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THESIS

**Girls with Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties:
An investigation into the provision being made
to meet girls' needs**

Julia Katherine

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ABSTRACT

Background

Boys are heavily over-represented in the 'EBD population' and school provision reflects this. Little has been written about the general and specific needs of girls or the support which they require. While all pupils experiencing EBD are likely to have common needs, it is also possible that girls' and boys' needs may differ in certain specific areas.

Aim

This study aims to access girls' views in order to investigate the educational provision that is made for girls with EBD, and whether this provision is meeting girls' needs.

Samples

The research has involved conducting 40 face-to-face, structured interviews with staff and female pupils in two educational settings (a mainstream secondary school and a pupil referral unit).

Methods

Interviews were structured around the following questions: What are pupils' and staff's beliefs about girls' behaviour? What do girls and boys need to help them manage their behaviour better? Is there anything that would specifically help girls to manage their behaviour better? The data was analysed using grounded theory methodology.

Results

Analysis of the data suggests that behavioural interventions for girls need to include whole school, small group and individual approaches. The data also suggest that girls respond best to social and language-based interventions.

Conclusions

These findings can be explained in terms of the proposal by Underwood (2003) that there are differences between girls' and boys' EBD, not in a simplistic dichotomy between internalising and externalising aggressive behaviour as has been previously thought, but because girls' aggression tends to be social, aimed at achieving social harm. Effective interventions are therefore likely to be those that utilise social forces: peer pressure, role models and language.

RESEARCH REVIEW

Reviewing the Literature on Provision for Girls with Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties (EBD)

1.1 Definitions

A child is considered to have emotional and behavioural difficulties if they are, *'withdrawn or isolated, disruptive and disturbing, hyperactive and lack concentration; those with immature social skills; and those presenting challenging behaviours arising from other complex special needs'* (DFES 2001, a, page 87).

It should be noted that the term, 'EBD' refers to emotional as well as behavioural components. The indicators of emotional and behavioural turmoil might include the following,

'withdrawal from social involvement, leading to social isolation within school, and possibly truancy or school refusal. At another level, the student with emotional difficulties may simply be preoccupied with emotional concerns to the extent that this interferes with the learning process. Students with emotional difficulties may be involved in bullying, either as victims or perpetrators. They may be violent towards others, or, in some cases, be self-harming. Children with such difficulties may also engage in attention-seeking behaviours (Cooper 1999, page 3).

Children described as having 'EBD' are therefore not a homogenous group, as might be suggested by the use of such a categorical term. Cooper (1996) argued that the use of 'EBD' as an all-encompassing, umbrella term is not necessarily helpful,

'At the present time there is no formal categorical system underpinning the term, 'emotional and behavioural difficulties'. This contributes to the unfortunate delusion that all children who are classified as having EBD have similar problems and, therefore, require similar treatment' (Cooper 1996, page 150).

EBD has often been described in terms of different 'types' or distinct categories and this may imply that these consequently require different types of response. Research indicates that the populations of EBD Special Schools are changing with decreasing numbers of 'conduct disordered' pupils, who are described as expressing their EBD through, '*aggression, violence, delinquency, and socially unacceptable conduct*' (Vivian 1994, page 219), and increasing numbers of 'emotionally disturbed' pupils, who are described as expressing their EBD through, '*withdrawal, neurotic responses, anxiety states, depression*' (Vivian 1994, page 219). Although identifying 'types', this survey makes no mention of differences or changes in the EBD special school population with regard to gender. Previous research across Europe has indicated that while the numbers of all pupils considered to be experiencing EBD of all types had been increasing, the provision made for these children tended to be similar in nature and did not take account of differences in causes or ways of expressing behaviour (Lawrence et al 1985). It remains to be seen whether EBD provision today is tailored to the type of EBD being experienced by the child.

Gemal (1993) also found that the populations of pupils defined as 'EBD' are changing. She compared the needs of EBD pupils placed in residential and day EBD provision and mainstream provision with and without support and found that these groups of children had '*very different patterns of problems*' (Gemal 1993, page 310). Again, no mention is made of gender issues. Neither is it clear whether it is the pupil population that is changing or our understanding of EBD itself, as Farrell et al (1996) conclude, '*the very term EBD is controversial and virtually impossible to define objectively*' (Farrell et al 1996, page 85).

Some writers, such as Rayner (1998) take the view that EBD should be re-conceptualised in terms of a pupil's individual learning style. He argues that it is only in understanding these individual differences that teachers can devise an appropriate response to EBD. Wise and Upton (1998) and Castle and Parsons (1997) also advocate a re-conceptualisation of EBD. They suggest

that we should not focus on within-child causes, but point instead to a variety of environmental stressors, as identified by research, Ofsted, and pupils themselves. If EBD is defined in terms of these environmental factors: *'family breakdown, time in care/social work involvement, multiple moves/disruption'* etc (Castle and Parsons 1997, page 5), then the implications of this for appropriate responses to EBD point strongly to the need for pupils' emotional, as well as behavioural, needs to be addressed.

The types, causes and expression of the difficulties such children are experiencing vary enormously. This raises three crucial questions: Firstly, whether, regardless of the type of behaviour difficulties being expressed, the educational needs of children with EBD are essentially the same; and secondly, to what extent can the provision that is made to meet those needs be tailored to the individual, and finally, can we learn something about the sort of provision that is likely to benefit particular groups of children with EBD, especially girls? These questions will be addressed through a review of the available literature on the needs of boys and girls with EBD, by highlighting any gaps in that literature, and by identifying the implications of the research for these groups.

1.2 Theoretical Perspectives: Overview of current thinking on provision for pupils with EBD

The current range of provision for children with EBD appears to be based on, (or at least shaped by) one of a number of psychological theories which have offered some explanations for emotional and behavioural difficulties and some suggestions for an appropriate and effective response. Lane (1994) divides these theories into the following categories: analytical, developmental, behavioural, cultural and social. Other writers, such as Maras and Kutnick (1999), refer to medical, sociological and social theoretical bases, while Garner and Gains (1996) use the categories behavioural, psychodynamic and ecosystemic to categorise the different theoretical bases.

