health and Care Plan). It is also suitable for those who do not have identified SEN, but who have additional pastoral needs, or are considered vulnerable due to their life circumstances. This intervention can form part of the ‘ordinarily available’ provision within schools.
Who can train to be an ELSA?
- Any professional who is passionate about helping young people to enhance their motivation and engagement in education, raise their future aspirations and/or their positive community involvement
- Any professionals who are currently offering any kind of coaching/mentoring who would like to upskill
- School-based staff (such as teachers, senior leaders, SENCOs, pastoral support staff, teaching assistants and learning mentors)
- No previous training required
- Qualified ELSAs or ELSAs in training (Emotional Literacy Support Assistants) can train to become an ELSA. This can count as part of their CPD (you do not need to be an ELSA though)

How is different to ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant)?
ELSAs have a broad range of training to support a wide range of social and emotional needs, including self-esteem, identity, belonging, social skills, loss and bereavement, and understanding and managing emotions, such as anger and anxiety. has a more specific focus on motivation and engagement. It can be used to complement an ELSA’s existing approaches, and it can be delivered by non-ELSAs including those with no previous training. training is open to both ELSAs and non-ELSAs.

What does the course involve?
- This course has four parts. In order to achieve your certificate, you need to attend all four parts.
- You will need to identify at least two young people that you will work with during your training, so that you can apply your skills straight away.
- You will be invited to take part in a follow-up 1:1 interview about the training program. This is optional.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outline</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Date and Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Training Day 1</td>
<td>The psychology of rapport building</td>
<td>Wednesday 29th June 2022 @ 9:30-3:30pm (6 hours)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Key ideas in Motivational Interviewing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Finding focus and setting agendas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervision and Focus Group 1</td>
<td>Supervision is facilitated by an Educational Psychologist (EP) or Trainee EP. Reflective discussions are focused on building confidence to apply coaching skills, and developing safe and effective practice.</td>
<td>Wednesday 13th July 2022 @ 9:30-11:30am (2 hours)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Focus groups will explore how are finding the training program and seek their feedback on applying with young people.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training Day 2</td>
<td>Exploring reasons for change (and reasons why change might be difficult)</td>
<td>Wednesday 28th September 2022 @ 9:30-3:30pm (6 hours)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Building commitment to change</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Building autonomy (independence and choices)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Creating person-centred action plans</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervision and Focus Group 2</td>
<td>Supervision and focus groups (as above).</td>
<td>Wednesday 12th October 2022 @ 9:30-11:30am (2 hours)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What is the cost?
The training is FREE and coaches will access FREE supervision of their practice during the training. Following that, in order to continue practising as a coach, there is likely to be future registration/supervision charge (around £75 per Coach per term). This is to ensure high quality, safe and effective practice of coaching. If you choose not to continue practising as a coach after the training course, there will be no charge.

What is the research element?
Fiona Conway, Trainee Educational Psychologist, Institute of Education, will be researching whether this training programme can support professionals to improve students’ motivation and engagement. During the focus groups, we will explore how you are finding the training program and seek their feedback on applying coaching with young people. Please refer to the research information sheet for further details.

Fiona Conway will invite some of you to engage in a follow-up research interview (1:1) to discuss in more depth how you found the training, applying your coaching skills and what could be further improved. There are no ‘right’ or ‘wrong’ answers. The interview is optional.
Appendix J. Focus Group Schedules

Focus group schedule (13th July 2022)

Protocol Summary

- Explain that I want to hear their views on supporting pupils who present with low engagement/motivation, their initial reflections on the MI approach, and thoughts on next steps for setting up and delivering an MI-based intervention.

- Emphasise that participants should not refer to their pupils by name, or discuss cases in detail to the degree that pupils and families may be identifiable. They should maintain confidentiality if sensitive issues are discussed.

- Ask if there are any questions about the project/focus group.

- Conduct focus group covering issues to be included (see full protocol) – remembering to record.

1. Let’s begin with some reintroductions as some of us are new to each other: what are your names and roles?

2. What are your views on why pupils come to be disaffected (hold negative beliefs and attitudes about school and education)?

3. Are there already programmes/interventions in place in your schools to help to support these pupils/what do these programmes look like?

4. Which pupils do you see the MI approach working especially well for? Who would it work less well for?

5. What resources and support are available to you to help set up and run your intervention?

6. What hurdles do you anticipate might arise when setting up/delivering the MI intervention?

7. What resources and/or guidance documents would help you to set up and begin facilitating the intervention?

Thank all participating for their reflections.
Focus group schedule (session 2 – October 2022)

Protocol Summary

- Explain that I want to hear their views on their experiences so far of implementing MI in their practice.

- Emphasise that participants should not refer to their pupils by name, or discuss cases in detail to the degree that pupils and families may be identifiable. They should maintain confidentiality if sensitive topics are discussed.

- Ask if there are any questions about the project/focus group.

- Conduct focus group covering issues to be included (see full protocol)

1. To what extent have you found the MI approach helpful and useful so far in your work with pupils?

2. Could you give examples of strategies you found valuable, and those you found less valuable?

3. How have your pupils responded to the MI approach – and can you give examples?

4. From a practical point of view, how was it to set up and deliver the intervention and use the MI strategies?
   A. What factors helped you to set up/deliver the intervention?
   B. What challenges have you faced setting up/delivering the intervention?
Appendix K. The RSOP and Additional Observation Tools

The RSOP was adapted from the MITI 2.0 (Moyers et al., 2003), which is a coding tool developed to assess core aspects of MI practice including the OARS and spirit of MI. The MITI was considered useful in the context of this study’s aims, as it was developed to be used in the following ways: (1) to explore the degree to which the facilitators’ behaviours in interventions adhered to the MI approach; (2) to provide a structured framework for observation feedback, and reflective discussions on how practice could be developed further. Critics of the MITI have questioned its accessibility to users outside of research contexts, and proposed the need for its simplification (Frey et al., 2013). To address this, the RSOP was developed here to offer a framework that offered accessibility for researcher and participants – in the process of observation and feedback. This involved simplification of the MITI’s coding framework: this was necessary for the protocol to be used in a live (rather than audio recorded) context. The RSOP incorporates selected foci for MI adherent and non-adherent behaviours from the MITI 2.0. Demonstration of the OARS – as core MI guiding and thinking skills (Miller & Rollnick, 1991; 2002; 2012) - were also incorporated into the protocol as these had been emphasised in Reach training. The RSOP was developed to check the presence or absence of MI adherent (or non-adherent) behaviours/skills, rather than monitoring event frequency as with the MITI 2.0. Atkinson and Woods (2018) developed a MI practice evaluation with practitioners, rather than researchers in mind, and to offer a framework for practitioner reflection – therefore offering a more accessible alternative to the MITI. The RSOP also draws from this more recent protocol, recording examples of behaviours/skills and client/young person responses – which could then be referred to during reflective discussions following observation.
Reach session observation protocol (RSOP)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MI Adherent Behaviour / skill</th>
<th>Observed in session (yes or no)</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Observed pupil response (verbal or physical communication)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asking permission to give information/advice</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affirming the client by saying something positive or complimentary</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statements that emphasise client autonomy/choice</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporting the client with statements of compassion/empathy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using open questions to explore the client’s perspective</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using summaries to reflect empathy and good listening</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using reflections to convey empathy and understanding</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

MI Non-Adherent Behaviour

| Advising without permission |      |         |                                                            |
| Confrontation (disagreeing, arguing, shaming, correcting, blaming, questioning client’s honesty) |      |         |                                                            |
| Directing or persuading the client |      |         |                                                            |
**Spirit of MI scales from the MITI 3.0 (Moyers et al., 2007)**

### Collaboration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Low</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clinician actively assumes the expert role for the majority of the interaction with the client. Collaboration is absent.</td>
<td>Clinician responds to opportunities to collaborate superficially.</td>
<td>Clinician incorporates client’s goals, ideas and values but does so in a lukewarm or erratic fashion. May not perceive or may ignore opportunities to deepen client’s contribution to the interview.</td>
<td>Clinician fosters collaboration and power sharing so that client’s ideas impact the session in ways that they otherwise would not.</td>
<td>Clinician actively fosters and encourages power sharing in the interaction in such a way that client’s ideas substantially influence the nature of the session.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Autonomy/Support

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Low</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clinician actively detracts from or denies client’s perception of choice or control.</td>
<td>Clinician discourages client’s perception of choice or responds to it superficially.</td>
<td>Clinician is neutral relative to client autonomy and choice.</td>
<td>Clinician is accepting and supportive of client autonomy.</td>
<td>Clinician adds significantly to the feeling and meaning of client’s expression of autonomy, in such a way as to markedly expand client’s experience of own control and choice.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Evocation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Low</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clinician actively provides reasons for change, or education about change, in the absence of exploring client’s knowledge, efforts or motivation.</td>
<td>Clinician relies on education and information giving at the expense of exploring client’s personal motivations and ideas.</td>
<td>Clinician shows no particular interest in, or awareness of, client’s own reasons for change and how change should occur. May provide information or education without tailoring to client circumstances.</td>
<td>Clinician is accepting of client’s own reasons for change and ideas about how change should happen when they are offered in interaction. Does not attempt to educate or direct if client resists.</td>
<td>Clinician works proactively to evoke client’s own reasons for change and ideas about how change should happen.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Schedule for reflective discussion**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reflective Discussion Item</th>
<th>Question Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Offering thanks for the opportunity to observe</td>
<td>What are your thoughts: do the notes here match your perception, or did you notice other examples/pupil responses?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Share with the participant observations on MI adherent behaviours and pupil responses. Prompt participant reflections on observation.</td>
<td>What were your experiences of using the MI approach here? How useful did you find it? How comfortable was it?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Explore participant perceptions of adopting these behaviours / skills.</td>
<td>What are your thoughts on why these behaviours / skills didn’t appear this time?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Note the MI adherent behaviours/skills that were not observed – discussion with participant as to their views/perceptions of why those behaviours/skills weren’t applied these time / others were used.</td>
<td>How do you perceive these examples as shaping the conversation with the young person?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Share with participant observations on MI non-adherent behaviours. Prompt interviewer reflections.</td>
<td>These behaviours don’t fit with the Spirit of I, but I’m wondering if you used them to serve a purpose in that discussion?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Note with participant that these behaviours do not comply with the spirit of MI, nonetheless, wondering around whether the participant applied them deliberately and – if so – in what ways did they see these behaviours as being useful in the discussion’s context?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Ask participant to complete the Spirit of MI self-report scales. Prompt reflections on choices.</td>
<td>Could you please talk me through your choices – why are you at X? What might help you to get to Y?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Goal setting following observation. Ask participant to set two MI adherent behaviour/skill-oriented goals for their next session, based on reflective discussions.</td>
<td>Based on our discussion, what two things do you think might be helpful to work on as you keep using MI?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Close reflective discussion.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix L. SSI Schedule for Coach Interviews

Interview Schedule – Reach Coaches (Nov/Dec 2022)

- A bit about my study. I am interested in the potential for Motivational Interviewing to be used by school staff to support issues like pupil disaffection. I’d like to learn about your experiences of training in and using MI through the Reach Coaching programme: how useful was it; how did your pupils respond to it; what helped and hindered your setting up and delivering the interventions; whether you intend to keep using the Reach skills and strategies.

*Before we start, can I ask what your usual role is in your school (title)?

I would like to start by asking some questions about your thoughts on using Motivational Interviewing in schools:

1. To what extent do you think that MI is a good approach to use with pupils who present as disaffected?

2. How far do you think that MI is easy to learn and easy to use?

3. To what extent has your approach to one-to-one conversations with pupils changed since participating in Reach?

4. What are some of the factors that helped and hindered you in setting up and delivering MI-based sessions in school?

5. To what extent do you think the MI approach is of practical use to school-based professionals? ("probes: are there any specific school-based professionals who would find the MI approach valuable and useful in their work?)

I’d like to move on to some questions about your experience of using Motivational Interviewing with pupils:

6. Could you tell me a bit about the pupil you worked with? Why did you select them?

7. Could you tell me about the MI strategies that you used in your pupil intervention? How did you use them?

8. How did your pupil respond to these strategies?

9. How did they respond to the intervention as a whole? ("probes: did you see a change over time; do you think they found it helpful; do you think they found it enjoyable?)
10. Would you do anything differently if you were to run the intervention again?

11. How likely are you to keep using MI in your practice? In what context? (*probe: what would help increase the likelihood of you carrying on using MI with pupils?)

My final questions are about your views on the Reach Coaching programme:

12. How did you become aware of Reach Coaching, and what were the circumstances around your enrolling on the training programme?