Psychoanalytical or psychodynamic theories are originally based on the works of Sigmund Freud, Anna Freud, Melanie Klein and John Bowlby. From these theories emerged provision based on psychotherapy, offered from Child Guidance Clinics. Such therapy emphasised the importance of early experiences and attachments, and the successful resolution of conflict. For an overview and more detailed explanation of these different models, see Wright (1993).

Developmental theories are based on the notion that children face a series of developmental tasks and difficulties in learning and behaviour arise when the child is not able to fulfil these successfully. Such approaches as play therapy and nurture groups have developed from these developmental theories. For an explanation of nurture groups see Boxall (1976).

Behavioural theories stress the importance of environment in determining behaviour (good and bad). A number of packages and strategies have emerged from this approach. For a more detailed explanation see Jones (1993).

Cultural or sociological theories look to the family and the social environment as the cause of the behavioural difficulties faced by the child. Logically, an approach based on this idea would involve removing the child from the environment that is causing the behaviour.

Social theories draw from the ideas of Social Learning Theory. Aggression is seen as a normally occurring phenomenon, caused by frustration. If the child learns that the consequences of the aggressive behaviour are rewarding, they will continue to display this behaviour. *'An individual learns to behave aggressively because it is reinforcing to do so'* (Lane 1994, page 14). Strategies based on this approach use external reinforcers, within a positive relationship between the adult and child, and desired behaviour is modelled.

It is most likely that educational providers adopt an eclectic approach, utilising a range of psychological theories in planning and implementing the provision. Occasionally one model may predominate over other approaches.

Research on the effectiveness of provision for EBD, has tended to focus on the curriculum and environment, rather than the theoretical approach. Cole and Visser (1998), for example, make a case for raising standards and improving the effectiveness of EBD special schools through careful consideration of the school environment and the appropriateness of the curriculum delivered. They argue that in order for the provision to be effective, pupils' expressive, personal, social and emotional needs must be accounted for,

'a curriculum which concentrates on practical, physical and perhaps creative experience in place of Shakespeare, a modern foreign language and conventionally delivered humanities would be more effective in meeting the needs of pupils with EBD' (Cole and Visser 1998, page 39).

However, what these writers do not consider is whether the needs of male and female pupils are the same and whether particular theoretical approaches might be more or less effective for girls or boys. It turns out that the same sort of theoretical approach to intervention and curriculum access opportunities is likely to be beneficial to both girls and boys with EBD, but few people have considered any of these possibilities.

1.3 Provision for pupils with EBD: The UK Perspective

A comprehensive survey of special school provision in England for children with EBD was carried out by Visser and Cole in 1996. They identified a little over 200 schools for children with EBD, with 9,500 pupils on role, around 12 percent of the total number of children in special schools at the time. They noted a decline in numbers of around 20 percent over the previous 10 years and this is a trend that could be expected to continue, given the new statutory guidance on inclusion (DFES 2001, page 2). These figures from the Visser and Cole study did not include children in independent schools, unit provision,

educated otherwise, or in mainstream classrooms. The study makes no specific comparison of provision for boys and girls, however, some gender issues are raised in the concluding remarks,

'Another dramatic development . . . is the growing imbalance of numbers of boys to girls in schools for children with EBD . . . At the extremes, a 'mixed' school . . . had one girl to 45 boys . . . The ratios were noticeably better in 'other difficulties plus EBD' schools . . . questions have to be asked about the viability and desirability of mixed schools. In January 1994 there were about 90 single-sex 'EBD only' boys schools but no single-sex girls schools. Are the needs of girls being addressed?' (Visser and Cole 1996, page 15).

Another large survey of EBD schools and units carried out in the early nineties found that most of these schools tended to adopt a behavioural approach to managing pupils' behaviour and it was agreed that one consequence of this was that pupils' emotional needs were not being met satisfactorily. The authors argued for the consideration of new and more creative interventions and the need to consider pupils' emotional, as well as behavioural, needs and to offer *'psychological and therapeutic support'* (Smith and Thomas 1993, page 104). This would suggest that the integration of a number of different approaches to EBD might be the most effective way forward, rather than narrowly focusing on one approach to the exclusion of all others. It was assumed in this study that both boys and girls with EBD would benefit from more *'psychological and therapeutic intervention'*, in order for their emotional needs to be met. There was little consideration of gender issues in relation to this, however, such as whether girls would be more likely to benefit from a more emotion-centred or eclectic approach. If this were the case, it would imply that girls are currently being disadvantaged and discriminated against by a rigidly behavioural approach that ignores the emotional element of behaviour. It may be that there are lessons to be learned about appropriate provision for girls with EBD that are also applicable to boys. The authors conclude that,

'It is a major implication of this research that the school or unit for these children, if it is concerned to provide a special treatment experience

which attends properly to the child's emotional and social development, must have a programme of consistent therapeutic input with suitable levels of professional expertise and full-time commitment from therapeutic practitioners' (Smith and Thomas 1993, page 105).

The case is the same when pupils' needs are being met within the mainstream, as they increasingly are. Cole et al (1999) describe *'effective EBD practice in mainstream schools'* as taking place in, *'caring and listening schools that work closely with individuals and their families'* (Cole et al 1999 page 12). Although there is no specific mention of gender issues in this article, the focus on the individual as well as on an approach that takes into account the emotional aspects of EBD as well as the behavioural again leads one to consider whether looking at the needs of girls with EBD might provide some principles of good practice that could also be applied to meeting the needs of boys with EBD.

Morris (1996) argues that in meeting the needs of disaffected and excluded pupils, it is important to strike a balance between entitlement and support:

'entitlement to a broad, balanced curriculum relevant to their individual needs, and the support available to schools and teachers to enable them to meet the needs of these pupils within the mainstream' (Morris 1996, page 36).

Once again, however, there is no consideration of whether the needs of excluded girls are the same or different to the needs of excluded boys, or even whether the reasons for exclusion are likely to be the same. In research, Farrell and Tsakalidou (1999) found that very few excluded pupils were ever re-integrated back into mainstream provision, and Dyke (1985) has identified some barriers that prevent successful re-integration taking place. If, as has been speculated, there would continue to be a need for EBD special provision in the near future, it is even more important that such provision is effective in meeting the needs of an 'at risk' group.