13. Which aspects of the programme were most valuable to you (training, supervision, time to try out the intervention)?

14. Which aspects of the training programme could be developed further to support schools and staff to sustain and carry on using it?

Do you have any questions about my research or Reach before we close our discussion?

Thank you for participating.
Appendix M. Reflexive Journal Extract

Oct FGs/supervision – my group

- Coaches emphasising the usefulness of MI skills etc, lots of mentions of specific resources/skills (affirmations, reflections, open questions). Agenda mapping discussed as something helpful to structuring sessions. Interesting though that I noticed some comments suggested a (very adapted) version of Reach being used in practice. Also feeling it is difficult to get a true sense of what it looks like in practice when I can’t clearly envision what their pastoral activities are like (i.e., RC16 discussing his coaching/mentoring work – takes place outside and he apparently is able to take students out of lessons very flexibly – but then he also says consistency is a problem. Is this partly because sometimes pupils seek him out rather than the other way around?). Observations important to get a better sense of this.

- Initial impact noted: behavioural and attendance improvements, pupils opening up more easily. Seems that engagement tools are very valuable in building trust and rapport in partnerships.

- Theme of control – coach mentioning how agenda mapping allowed her pupil to feel ‘in control’ of sessions. This could be important – something around interventions/programmes for CYP where they have agency in taking part/contributing and co-constructing agendas etc?

- RC12 talking a lot about one pupil she is working with, who apparently self-referred. Mentioning ostensibly all is well for him, but he is saying he feels something is wrong. Lots of discussion about this. Questioning who pupils are who are being identified for the use of Reach – doesn’t sound like this is being used for disaffection? But useful that it is an example of the approach being used more widely/flexibly in activities.

- RC15 didn’t get to use it at all. Seems despondent about this, but hopeful about future opportunities. Also helpful to have her insight on colleagues who are also using the approach. Her inclusion/comments suggest this programme as more appropriate to target at SS?

- Barriers: talk was quite problem-free. Do they feel they have to reiterate its helpfulness to me (as part of programme team?). Although also – seems that none in group are carrying out the structured 6-8 week intervention. To consider for implications/analysis possibly – something around future directions for the programme, is it better that it is used more widely (at cost of structured intervention being implemented), or more important that the programme is implemented formally (replicated) – to better ensure positive outcomes (and future opportunities for evaluating the impact of Reach?). Discuss with RLEP. Will current cohort feel alienated from prog if they are encouraged to revise their practice and attempt again (with structure/improved fidelity?)

Themes

- Control, rapport and engagement, feeling heard and listening.
### Appendix N. Extract from a Coded Transcript

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Initial codes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fiona Conway</td>
<td>Issue: opportunity for/consistency of session delivery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>So what did you find were factors that helped and hindered you in setting up Reach?</td>
<td>Role as reactive in nature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RC17</td>
<td>Nature of role, limited opportunities to plan 1-1 sessions in advance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I think hindering, the only issue really that I had was time and consistency with those times, like those slots and things like that, which very much for me is part of the nature of the role. You know, I'm in a very fast paced role where not a lot can be organised beforehand, it's a lot of, on the day in the moment. That was a struggle for me, and I think would probably be a struggle for a few support staff. But in my mind, it probably would have been better to have had a few of us all trained up to be able to use it, in case, if I wasn't in for some reason, the child had somewhere else to go and somebody that I knew would be able to have the same level of communication. Because some of the children that I worked with were giving very, very little verbal communication, when it was one to one anyway. They didn't really want to talk. And so I'd end up just talking normally with them, not using Reach, for fear of not actually being able to have that room and time to talk.</td>
<td>Limited time (to deliver and prepare) as a barrier faced by other support staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>And were there certain things that I suppose facilitated you being able to use it at all?</td>
<td>If more staff were trained in Reach, consistency would improve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RC17</td>
<td>Finding CYP are usually quiet in 1-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My sessions that I did have, I just made sure that I had agenda maps and I'd planned out sort of slightly different routes we could go down. So for me, for the kids I was seeing, it was more about having an idea of maybe why we were coming into these one to ones. And</td>
<td>Finding CYP are usually reluctant to talk in 1-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Returning to ‘usual practice’ as not having time and room for Reach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Using agenda mapping to structure sessions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Using Reach with new pupils and pupils already known to coach</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
those who I’d already been working with, it was a case of I knew that the approach I had wasn't working as successfully as I hoped. So it was a case of trying some of the Reach coaching stuff within those. Which worked a dream for a lot of them actually.

Fiona Conway
So that's helpful to know that you were kind of using within work that was already a bit established, but it was taking an alternative route?

RC17
Yeah, because Reach coaching for me it was less like, less of a course to put a student on or to work through with a student. For me, it's more of a of a way in, or a style moreso. And being able to, for me anyway, apply it to my other support that I had already with some students, was great.

Fiona Conway
Did you find it was easy to learn and easy to use?

RC17
I think so. I think those like basic fundamentals of it, like giving the autonomy and giving up some of that sort of control almost. I think it's easy to understand and, and to process. I think the idea of putting it into practice can be a bit daunting at times, but for me personally, once I'd seen a result I just wanted to carry on doing it. And I did see more results than not.

Fiona Conway
I wondered what does your role look like from day to day, because you were saying about the difficulties planning your time?

RC17
So I will get in. I will find out what children I have planned to be in my

Using Reach when other approaches haven’t worked with specific CYP
Reach has worked when other approaches didn’t

Reach as a style rather than a formal intervention
Reach concepts as easy to understand
Reach principles as easy to implement
Using a new approach as daunting
Seeing positive impact as motivating coach to sustain it

Job based in isolation room
isolation room. I will then look at my timetable to see if I am due to see any mentees, and then we see how the day goes. So more or less there's a plan in place every time. The things that prevent me from following that is we work on an on call system. So they get a point system, points one through to four, when you're on four you get on called. That means you come straight to me and you are with me until the end of the day, plus an hour. And I have to make sure that all of the work and you know, you're still learning to curriculum, doing all of that. So it's then resourcing, and organising meetings, and calling parents and there's only two of us that do it. And one of us has to be in the room all the time. What tends to happen is that one of us will end up running around and missing out on a mentee session and have to rearrange. Most of the time, I will get to see them all every week. The issue for me, especially when you've then set something up like the Reach coaching is that consistency is quite key. And that's where the struggle is, because I just often will not have time. Oh, there'll be some, you know, a bigger situation like a physical fight, or a child may be caught with drugs on them, or maybe vaping in a toilet or on property, you know. And they're all instant things that have to be dealt with. And unfortunately, if my mentee block is there that, not that I necessarily agree with it, but that often gets pushed aside, and then there's the lack of consistency.

| Existing mentoring work is timetabled |
| On call duties can disrupt timetabled mentoring sessions |
| High workload with only one colleague to share |
| On call duties can disrupt timetabled mentoring sessions |
| Typically, seeing 1-1 pupils weekly |
| Seeing consistency as important in Reach implementation |
| Experienced barriers: opportunity for/consistency of session delivery |
| Emergency on calls take precedent over mentoring sessions |
### Appendix O. Example of Themes and Associated Codes

<p>| Theme 2: The Need to Develop In-School Mentoring |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sub theme</th>
<th>Codes</th>
<th>Excerpts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The mentor role as</td>
<td>The role of attachment and relatedness in</td>
<td>(EP1) And I think it just kind of goes back to almost, you know, attachment really, just that being kept in mind and that nurturing figure within school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>valuable</td>
<td>mentoring</td>
<td>(EP1) Because, you know, a lot of children whose emotional needs aren't being met at home or you know, in other contexts, there's something very powerful about yeah, having that person that they can trust and advocate for them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Value of school staff as mentors</td>
<td>(EP2) we often recommend it around that sort of sense of belonging, social interaction, or engagement, that kind of thing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(EP3) one EP commented they felt that they often are recommending that school-based member of staff, like a teaching assistant or someone who's already in school should be best placed to do that, because they're there all the time and they can have that relationship with the children, young people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(EP1) But I have seen children make such progress when they do have that relationship with someone in school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The mentor role as widely used but poorly defined</td>
<td>EPs often recommend mentoring for SEMH difficulties</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-school mentoring is often recommended and used to address pupil disaffection</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variability in how mentoring is defined and applied</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(EP3) You know, it's something that I recommend a lot in my reports, motivational interviewing techniques or, you know, building a one-to-one trusting relationship with an adult who can address, you know, that disaffection from education and stuff.

(EP5) if you were to take a sample of EP reports around children who are experiencing, you know, some element of social and emotional need, I'm sure you would see phrases such as this child requires, you know, a safe safe space or unnamed person or a trusted adult or, you know, a mentoring type intervention, or, you know, a kind of a group of some kind intended to support them within that area.

(EP1) when I spoke to EPs quite a few of them said that they do recommend in their EP consultations and their psych advice and reports and things, they do recommend routinely mentoring or coaching.

(EP6) But I'd say kind of things that regularly come up in terms of EP practice that are both recommended and things that we see a lot would be kind of weekly mentoring, regular check ins, the role of the form tutor is being expanded, again, talking about secondary settings, they're trying to keep an eye on it.

(EP4) I have one secondary school and they have quite a high level of support. So, they have ELSA, they also have different kind of varieties of mentors.

(EP1) I think just through my casework where there’s students
presenting as disengaged or disaffected, no motivation and that kind of thing. I think schools have sometimes offered what they're calling mentoring. Or sometimes they might call it coaching. (EP6) So again, I think it also comes back to the idea of what is understood by the term in the first place, are people on the same page? And I think you see such variable practice across schools. You see the approach and the kind of the time and space that might be available in different settings, is another one of those challenges.

(EP1) I think schools have sometimes offered what they're calling mentoring. Or sometimes they might call it coaching. I think those terms are often used interchangeably.

(EP5) That some of the terms that we're talking about, you know, around mentoring, coaching, they're phrases that are quite often used a bit interchangeably.

(EP2) It's just allocating a mentor, but what does the mentor do? What's the mentor's approach? What is the purpose of the mentoring session? I think that can be a little bit fuzzy.

(EP6) So again, I think it also comes back to the idea of what is understood by the term in the first place, are people on the same page? And I think you see such variable practice across schools. You see the approach and the kind of the time and space that might be available in different settings, is another one of those challenges.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barriers to efficacy and implementation of in-school mentoring</th>
<th>This theme was made up of the following sub themes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Barriers to implementation at school level</strong></td>
<td>(EP5) it may be so variable based on what the expectation is around time, you know, is that adult going to be given time to prepare for those sessions, or is it just something that they do between other activities?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time limitations and pressures</td>
<td>(EP5) I think there can be challenges around availability of that member of staff or familiarity, you know, if it becomes something that a head of year has to do, amongst many, many other things, do they give it the same level of thought and attention that actually that intervention really needs?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Absence of support system for mentors</td>
<td>(EP5) does it just become a bit of a tick box about seeing someone for five minutes rather than it being really meaningful or, you know, kind of really thought about between sessions or, you know, the kind of the follow up activity that might need to happen?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentoring activities occur in isolation in school systems</td>
<td>(EP6) I'm sure it's just logistically easier, and that potentially a SENCO might have more control over their own time or timetable, not necessarily so, but somebody that was a teaching assistant might have their time directed by others, which will be potentially limiting in terms of deciding whether they were or were not going to proceed with a particular intervention or start it in the first day.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentoring activities are not valued in the school system</td>
<td>(EP5) we have are unquestionably individual people who are working in schools that have a huge amount of opportunity to work with young people, but a lot of pressure on their shoulders as well in terms of trying</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
to support often, you know, it's a case of providing the support incidentally as and where it can be provided, you know, it's not necessarily something that might be typically provided as part of a broader intervention.

(EP3) I think the pressures that they feel from the school perspective as well or that they have to fix the child and, you know, that they have this period of time and if the end goal isn't reached well, then the intervention was a failure, which, you know, obviously, it wasn't.

(EP4) I think too often it is just the case of staff are put forward to do something. And that's it. You know, there isn't much thought beyond that.

(EP5) the question for me would be if someone has met with a young person, well, who's then meeting with the adult in school to find out how did that go, you know, kind of what do you need, you know, what, what else would be useful?

(EP5) it's just packaged up as being all of that pastoral support for that young person just happens in this one session that happens once a week, and it's not the principles that are emerging, or the learning bits emerging or themes that emerge from those sessions.

(EP3) I think as well with these interventions, you know, like the child has kind of taken away in a silo away from everyone else and people have a rough understanding idea of what that person is doing, but they don't really know

(EP3) when they do have that one-to-one work or whatever, people are
very quick to kind of say, okay, well, that's what they're doing with that person. And, you know, almost like that person is in charge of their behaviour. And that's it, kind of thing.