Research supports the view that meeting the needs of pupils with EBD in mainstream or special schools, requires a balancing act between curriculum

delivery, behaviour modification, and emotional nurturing (Avard and Upton 1992, McNeill 1996, Gray and Noakes 1998). In addition to National Curriculum requirements, for example, it may be that pupils with EBD require additional input, for example social skills training (Royer et al 1999) or self-esteem building courses (Lund 1989). Such careful planning and discussion is likely to be especially relevant to girls who may lack a natural peer group within an EBD special school due to their small numbers in comparison to the boys.

One approach that provides additional emotional nurturing, involves the innovative concept of a 'Quiet Place' available to children experiencing EBD, within the mainstream (Spalding 2000). This model draws on ideas from a number of therapeutic approaches, including nurture groups and play therapy. There is also an attempt to involve the family in the intervention. This paper describes and evaluates the use of this strategy in a number of schools and the results of this evaluation, although not statistically significant, are positive. However, there is no mention of the gender of the children involved. Consideration of gender as a factor would surely have added depth and weight to the conclusions, especially as this approach focuses primarily on emotional needs, was more effective with girls or boys. Further research is definitely needed in this area, for example an evaluation of the effectiveness spaces specifically for girls, for example the 'girls room' established in a mainstream school and reported by Hinds (2002).

Establishing a positive and valuing relationship between teachers and pupils may also be also of crucial importance in meeting the needs of children with EBD,

'When teachers are made to feel good about themselves and recognise themselves as good teachers, they become good teachers. When students are made to feel good about themselves and recognise themselves as good students, they become good students' (McNeill 1996, page 184).

Other examples of good practice in supporting pupils with EBD within mainstream, special provision, and units are described by Barrow (1996),

Boorman (1996), Hill (1997), Normington and Sproson (1997), Porter and Lacey (1999), Spalding et al (2001), and Richards (1999), who stated that,

'Inclusion is only achieved by schools that plan for diversity and work towards developing appropriate environments for all children rather than attempting to force a particular individual or group of individuals to fit the school' (Richards 1999, page 99).

This relates back to the earlier point that was made about the different possible causes for EBD pupils' different ways of expressing their difficulties, and the importance of ensuring that there are a variety of responses available to meet these different needs.

These authors have not, on the whole, considered whether good practice in meeting the needs of boys with EBD (who form the vast majority of samples of pupils surveyed) is identical to good practice for girls with EBD. Girls with EBD form a small (but growing) under-represented and often-ignored minority. It may be that girls' and boys' needs are the same. Or it may be that girls have some different or additional needs that are not being identified through the majority of research into the needs of 'pupils' with EBD that actually means 'male pupils'. If we do not ask questions about the specific needs of girls with EBD, we may not only fail to meet their needs, but also fail to learn lessons from this that could be applied to boys.

1.4 Gender and Special Provision

Inevitably, most research into EBD considers the issues for boys with EBD, who form the vast majority (c.f. the recent over-emphasis on 'the problem of boys' under-achievement' highlighted by Kniveton 1998). There is little research that considers gender issues in relation to special provision, although we know that boys are significantly over-represented in special provision, a point highlighted by Daniels et al (1996) and Farrell et al (op. cit.),

'there is concern about the preponderance of 'acting out' boys who are placed in EBD provision and about the lack of resources being directed at children whose difficulties do not cause problems for schools, especially girls' (Farrell et al 1996, page 84).

Researchers adopting a feminist perspective have argued that this under-representation of girls is indicative that girls' needs are not being met, with the available resources being directed towards addressing boys' needs. This has been found to be true both within mainstream and special provision, with boys more likely to receive support in mainstream schools for their learning or behaviour needs, and more likely to be allocated a place in a special school (Daniels et al 1996). Is this due to girls and boys expressing their EBD in different ways, with boys externalising and 'acting out' their behaviour into aggression and violence, and girls internalising and self-directing their distress into eating disorders and self-injurious behaviours? If this is the case, then the different responses to the behaviour of girls and boys, with boys' behaviour attracting the majority of available resources, could be perceived as discrimination.

Worth further consideration are race issues in relation to the identification and reaction to special needs. Research indicates that, '*overall, gender differences were much greater in the white group than the black group, so clearly gender and race should not be treated as additive, but rather as interactive*' (Daniels et al 1996, page 2), with boys difficulties being over-identified and girls difficulties being under-identified. Interactive, too, are the effects of stereotyping based on gender and disability. This disadvantages both boys and girls as,

'Boys may be too frequently identified as disabled because of disruptive social behaviour rather than educational needs and, therefore may be inappropriately placed in special classes. Girls may be left in a regular classroom without the special educational opportunities appropriate for the development of their abilities' (Kratovil and Bailey 1986). Also see Riddell (1996).

Current statistics suggest that Afro-Caribbean boys are disproportionately represented within the numbers of excluded pupils and those referred to EP services due to EBD. This raises the question of how EBD is identified and whether there are training needs for EPs, arising from this, in order to ensure that the needs of all pupils experiencing behaviour difficulties are being

correctly identified and adequately met. This has implications, not only for individuals, but also for the allocation of resources and equality of opportunity, as Farrell et al explain,

'The fact that the vast majority of pupils placed in EBD schools are boys who display outgoing, aggressive and unsociable behaviour . . . suggests that the population of children labelled as EBD is skewed and that other vulnerable and equally disturbed children may not be receiving help because their problems do not cause difficulties for schools' (Farrell et al 1996, page 81)

Viewed from a feminist perspective, this inequality of resource allocation in response to the increase in the incidence of EBD in boys could be seen as the product of social norms:

'a patriarchal culture which celebrates and encourages male violence and female passivity . . . These perspectives have helped draw attention to [the] disproportionate preoccupation of our culture with disruptive, acting [out] behaviour, and the relative neglect of children and young people's emotional difficulties' (Cooper 1999, page 7).

Given this perspective, it is likely that it is mainly girls' emotional needs that are being ignored. Cooper (op. cit.) goes on to use this theory to explain the increase in adolescent mental health disorders, *'These disorders include depression, eating disorders, substance abuse, suicidal behaviour'* (Cooper 1999 page 9), again, most likely to be experienced by girls but also most likely to go unreported. However, what this perspective fails to explain (unless through changing gender roles) is the recent, increasing incidence of 'acting out' behaviour in girls. It seems that girls experiencing EBD (if identified at all) are identified later, often when the girls have slipped behind academically and the behaviour problems may have become too severe for remediation (TVEI 1991).

One of the difficulties in meeting girls' needs is highlighted by McNeil (1996), who describes as a fundamental principle, *'a commitment to valuing each youngster as an individual and valuing the group to which these youngsters belong'* (McNeil 1996 page 182). For girls in special schools for pupils with

EBD, there is often no same-sex peer group to which their group identity can be established or reinforced, as they are so out-numbered by boys (Riddell 1991).

This is not to say that a 'gendered' or differentiated approach to meeting the needs of boys and girls experiencing behaviour difficulties is necessarily the way forward. Kersten (1989), reported on attempts in Germany to provide a gendered approach to juvenile delinquent behaviour, concluded that the research just does not exist to provide a model for responses to girls' behaviour,

'Studies of criminal youth relate almost as a matter of course to male young people, without the sex of the people under study being given any attention apart from statistical banalities' (Kersten 1989, page 129).

This research suggested that the gender-specific approach that is offered reinforces narrow, stereotypical gender roles and consequently increases delinquent behaviour.

Hudson, however, in the same issue, disagreed. She focused on social services support for girls who may not have committed offences, but are perceived to be at risk of offending and argued that what is needed is better understanding among professionals about what works for girls and *'a social and political space in which work with girls can develop'* (Hudson 1989).

Riddell (1996) and Moodley (1997) argue for not only greater understanding, but also increased inclusion of both boys and girls experiencing EBD within co-educational mainstream schools in order to reduce stereotypical responses to their behaviour. So how do we, as professionals, come to a greater understanding of the needs of girls with EBD (or any other discreet group of people) and what works for them? The obvious answer would be to access their views directly, to ask them. However, there is (not surprisingly in view of the difficulties in accessing the target group) little research that has attempted to achieve this.

1.5 Pupil views

A number of writers have stated the importance of asking pupils for their views of the provision that is made for them (e.g. O'Brien 1996), for the value and importance of taking pupil views seriously (e.g. Hill 1997), and for the importance of '*researching with students*' (Doherty 1997, page 49), '*students on the margins, the disaffected, the excluded, the educational other*' (Doherty 1997, page 45), rather than seeing pupil participants as simply, '*passive providers of data*' (Doherty 1997, page 45). Indeed, Miller notes that,

'the increasing emphasis being placed on the voice of the student . . . [has] led many practitioners who work with individual students in difficulty to extend their focus beyond what is merely observable – 'behaviour' – and to take account of thoughts and beliefs' (Miller 2003, page 55).

Many of these writers also warn of the difficulties of research involving children and young people, the potential pitfalls of taking advantage of participants who might be impressionable and of manipulating the data. Wise, for example, cautions that,

'Anyone using interviewing to gain research data should question the true rights of the participants they interview, particularly when they are children and school pupils. We should be aware of the potential vulnerability of the interviewees in certain research situations particularly concerning the degree of control that they have over the information they disclose' (Wise 2000, page 24).

Despite these potential obstacles to obtaining valid research data using children or young people as participants, numerous researchers have decided to persevere with the implementation of such methodology, such as Wise herself, who argued that,

'It appeared to me that the closest I could try to get into the minds of my pupils was to conduct informal interviews with them and to encourage their spontaneous and open responses to my questions' (Wise 2000, page 13).

For researchers determined to try to access 'pupil voice', there are clearly established principles of good practice in order to try to avoid many of these difficulties (National Children's Bureau 2002).

The first study to investigate pupils' own perceptions about (residential) EBD special provision was carried out by Cooper (1996), using grounded theory. This study identified three main factors contributing to successful outcomes for pupils placed in residential special EBD provision. The three factors were: respite from distressing home situations; positive relationships with staff and peers; and developing new, positive identities. The participants in this study were, without exception, boys, although there was no consideration given to whether the same would be true for girls or not. Dwyfor Davies (1996) carried out a review of the literature on pupils' views of the special educational provision that is made for them. Once again, there was no analysis of whether the views included girls' views or not and, if so, whether the results could be applied to girls or not.

Wise and Upton (1998) and Wise (2000) promoted the benefits of accessing pupils' perceptions about their behaviour in order for professionals to gain a better understanding of that behaviour. The pupils in this study gave overwhelmingly school-based causes for their behaviour difficulties. While this is a useful perspective, it should also be noted that such children may have difficulties in taking responsibility for their own behaviour and therefore are more likely to give externalised causes rather than taking individual responsibility for their own behaviour. The authors concluded that there was a need for support for pupils to express themselves, and for more emotional and therapeutic interventions. Interestingly, 5 out of the 36 participants in this study were girls. However, the data was treated as uniform, with little consideration of whether this gender split could have any effect on the results.

Certainly, there are methodological problems in carrying out research that aims to access pupils' views about their EBD and the educational provision that is made for them. These include difficulties in accessing sufficient numbers of girls with EBD for their views to be considered significant, even for

a minority group. Another factor is that pupils with EBD may have difficulties in taking an objective view of their behaviour and the provision that has been put in place to support them in managing it. Such difficulties may explain why many researchers have chosen instead to access the views of relevant others such as parents or teachers who work with children with EBD.

1.6 Teacher Perceptions

A number of researchers have attempted to access teachers' views about the pupils experiencing EBD, with whom they work. Sherbourne (1998) for example, investigates teachers' perceptions of the role of staff working in on-site EBD Units. Such studies have found that the same behaviour is perceived differently, if performed by a boy or a girl. Traditionally, deviant behaviour in girls has been attributed to mental illness ('madness') rather than deliberate misbehaviour or ('badness'). Ussher (1991) discussed this from a historical and psychological perspective. This could be due, in part, to real or perceived gendered differences in the patterns of expression of emotional distress. In terms of education, this has previously led to greater identification of EBD among boys, whose externalising, acting out behaviour to express their distress, such as shouting out, fighting, or damaging property, cannot be ignored. Girls' distress may have been overlooked in the past due to a tendency to express their distress through 'internalised' behaviour. Such behaviour may be easier to ignore, but at a huge cost. Withdrawal and the internalisation of emotional distress may lead to isolation, mental illness (such as depression) and social exclusion. This may go some way to explain the relatively small numbers of girls identified as having EBD and the small proportion of girls in EBD special schools. However as attitudes towards gender in society as a whole continue to change over time, so too do attitudes towards girls experiencing EBD.