(EP5) I think people have kind of pay lip service to being you know, supportive of it, but yeah, on the ground I'm not sure if they value it to the same extent to the extent that they should.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barriers to implementation at the intervention level</th>
<th>Lack of a framework or evidence base</th>
<th>(EP6) But I feel like lots of those are good in the sense that they are practical, and they're things that schools can support with in reality, but I'm not sure what the evidence base is for how effective they are.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The need for intervention specificity and consistency</td>
<td>(EP6) I think that maybe the purpose of them is more to make a child feel kind of noticed, than it is to do anything else.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(EP5) it's not seen as being something additional to or, you know, kind of special in some way or another. It can be very generic.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>EP2) even if it is quite broad, I think if there was a training that all mentors in secondary schools have to go through, things that would give us a better sense of how things are being used, what skills are being applied.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barriers to implementation at the mentor level</td>
<td>Lack of training to support mentoring role</td>
<td>(EP1) And it tends to be with a teaching assistant or an LSA, who hasn't had any training in those approaches.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Evidence of unhelpful mentoring strategies</td>
<td></td>
<td>(EP2) I can't say for sure that there is a consistent approach or standard that they need to meet to be able to become a mentor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentors’ engagement with and clarity about their role</td>
<td></td>
<td>(EP5) it's also very dependent on who that person is, you know, what training they might have had previously or, you know, what their role and status is within the school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(EP1) I think we also see with those with the SEMH needs as well who were then you know, they have like key adult that's identified to work with them and, you know, they just often don't have any training.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(EP1) I have seen it where, you know, a TA goes in a room with a student and tries to address the issue of the uniform's not compliant or whatever. And it's essentially them telling them what they need to do, telling them what's good for them, trying to persuade them why it's good to follow the rules</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(EP5) That some of the terms that we're talking about, you know, around mentoring, coaching, they're phrases that are quite often used a bit interchangeably. You know, maybe people are sometimes put into a role that perhaps they don't necessarily feel entirely sure what that is.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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|                                               |                                          | (EP5) But I think it is that challenge about people being thrust into a role that they might not necessarily have asked for, or that you put into that role, but actually, they've been put into that role because they're 'that

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sort of person’ might be the kind of the thinking in school.
### Appendix P. Transcript Excerpts Illustrating Phase 1 Themes and Subthemes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In-Text Reference</th>
<th>Excerpt</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Theme 1: Disaffection as a Neglected Issue in Schools</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subtheme: Recognition and Accountability for Disaffection as an SEMH Need</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P.1.a</td>
<td>And actually, in terms of disaffection, I think it’s framed often in terms of academic output and achievement, rather than a focus on the child being disaffected in terms of their engagement with the wider community or peer group or so on. (EP6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P.1.b</td>
<td>I think that kind of bleeds into kind of a bit of a within child model, kind of thing, seeing it as laziness, as if it's something that the young person needs to solve themselves rather than being something that within the broader scholastic context. (EP6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P.1.c</td>
<td>One of the challenges from an education perspective is that the support that students really need isn't perhaps given to those students who are either not attending or not likely to be, how can I put it, you know, it's not going to make a difference in terms of outcomes in such a way that schools are measured. (EP5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P.1.d</td>
<td>Cynical me says I think sometimes Heads see a certain pathway for students that is going towards permanent exclusion, or that it's going towards an alternative or specialist setting. And I think there sadly isn't a lot of incentive for schools to include those students. (EP1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subtheme: Limitations of Existing Approaches to Address Disaffection</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P.1.e</td>
<td>I think as well like the other challenge is, when you do get a young student who's very, you know, disengaged or whatever, if you present anything to them that is seen as work, or you know, schoolwork or writing or anything like that, which is you know what a lot of the ELSA stuff is, or can be, that kind of disengages them further. (EP3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P.1.f</td>
<td>You know, people have gone missing in the context of the project, or you know, they've just disengaged. (EP3)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>P.1.g</strong></td>
<td>I do work with these groups of pupils, but it tends to be when things have escalated so, so much and so intensely that they feel like oh, they need someone else, someone outside involved to be to be fixing things. But by that stage the young person is already probably going to another setting. (EP2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>P.1.h</strong></td>
<td>I would say this needs to be used as a preventative sort of approach. So not at the point where they are already at risk of exclusion or having had exclusions. It needs to be the pupils that are clearly on the trajectory to get there. (EP2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Theme 2: The Need to Develop In-School Mentoring</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subtheme: The Mentor Role as Valuable</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>P.2.a</strong></td>
<td>We often recommend it around that sort of sense of belonging, social interaction, or engagement, that kind of thing. (EP2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>P.2.b</strong></td>
<td>One EP commented they felt that they often are recommending that school-based member of staff, like a teaching assistant or someone who's already in school should be best placed to do that, because they're there all the time and they can have that relationship with the children, young people. (EP3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subtheme: Mentoring as Widely Used but Poorly Defined</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>P.2.c</strong></td>
<td>If you were to take a sample of EP reports around children who are experiencing, you know, some element of social and emotional need, I'm sure you would see phrases such as this child requires, you know, a safe a safe space or unnamed person or a trusted adult or, you know, a mentoring type intervention, or, you know, a kind of a group of some kind intended to support them within that area. (EP5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>P.2.d</strong></td>
<td>I think just through my casework where there's students presenting as disengaged or disaffected, no motivation and that kind of thing. I think schools have sometimes offered what they're calling mentoring. Or sometimes they might call it coaching. (EP1)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>P.2.e</strong></td>
<td>I think schools have sometimes offered what they're calling mentoring. Or sometimes they might call it coaching. I think those terms are often used interchangeably. (EP1)</td>
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<tr>
<td>P.2.f</td>
<td>It's just allocating a mentor, but what does the mentor do? What's the mentor's approach? What is the purpose of the mentoring session? I think that can be a little bit fuzzy. (EP2)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Subtheme: Barriers to Implementation of In-School Mentoring</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>P.2.g</td>
<td>If it becomes something that a head of year has to do, amongst many, many other things, do they give it the same level of thought and attention that actually that intervention really needs? (EP5)</td>
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<tr>
<td>P.2.h</td>
<td>I'm sure it's just logistically easier, and that potentially a SENCO might have more control over their own time or timetable, not necessarily so, but somebody that was a teaching assistant might have their time directed by others, which will be potentially limiting in terms of deciding whether they were or were not going to proceed with a particular intervention or start it in the first day. (EP6)</td>
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<td>P.2.i</td>
<td>I think the pressures that they feel from the school perspective as well or that they have to fix the child and, you know, that they have this period of time and if the end goal isn't reached well, then the intervention was a failure, which, you know, obviously, it wasn't. (EP3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P.2.j</td>
<td>I think too often it is just the case of staff are put forward to do something. And that's it. You know, there isn't much thought beyond that. (EP4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P.2.k</td>
<td>It's just packaged up as being all of that pastoral support for that young person just happens in this one session that happens once a week, and it's not the principles that are emerging, or the learning bits emerging or themes that emerge from those sessions. (EP5)</td>
</tr>
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<td>P.2.l</td>
<td>I think that maybe the purpose of them is more to make a child feel kind of noticed, than it is to do anything else. (EP6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P.2.m</td>
<td>It's also very dependent on who that person is, you know, what training they might have had previously or, you know, what their role and status is within the school. (EP5)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I have seen it where, you know, a TA goes in a room with a student and tries to address the issue of the uniform's not compliant or whatever. And it's essentially them telling them what they need to do, telling them what's good for them, trying to persuade them why it's good to follow the rules. (EP1)