There seems to have been an upsurge in interest in gender issues in relation to EBD in the mid-nineties. For example, three master level dissertations from the Institute of Education (all from the same year) all investigated gender-specific responses to the behaviour of children with EBD (see Valentiner

1996, Gibbs 1996, and Hood 1996). The findings of these studies are remarkably consistent, as shown in the following quotations. Gibbs concludes that,

'there are differences between the behaviour of boys and girls, but the perception and management of these behaviours exaggerates and distorts these differences' (Gibbs 1996, Page 2)

Valentiner goes on to suggest that,

'girls' needs were being overlooked by mainstream schools and it was suggested that counselling in schools would best meet the needs of girls and young women with EBD'.

All three researchers argue for an end to the over-concentration on issues in relation to boys,

'EPs carrying out research should be aware of the implications of carrying out EBD research on boys rather than girls simply because there are more of them and their problems are easier to identify. Such discrimination might set the criteria for subsequent interventions and result in the needs of girls continuing to be overlooked' (Hood 1996, Page 53).

Gibbs goes even further,

'a recent Guardian article . . . outlines the current argument that, in the light of boys' poor achievements, perhaps they need to be given more attention in order to encourage them to value education. No suggestion here that education is not good for them, it's not worth bothering as they're not interested etc. Serious proposals in the face of evidence that they already receive the lions share of support and attention that they should have more. My concern at these proposals is not that I do not think that young men need to be encouraged and enabled to take part in education, but that they appear to be valued at every level by all of us above young women. Young women's recent achievements in education can be seen to correlate to the removal of barriers specifically put there to prevent their achievement, to slow them down and to give the advantage to young men' (Gibbs 1996, Page 96).

These papers raise a number of issues around discrimination. Assertions are being made that girls' needs are overlooked in the research as well as in the allocation of resources. There is a strong argument here that what is being highlighted is 'institutionalised sexism' within education, with boys receiving the majority of the attention, concern, interest and resources, in terms of research and provision. Surely there is the legitimate question: when will the focus switch to include girls' views, opinions and needs?

1.7 Accessing Girls' Views

On examination of the available literature on gender and special educational needs provision, it is clear that there is a need to investigate girls' views about their EBD and the provision that is made to support them. The importance of accessing girls' own views of the provision that is made for them is most eloquently expressed by feminist academics and provides a theoretical framework for the current research. Feminist theory recognises the value of experience as a valid subject of investigation and source of knowledge. Aaron and Walby argued that,

'Ideas are not simply produced from an individual's everyday experience but from discussion with others and the sharing and debating of personal histories, acts which give conceptual form to experience and reveal the personal as the political' (Aaron and Walby (1991, page 1).

In order to do so, it is important to identify a methodology that is sensitive enough to give direct access to girl's own opinions and perspectives, and yet is rigorous enough to stand up to scientific scrutiny.

The study by Lloyd & O'Regan (1999) is one of the few which does access the views of girls. A number of important points are raised by the girls about the sort of provision they feel would be helpful to them. These include:

- Having a positive relationship with a professional,
- Feeling they were part of the decision-making process,
- Having an individualised curriculum,

- Feeling that they were being treated fairly (i.e. not being picked on),
- Feeling that difficulties out of school were being accommodated,
- Adults who listened,
- Small classes,
- Being able to ask for help,
- Not being subject to verbal abuse,
- An informal environment and informal relationships with teachers,
- More immediate access to support,
- Non-intrusive, informal support,
- Being acknowledged as individuals,
- Support that makes sense, and
- Support when they were ready for it.

The conclusions drawn from this study were that most girls saw special provision as more positive than mainstream provision because of the smaller classes, more informal relationships with teachers, and more access to support. However, the outcomes for pupils tended to fit in with expectations for their socio-economic group.

It should be noted, however, that this important study relied entirely on qualitative data and so any conclusions need to be drawn tentatively. The study set out to consider the effectiveness and outcomes for girls placed in alternative provision. It is unclear from the conclusions whether this was achieved. The research was carried out in Scotland, where systems differ somewhat from England and Wales, so a cautious approach needs to be taken to generalising from these conclusions that the same is true for the rest of the United Kingdom. The sample of participants was comparatively small: twenty pupils took part in the initial stage of the study, however, only fourteen were able to take part in interviews at the second stage. Frustratingly, the Lloyd and O'Regan paper does not disclose how the sample was selected, other than by saying that the girls interviewed were identified as having EBD and the data available at the first and second interview stage is limited to categorical data. The reader discovers only where the girls were living at the

first and second interview, and whether participants were placed within mainstream or special provision. There is a tendency towards anecdotal accounts, rather than an attempt to analyse the data in any more depth using a content analysis approach or to draw out patterns and to make more generalisable conclusions. The study does acknowledge the complexity of the interactive social situation, but goes no further in explaining this or analysing its effect.

Lloyd and O'Regan's methodology relied on interviews, from which themes were extrapolated. The follow up interviews relied on the researchers being able to trace a sufficient number of the original participants. This study raises some important issues. It is one of very few studies that accesses girls' views directly. However, it was carried out on a small scale and the conclusions are drawn mainly from the qualitative extracts of the interviews, leaving room for a large amount of subjectivity.

A more recent study was carried out for the National Children's Bureau and the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (see Osler et al 2002 and Osler and Vincent 2003). This study was also qualitative. It aimed to investigate the factors that contribute to disaffection among girls and that result in exclusion. Their rather broad aims also included being able to make recommendations to service providers regarding 'effective support strategies' (Osler et al 2002, page 2). Like the Lloyd and O'Regan study, Osler et al included the views of girls themselves. Although the focus is on strategies to prevent exclusion, rather than models of provision, there are a number of areas of overlap between this and the present study. This study used focus group and individual interviews with over eighty girls in three local education authorities and three education action zones in England. A smaller sample of parents and staff were also interviewed.

This recent research project, along with other emerging publications, gives an indication that the issues around gender and provision for pupils with EBD are coming to the fore again. This may be due to the government-led emphasis

on the importance of inclusion. This provides an up to date review of the available literature.

1.8 Explanations

Until recently, no-one has put forward a coherent theory of why it is worth considering girls' needs separately to boys, why it is important to access girls' views independently to those of boys, and why there is likely to be a difference in the results of research carried out on these two distinct populations. The study by Underwood (2003) is helpful in that it referred to different sub-types of aggression. The categorisation of aggressive behaviour into different types enables researchers, Underwood argued, to explain aggressive behaviours that arise from different causal factors, to explain 'discrepant' research findings, and to explain the aggressive behaviour of women and girls which frequently doesn't fit the traditional explanations of aggression and has often been overlooked.

Underwood identified the following sub-types of aggression that, she claims, are particularly helpful in making sense of the aggressive behaviour of women and girls. Indirect aggression was defined as behaviour that caused psychological hurt, but where it was not easy to identify the aggressor. This behaviour could take place verbally or physically. Examples given included social rejection and spreading rumours. She cited studies going back over 40 years in which it was demonstrated that girls were more likely to display indirect aggression, whereas boys were more likely to display direct aggression. Underwood acknowledges that, although conceptually these studies provided useful ways of explaining the differences in behaviour between boys and girls, operationally it is very difficult to define indirect aggression and even harder to conduct research into actual behaviour.

Relational aggression was defined as harm caused through the manipulation of peer relationships. Examples given included threatened or actual peer rejection. Interesting ideas that emerged from research into this sub-type of aggression (and discussed by Underwood) included the idea that relational

aggression may be related to 'psychological maladjustment' and that aggression might be just as prevalent in girls' behaviour as in boys', although it is of a different type. Underwood acknowledges the difficulties in measuring or researching this type of aggression. The most common method was through a 'peer nomination tool'.

Social aggression was defined as the manipulation of social situations, including friendship groups. Examples given included social rejection and 'character defamation'. The studies that Underwood referred to again found that girls were more likely to display social aggression than boys and that the percentage of conflicts reported by girls involving social aggression increased with age among girls into their teens. A developmental explanation of this type of behaviour was also considered. Underwood favoured this explanation of the aggressive behaviour more commonly seen in girls than boys and used it as the basis for the construct she developed in her own research.

These terms, while helpful conceptually, are difficult to define operationally. As constructs they are vague and imprecise and the examples given for each demonstrate the overlapping nature of the three terms. Given these difficulties, researching this type of behaviour is inevitably fraught with difficulties, which are discussed in detail by Underwood. What is clear, however, and evident in the majority of the research reviewed by Underwood, is that girls are more likely to engage in indirect, social or relational aggression than they are to engage in physical aggression. This argument has been developed more recently by Besag 2006. Underwood also made the point that indirect, social and relational aggression is also displayed by boys so should not be seen as exclusively female behaviour, nor should physical aggression be seen as exclusively male (see also Jackson 2006). There has been recent media interest in girls who display physical aggression (e.g. see Hinds 2002). The phenomenon identified here is one of behaviour preference or style. Girls are more likely to express their EBD through indirect, social and relational aggression, whereas boys are more likely to engage in physical aggression. It could therefore be argued that while both boys and girls engage in aggression, the possible causes of their behaviour could be

different and the range of responses to this behaviour, to be most effective, should reflect this.

1.9 Summary and Implications

In this literature review consideration has been given to the meaning of EBD and the theoretical approaches that underpin provision. There has been discussion about the effectiveness of EBD provision and the current situation with regard to provision for girls with EBD. Detailed discussion around gender issues, in particular the under-representation of girls in the research and the literature, has also been provided and there has been some mention of the differing perceptions of girls' and boys' behaviour, leading to different responses, and the needs to access pupils and teachers views directly. It has been argued that there has been a lack of research considering whether girls' needs are the same as boys' and whether girls' needs are being met.

In the current research, it has been decided to focus exclusively on the needs of girls with EBD, not by imposing views on them, but by accessing girls' views and perspectives directly. An initial study using focus group methodology and grounded theory, thought to provide an appropriate methodological framework with which to access girls' views directly while still maintaining scientific rigour, was followed up by a series of interviews and more quantitative measures in order to provide more rigorous, although small scale data.

By highlighting girls' perceptions of the strategies and aspects of educational provision that has been made to address their EBD, it has been possible to identify some recommendations for good practice to effectively meet the needs of girls with EBD. It is anticipated that such recommendations will lead to a deeper understanding of the issues and ultimately better management of the problem in the future.

1.10 Hypotheses which emerge from this Review

1. Girls with EBD have needs that are similar to those of pupils in general.
2. They also have some specific needs which are different from boys'.
3. Current provision is not meeting some important needs of girls with EBD.
4. Such information will have direct implications for improving the education of girls with EBD and for pupils in general

By investigating these hypotheses, this research will make a distinctive contribution to the knowledge base that exists around meeting the needs of pupils with EBD, and in particular meeting the needs of girls' whose needs have for too long been overlooked.

PILOT STUDY

The aim of this section is to summarise the pilot study that was carried out in July 2002 in preparation for the above research.

2.1 Purpose

The purpose of this pilot study was to try out the research methodology on a small scale by running one focus group with girls in a mainstream secondary school. It was hoped that the pilot study would result in a rich source of data from which emerging themes could be identified in order to guide the main research. In addition, it was assumed that the pilot study would highlight potential problems with the procedure and measures, allowing time for modification of the main study before its implementation.

The questions being addressed by this small-scale pilot study were as follows:

- What are the girls' perceptions about the strategies that the school has put in place to help them manage their behaviour better?
- What have they found to be helpful and unhelpful in managing their behaviour in school? What strategies would they find more helpful?

2.2 Research Design

It was necessary to identify a research methodology sensitive enough to highlight the possibly subtle differences in the needs of girls and boys, that allowed access to girls' own perceptions and views, and that was robust enough to stand up to scientific scrutiny. Focus group methodology has emerged as an appropriate means of uncovering underlying themes in complex human issues (see Vaughn et al 1996, Barbour and Kitzinger 1999). This methodology enables direct access to pupil perceptions, so claiming

validity. The data generated by this technique can be analysed systematically and thus the conclusions drawn are claimed to offer some reliability and generalisability. In addition, focus group methodology can be cross-validated with quantitative methods. Focus groups can generate a rich and varied pool of data. By utilising the power of group dynamics, the participant group can generate a wider and more interesting range of responses than any one individual participant would produce independently. This happens as group members engage with and build on each other's ideas, developing them further throughout the discussion.