But I think it is that challenge about people being thrust into a role that they might not necessarily have asked for, or that you put into that role, but actually, they've been put into that role because they're 'that sort of person' might be the kind of the thinking in school. (EP5)

**Theme 2: The Need to Invest in Support Staff Development**

*Subtheme: Absence of Recognition of Support Staff Contribution and the Impact of this*

I do see that the TAs are so stretched, and they're not perhaps recognised for the work that they do. (EP3)

I don't think they're necessarily seen as a resource or people to invest in, in the same way that perhaps teaching staff are. (EP1)

I think we all know that there are huge power dynamics within school settings, and that there is a real hierarchy. And that's definitely something that come up in my ELSA supervision groups, that TAs are feeling really disempowered, and that things that they deliver are not being seen as valuable. (EP6)

But I get a sense that when I do meet the TAs, it's as if like, oh, my opinion is maybe not quite accurate. You should ask the head of year about this, or you should ask the SENCO about this. And it's not that they don't have an opinion, it just feels as if they have the sense that their opinion might not be valued as much and there's not much weighting given to it. (EP2)

*Subtheme: Concerns About Support Staff Training and Development*

There just isn't really much in terms of training for teaching assistants and learning mentors, generally. (EP1)

I think another barrier is like the relatively high turnover of staff in a TA position. I mean, I can only speak to ELSA, but we'll invest a
lot in training up ELSA and then they move on from the school, and they have to invest again and retrain someone. And I think in a TA position, particularly as many people go into the professional and kind of you know, they're looking and moving, wanting to move on to do something else in the area of teacher training or things like that. It means that there's a relatively high turnover of staff. (EP4)

**Subtheme: Opportunities and Role Potential**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>P.3.g</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>That person can become the specialist person in school. They're like, “oh, they also might know about it.” And, you know, they've been kind of, they can share their information and then, by the end of the course, and from ongoing supervision, they become very skilled practitioners, and they're able to share their knowledge of the area. And it might be the same thing like, “oh, I'm really struggling with this disengaged student”, and, you know, they're kind of seeing someone that you can approach about it, and I think that can be really effective. (EP4)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix Q. Phase 1 Theme 3: The Need to Invest in Support Staff Development

The final theme identified from EP interviews captured views on support staff, and the perceived need to invest in professional development for this group. EPs highlighted that the support staff role is often overlooked, and shared concerns around existing training and development opportunities for these educators. The need to invest was further emphasised through EP perceptions of the promise and potential of the support staff role.

Absence of Recognition of Support Staff Contribution and the Impact of this

Participating EPs found that, often, the support staff contribution was not acknowledged or valued in schools. This was seen as particularly pertinent given that these staff often experience significant workload pressures (P.3.a). Some EPs saw that, perhaps because of these apathetic attitudes, schools were not inclined to invest in support staff development (P.3.b). It appeared that these attitudes impacted on support staff’s sense of professional competence, confidence, and self-efficacy, which was evident to EPs in their direct work (P.3.c). From EP interviews, an image
emerged of local school cultures where support staff were underappreciated, leading to internalisation of this low esteem by the support staff themselves (P.3.d).

**Concerns about Support Staff Training and Development**

Participating EPs reported concerns about staff training and development, noting the apparent lack of a regulatory framework or standards to guide practice. Participants also saw that there were few existing training and development opportunities for this group (P.3.e). Alongside questioning the availability of relevant training for this group, EPs also perceived schools’ reluctance to invest financially in their support staff. High turnover of support staff in schools was seen a ‘big problem in schools’ (EP6), and that this impacted decision making around budgeting for staff training. EPs saw that, in making cost benefit analyses for support staff training, schools may conclude investment was not worthwhile as they would not see a ‘return’ on training staff over time. One factor in this was the perception, in the wider education profession, that support staff roles were ‘stepping stones’ to other positions rather than being established positions in themselves. This perspective was seen as impacting support staff access to training (P.3.f). This suggested that attitudes about school staff in the wider education culture were being borne out in local schools, undermining the potential for this role (and its contribution) to develop further.

**Opportunities and Role Potential**

An important subtheme identified referenced EP’s views on the promise offered by the support staff role. EPs highlighted soft skills characteristic of this group, and suggested this offered a foundation that evidence-based training could extend and refine. EP1 described potential here: ‘something about building on the
coaches, their natural skills … giving it a name, and putting a psychological theory to it’ (EP1). This suggested that, contrary to views that undermined investment in support staff training, there was evidence that support staff embodied an untapped skills resource in schools.

EPs highlighted further arguments for investing in school support staff. Participants perceived that, with training, the support staff role to evolve into a more defined SEMH support position. As well as the clear benefits this would offer in building schools’ SEMH support capacity, participants also saw that this could also impact on professional attitudes and beliefs about support staff (P.3.g). This suggested that specialist training could alter the ways other professionals view and interact with these staff in schools. Subsequently, support staff may experience their status increase in their schools, and potentially wider education culture. As well as impacting others’ views, this could also impact support staff’s self-perceptions, reducing the characteristic sense of disempowerment amongst this group.