This initial study involved setting up a focus group to investigate whether girls' emotional and behavioural needs are being met. This single focus group was facilitated by the educational psychologist/researcher. The participants were girls from Year 8 and Year 9 of a mainstream secondary school, identified as experiencing EBD.

It was planned to use grounded theory to analyse the data produced and it was hoped that this would guide the researcher in planning for the main research study by producing a rich source of data and highlighting the range of issues and themes likely to arise.

2.3 Measures

The focus group discussion was taped using a conference microphone and audio tape recorder. The taped discussion was then transcribed and typed. It was planned that the transcript of the focus group interview would be analysed using grounded theory to identify key emerging themes.

Grounded theory was chosen because it enables the research to identify from a transcript emerging themes and issues, from the content of the discussion, as distinct from the wider remit of an approach such as Discourse Analysis. This approach of data analysis involves the following key steps: identifying the big ideas, unitising the data, categorizing the units, negotiating categories, identifying themes and use of theory (Vaughn et al 1996). This process can

be aided by a number of computer software packages (e.g. max qda). In the event this was not possible, due to reasons discussed later. The researcher made an attempt at the first key step of this process, but there was insufficient data to go further.

2.4 Participants

The participants were selected to take part in this research by the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator and Heads of Year of a local single sex girls' secondary school. Eight girls were identified from Year 8 and Year 9 who had experienced behaviour difficulties at school over the previous academic year, and for whom strategies had been put in place to address these difficulties.

2.5 Procedure

Once the girls had been identified, a letter was sent to their parents to explain what was going to happen and to obtain parental consent. A date, time and venue were arranged for the focus group to run. This was to take place towards the end of term, as more time was available and during the second lesson in the morning, when a senior member of staff (Deputy Head) was available to attend. A vacant classroom was identified and pupils were asked to go to this classroom by their Form Tutors at the allocated time, during registration at the beginning of the day.

When the girls arrived at the start of the lesson, they were asked to sit around a table in the centre of the room. The Deputy Head sat to the side of the room, but did not take part in the discussion. Unfortunately, the negotiations and arrangements to conduct this focus group had been made with another member of staff (the SENCo) and there was not the time or opportunity to clarify roles and expectations with the Deputy Head prior to running the group session. In hindsight, this lack of clarity about roles had a major impact on the success of the focus group.

The session was introduced using a prepared script (see below):

From time to time everyone feels stressed, frustrated and angry. People manage this stress differently; some walk away, some talk about their feelings to others, some shout and take it out on others etc. I'm sure you can think of some other examples of how people behave when they're feeling stressed. When you're in school, teachers expect you to manage your stress and to behave in certain ways.

Today we are going to talk about some of these issues and I'm interested to find out what you think about them. I am going to ask you some questions and you will all have chance to tell me what you think. I will be taping the discussion so that I can listen to it later and identify the things that you think are important. I'm interested in what you say, but I won't be revealing any names so you can feel sure that what you say won't be traced back to you. The tape will eventually be erased. Ms T will be sitting in on the discussion, because she is also interested to find out what you think is important, but she won't be reporting to anyone else who says what.

Is everyone OK about that?

Once everyone had agreed that any queries had been addressed, the discussion was introduced with the following statement:

I understand that everyone in this group has at some point had difficulties in managing their behaviour in school.

The participants were given a stimulus sheet with the focus questions printed in large script. Questions were asked to each group member in turn. Questions were then opened up to the whole group. However, group members found it very difficult to listen to each other's answers and to give their response in turn and frequently did not respond or answered out of turn. It was decided by the facilitating EP that a relaxed atmosphere would produce

a 'richer' discussion and consequently richer data. The order of responses was therefore not strictly adhered to. The stimulus questions were as follows:

1. *What behaviours do you think teachers find most difficult to tolerate?*
2. *What helps you to manage your behaviour in school?*
3. *What does not help?*
4. *What else could happen to help you manage your behaviour better in school?*

At the end of the focus group discussion, participants were thanked for taking part and asked if they had any further questions.

2.6 Results

The focus group discussion was taped and transcribed (see Appendix I). It had been hoped that the data could then be analysed using grounded theory in order to highlight the emerging themes. But due to problems with data collection, this was not possible. The problems experienced included: poor recording quality (despite having bought the equipment specifically for this purpose), the difficulties the girls had in taking turns to speak, the resulting difficulties in identifying the speaker during transcription.

The tape was therefore transcribed, as much as it was possible to do so. The small amount of data generated was categorised by the researcher by grouping together identical or very similar responses.

The results will be described, taking each question in turn.

Question 1 required the participants to consider the types of behaviours that were considered to be problematic at school. The responses fell into the following categories:

- Verbal aggression (e.g. '*swearing*')
- Mood change (e.g. '*getting angry*')

- Physical aggression towards objects (e.g. '*chucking chairs*')
- Physical aggression towards other pupils (e.g. '*fighting*', '*punching people*')
- Unpredictable behaviour (e.g. '*psychopathic things*')

NB Terms in italics indicate the girls' own words.

It was not possible to position these categories in any particular order, given the small sample size. Other possible categories could include physical aggression towards self, physical aggression towards adults, deliberate destruction of property, substance abuse (e.g. smoking), and truanting or absconding.

Question 2 required the participants to consider the strategies that had been put in place to support their behaviour management in school. The girls had considerable difficulty in identifying these strategies. They perceived the actions of school staff as primarily punitive rather than with the aim of helping them to improve their behaviour. After some further explanation and prompting, the responses fell into the following categories:

- Friends – who make you laugh
- Being left alone
- Talking things through later
- A relaxed atmosphere/teachers who display a sense of humour
- Being on report (there was some disagreement over this one with not all girls seeing it as having a positive impact on their behaviour)
- Having a cigarette
- Punching the wall or door

e.g. '*you punch people, throw things, slam doors, make people know you are there, stamp your feet*'

Question 3 required the participants to consider the strategies that had been put in place to support their behaviour management in school, but which they did not perceive to have been helpful to them.