Appendix R. Transcript Excerpts Illustrating Phase 2 Themes and Subthemes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In-Text Reference</th>
<th>Excerpt</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Theme 1: Strengths of the Reach Approach</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Power of Listening</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R.1.a</td>
<td>And making you look at it from a different angle has been really good. Because sometimes it is actually better to listen to the individual, rather than you deciding what's best for that individual. Definitely. I think that's the big pro, it's that, what you think the main problem is may not actually be what the main problem is, and by listening, which is the hardest bit for any parent or carer or anything, by listening to actually what they're saying, I think makes you understand how they tick a lot more, and gives you an ability to help them where they need the help. (RC6, Oct 2022)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R.1.b</td>
<td>They responded differently. Because one of them said, 'you listened to what I said, you didn't just pretend you were listening'. So it was different, but I got a lot from that session with him. So I was able to listen, and we were even able to set a long term plan for things he wants to achieve. (RC17, Oct 2022)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R.1.c</td>
<td>I don't necessarily think we'd have gotten there without using some of this stuff...it was just as simple as letting her talk instead of asking and that made a big difference. (RC17, Oct 2022)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Theme 2: Adapting and Applying Reach in Practice**

*Subtheme: Integrating Reach into Existing Practice*

| R.2.a | No, it was just for me to try, can I do Reach coaching without talking about it? So, for them it should just feel like, this is it for everybody else who comes to see me, not like here's a special version for you. (RC10, Oct 2022) |
| R.2.b | Like I said earlier, it's the jumping in and out, and having those conversations with students but without having proper sessions. It feels kind of bitty. But it's still being used. (RC3, Oct 2022) |

*Subtheme: Reflections on Age-Group Applicability*

| R.2.c | I think older students are more, they are maybe better for this than ELSA. Like often with Year 7 and 8, they'll engage, whereas Year 10 and 11 they're often not keen on it. So, I think the age is also a thing. (RC12, July 2022) |
| R.2.d | A lot of key stage three they're not emotionally attuned to engaging with this. (RC15, July 2022) |

| R.2.e | I think with the age thing, it's more about how much control the boy can have over his life. You can do motivational interviewing with a year seven, but he's still reliant on parent engagement. Unless that happens, they have less control. Whereas with years 10 and 11, they are much more autonomous. They have that meaning like, I can do this, I can change my life. I'm going to do this because I'm more independent. (RC8, July 2022) |

**Theme 3: Potential Barriers when Using Reach**

*Subtheme: The Choice of Coach Matters*
| R.3.a | It's that if someone's comes back to RC15 and says they won't engage, she has to say that at panel, then SLT will go right we'll take them off the list then, rather than finding someone else. (RC13, July 2022) |
| R.3.b | I suppose it's having that because then coaching is new it doesn't have a profile of something like ELSA yet. So with ELSA, they'd think, oh yes, we need to build that into your timetables. (RC12, Oct 2022) |
| R.3.c | So it is, what do you have like six sessions with the boy. And then you have others saying, have you fixed him yet? As if it's this magic thing. And you try to say well, this one is very low and he has trust issues. (RC10, July 2022) |
| R.3.d | The only worry I have is that it is time consuming. Because you know, you don't have a specific target, or maybe you have, from the kid, but it might take a long time to reach the target, or maybe you will never reach the target. (RC12, Oct 2022) |
| R.3.e | I'm not saying that I've stopped trying, but, you know, presumably, this is meant to be a little bit time limited? Or is it? Is it just something that you just carry on and, you know, use it whenever you get the chance, or an opportunity to? It's difficult with the year 10s and 11s because of their timetables. (RC8, Oct 2022) |
| R.3.f | So I think this has to be you know, very clear what is the aim of coaching? What is the expectation, which kind of support, because it's a school, you know, being a school, there are expectations from those people that send those kids to us. (RC12, Oct 2022) |
| R.3.g | I used to do ELSA before the mentoring, and there's this misconception from SLT of, when you're working with a boy, "can you do a bit of ELSA with him?" Which is interesting, because they think you can just throw it into the mentoring, but I don't think they actually realise what it really is, they just give it a name. And they will handle this in the same way, they will say, "instead of mentoring, do a bit of Reach coaching." (RC10, Oct 2022) |
Subtheme: A Lack of Active Support from Leaders and Colleagues

| R.3.h | I think they just because we always fight the boys’ corner, they just think, here we go, they're going off again. (RC8, July 2022) |
| R.3.i | I had a school refuser. We got her back in. And she was coming in everyday. We worked out where we were with what the problem was, and she realised that being off longer meant that she was getting further behind. So she needed to just bite the bullet and come back in. I said, well, I'm there to support you. She went to my one of her lessons, or one of a particular lesson. And the lady shouted at her and tried to get her to do something in front of the class, she's quite anxious this girl, the fastest girls and then turn around and said “no”. You know, it says it all over her file, it clearly says and we've told you. Then she was off for a week and a half afterwards and I was sitting there thinking, I'm so upset that all of that hard work for getting her back in had just fallen apart. (RC6, July 2022) |
| R.3.j | But we've had nothing really, nothing's been set up by the school. It's been very much oh, if you're free and you want to do it, that's fine. Like I say, I actually have no idea where it's gonna go. (RC8, Oct 2022) |

Subtheme: Resisting Habitual Behaviours and Mindset

| R.3.k | I think I need to step out of my ELSA hat, and that's my challenge. (RC8, July 2022) |
| R.3.l | It was just really hard, I found, to not keep asking questions. And to me it just felt really bizarre and really weird. It's a personal thing, but I suppose for me I just felt like I wanted to know a bit more. I had to keep telling myself to stop. When he was engaging, it felt really, really nice that we had a nice two way conversation but I thought, we shouldn't really be having a nice two way conversation. I should be listening to you and reflecting back. (RC7, Oct 2022) |

Appendix S. Transcript Excerpts Illustrating Phase 3 Themes and Subthemes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In-Text Reference</th>
<th>Excerpt</th>
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<td><strong>Theme 1: The Value/Usefulness of the Reach Approach (MI)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Subtheme: Addressing a Range of SEMH Needs in Children and Young People</td>
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<td><strong>S.1.a</strong></td>
<td>I started doing stuff with him when we started last academic year. And then this year, I've seen him once. And even his approach to his work has changed. He started wearing his glasses. He's sat down and he's just got on with work. It was a joy to see the change. Yeah, he has totally turned it around. Whereas before I was constantly hearing his name being bandied around the school. So I don't hear anybody saying anything negative about him now. So it works, it did for him. (RC13)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>S.1.b</strong></td>
<td>So this one kid used to be involved in in a lot of behaviours in schools, distracted at lunchtime, break times, just doing some silly stuff with his friends, trying to impress them trying to be the funniest one around them. So, I got the wheel of change, put it in front of him, right. And I said, this is your wheel, this is your life now. Okay. At the minute, you're at step one. Okay. By the end our work, I want you to be in step five. Right? They're going to be small steps, right, but it's going to be effective. This kid, last term, like before summer, he was called 25 times to the reflections room, right. This term he's been called only twice. (RC16)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>S.1.c</strong></td>
<td>Automatically it just fell into place for him, and how he's in one of the highest sets in the school. (RC17)</td>
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**Subtheme: Shifting Power Dynamics in Staff-Pupil Interactions**

| **S.1.d** | I asked one of the students why they prefer it and they basically turned around and said, oh, because I organise what this meeting is about. And I thought, yeah, I can see that. You know, just giving that control. (RC17) |
| **S.1.e** | It's a good way of getting to know the actual boy, rather than just going in and saying, okay, well you need to do this, this, this and this and you need to tell me this, this this and this. So is actually yeah. It’s building that rapport with them. (RC15) |
| **S.1.f** | That's it, having their voice listened to when someone is listening. And they realise about us, they are listening to what I want to do, and what I need, and what my goals are. So, I suppose that gets them thinking in a different way. (RC3) |

**Subtheme: Potential for Diverse Application of Reach in Schools**
<p>| S.1.g | Because from a young person's point of view, they've been told off, they're up here, heightened and probably feeling things are somewhat unjust. And then all they're seeing is another adult coming to talk at them. And I think if we have that room, and those people with those approaches, even as a way to start a conversation. (RC17) |
| S.1.h | There is a gap between students and teachers. Okay, and you want to close that gap. For example, if I was a tutor for a class, I don't want my kids to go out and be mentored by someone else. I want my kid to be mentored by me because I'm his tutor. And that's the reason why I'm saying I believe that that should be used at that period in the morning first thing. Okay, and culture should be implemented here, building that relationship with them. (RC16) |
| Theme 2: The Impact of Reach Training on Staff Practice |
| Subtheme: Comparing Practice Pre and Post Reach Training |
| S.2.a | Most of the time I would have been listening to them, or giving them my advice, but I wouldn't really listen to what they need and what they're really going through. I would advise them and say, look, I'd be taking the perspective that the school gave me a report about this child and da da da, and I'd go to the kid and say, if you do this, this is the consequence, you do this, this is the consequence, and then I'd be out of there. Whereas after Reach, that's when I started to understand, started to analyse. I don't need to be talking. I need to them to be talking. (RC16) |
| S.2.b | So you hold on to your personality, you still hold on to the way you lead conversations. But it's just adding a way to employ your own thoughts and your own conversations, words, and everything into it. It offers a structured way to articulate what you want to say. (RC3) |
| S.2.c | I think, I think it's very, to put it in a very tangible way, it doesn't have to be 100% professional in that sense, where a student feels like they're sitting with actually a therapist or coach or whatever. So, it's like, you can just apply it in a conversation that's genuine, and just apply a skill within it. (RC2) |
| Subtheme: Reach Adherence and Non-Adherence |</p>
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<th>S.2.d</th>
<th>I just explained what I was trying to do, what the aim of it was, how important it was that their voice was heard that there wasn't any timeframe on it. If they didn't want to speak to me, they didn't have to speak to me that week, but I would like to speak to them in the following week. (RC6)</th>
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<tr>
<td>S.2.e</td>
<td>Basically, she'd decided one morning when she came in that she was gonna say 'why' to everything someone said. And, and I turned around and said, well, it can be quite annoying for people because if they think that they're explaining something to you, you might find it funny that you're asking them why, but they may feel uncomfortable because you're not listening to what they're saying. And she got quite upset about that. (RC6)</td>
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<tr>
<td>S.2.f</td>
<td>So now I'm going to be understanding you as a human first, okay? But I'm going to give you my perspective and my view of what is going to be the consequence of you thinking, I don't like English, I don't like Maths. In the future when you are 25-26 years old, and you think, I'm still doing cleaning. There's not a bad job, but that's not the value or the aim of where you need to be. You need to try and have highest standard, and highest value for you. So, aim for the professions. (RC16)</td>
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**Subtheme: Barriers to Reach Adherence**

| S.2.g | But when you've become set in your ways, it's more difficult to break the cycle and break the patterns. So, you're constantly tripping over your 'but's and your 'no's when you're those sorts of things. (RC13) |

| S.2.h | At the end of the day, there is a reason why I'm doing this for them. I'm working in the school, so basically, I am going to be kind of implying what we're doing this in the conversation, and that is to bring them into school. Attendance our number one concern. So, I do want them to lead and everything, but at the same time, I like to redirect them into attending school and kind of overlook things that unfortunately I do have to overlook just to focus on what matters for us. (RC2) |

**Theme 3: The Reach Coach Network as a Facilitator to Implementation**

**Subtheme: Benefits of Connections with Other Coaches**

| S.3.a | |

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Me and RC16, we have done nothing but talk about it for months. And it's been great because we then have swapped things with each other that have and haven't worked. (RC17)

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<th>S.3.b</th>
<th>They might have found that something just worked (…) and then you can turn around and go, actually, I could try that. (RC6)</th>
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<td>S.3.c</td>
<td>Supervision is definitely very important. And obviously, it's always really, really great to hear other people's opinions and hear other people's feedback, because we're in such different settings. It gets you thinking more about the way you work compared to those in other settings, like compared to a secondary school, thinking about how the dynamics will be so, so different. But how we're all trying to achieve the same sorts of things. (RC3)</td>
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**Subtheme: Sustaining the Reach Coach Network**

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<tr>
<th>S.3.d</th>
<th>Maybe drop-in sessions online because obviously doing it in person would be so difficult. I think maybe drop-in sessions, or an advice line kind of thing would be good. Because there are times when you might try something and it's not quite worked, or maybe you think you're not doing it properly. It would be nice to be able to sort of just drop a line or join a drop-in session and say, look, I'm trying this tool. It's not quite working, any suggestions? (RC13)</th>
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<td>S.3.e</td>
<td>But also maybe we could possibly have an email group. Something very simple. Where everybody is just like, hi guys, hope you're well, I'm just dealing with something, can I just ask your opinion and get your perspective? I'm dealing with this at the moment, has anybody got any ideas of what we might be able to try? (RC6)</td>
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