The girls were able to come up with a number of ideas, these included:

- Internal Suspension (IS)
- Being on report
- The school contacting their parents
- Being told off (e.g. about uniform)

Question 4 required the participants to generate their own ideas for alternative strategies that they felt would be likely to help them manage their behaviour in school. The girls found this task difficult, however this was perhaps the only question where it could be said that the girls' answers seemed genuinely more creative, as they developed each others' suggestions, than they may have been able to generate individually. Their answers fell into the following categories:

- Having a 'time out' or teacher-free room,
- Having counsellors available in school,
- Having massage available in school,
- Being able to spend time in pleasant surroundings, with comfy chairs and air conditioning,
- Having a more relaxed dress code,
- Having better relationships with teachers.

Again, the small amount of data collected meant that these categories are in no particular order.

2.7 Discussion

Some key assumptions were made by the researcher in planning and carrying out this pilot study which had a major affect on the results obtained. These

included assuming that the girls would be able to and choose to engage with the stimulus questions presented, that they would be able to follow the simple procedure by taking turns to respond to each question in turn, and that they would be aware of the strategies that school staff had put in place to help them manage their behaviour in school. With hindsight, it seems to be the case that these assumptions were wildly over-optimistic.

The girls found it extremely difficult to take turns to speak. Certain girls would consistently interrupt others, while particular girls gave minimal responses, even when asked directly. The decision was made early on by the researcher that it would be better to allow a more free-flowing conversation than to stifle ideas, in order to generate the rich source of data promised by the focus group design. However, it is clear in retrospect that this decision to err on the side of informality resulted in the conversation being structured according to the social dynamics that already existed among group members. This resulted in some girls dominating the conversation, while others held back and were reluctant to engage at all. This inevitably affected the range of answers generated and skewed the frequency of responses towards the more socially powerful group members. This would have been less likely to occur had the girls not known each other prior to the focus group taking place. However, a number of strategies could have been employed by the researcher to prevent these problems from occurring. Expectations about the purpose of the group, social roles and behaviour within the focus group session, for example taking turns to speak, could have been made more explicit and reinforced more strictly. These expectations could have been reinforced by requiring the participants to pass around an object to indicate whose turn it was to speak. A warm-up or orientation activity might also have been helpful in allowing the participants to practice the turn-taking skills they would need in the group task, and to indicate to the researcher which girls would be likely to have problems with this.

Participants found it difficult to take responsibility for their own behaviour. They also found it difficult to see the actions of others as designed to support their self-management skills. They tended to express an egocentric view of

the world and this resulted in their responses appearing to be immature. The girls perceived the responses of school staff to their behaviour as mainly punitive, rather than supportive. They did not seem to make any connection between the responses of school staff and their behaviour, as if the two factors were unrelated. They talked about strategies such as internal suspension or being on report as serving the needs of school staff rather than aimed at improving the girls' own skills in managing their own behaviour. Their discussion indicated an external locus of control. They talked in terms of things happening to them, without always making the connection between the cause and the consequence. A warm-up or orientation activity may have helped the girls by cueing them into the topic to be discussed and giving them examples of the types of responses (in terms of depth and maturity) that were expected.

Question 2 posed particular difficulties. The girls found this question very difficult to understand for the reasons mentioned above and therefore very difficult to engage with. This affected the depth of the responses they were able to give. If this research design is to be repeated in the main study, question 2 would need to be re-worded so that it is expressed in a way the girls can access. The girls' motivation to engage with the task could be further facilitated by offering a drink and biscuit at the end of the session. This pilot study suggests that any data collected from young girls may be superficial and immature, and it will therefore be necessary to triangulate this data with that collected from focus groups with adults, possibly parents or teachers. Focus group data would also need to be triangulated with quantitative data such as exclusion figures, attendance figures and educational outcomes.

Bearing in mind the nature of difficulties that girls with EBD are likely to have experienced, it should perhaps be expected that their ability to cope with a large group situation and adhere to all the social expectations of such would be poor. This focus group included 8 girls from years 8 and 9 and 1 facilitator. This number of girls were chosen and their parents' permission sought in order to ensure that even if some of them were absent, on fixed term exclusions, or their parents objected to the involvement, there would still be

sufficient to run the group. However, on the day all the selected participants were available and were sent to the specified room from their previous lessons. In retrospect the group was too large: the number of girls in the room made it more difficult to identify on the tape who was speaking and increased the level of background or residual noise captured on the audio tape. In order for this type of group to run successfully in the future it would be better to stipulate a maximum number of participants (possibly 3 or 4).

A video recorder could have been used to ensure easier identification of who was speaking and to provide additional data regarding body language and group dynamics. Girls selected from a different age group, or with less severe difficulties might have been able to give a more considered response (but these constraints would not have met the previously described research criteria). If an object were to be used to indicate whose turn it was to speak (as discussed above), that girl's name could be used when the object was handed to her, so ensuring that voices could be identified on the tape.

One additional factor which inevitably affected the group dynamics was the presence of the Deputy Head. It had previously been agreed in setting up the arrangements for the pilot study with the SENCo that a member of school staff would be present. However, the researcher had not known who this would be or had contact with the Deputy Head before the focus group took place. Their role had therefore not been negotiated and agreed, as mentioned earlier. They chose to take a passive role, present in the room but not actively involved in the conversation. The girls were therefore likely to have been unclear about the Deputy Head's role, even though the anonymity of their responses had been promised. In addition, the impact of having a senior member of school staff present in the room, as opposed to a less senior member of staff, had not been considered. This factor could have further inhibited the girls' responses.

Other issues highlighted by this pilot study were those concerned with more practical aspects of the research. There were limitations of the venue; the school that the girls attended was used as the venue and an empty classroom

was made use of. While it is acknowledged that this is likely to result in the participants being limited by the social roles that are dictated by this environment (i.e. they have already been labelled by school staff as 'naughty', 'difficult' or 'problem' girls), it is unlikely that this could have been adequately overcome, given the available resources. To use an alternative venue would have meant transporting the girls or asking them to make their own way, at additional risk and cost.

After researching and purchasing the equipment specifically for this purpose and carrying out the focus group, it was disappointing that the data could not be analysed using grounded theory. It was an additional aim of the pilot study to practice using the available software packages in order to analyse the data in preparation for the main study. However, this was not possible due to the small amount of data collected and the lack of clarity in the audio recording. Even without this additional stage of the data analysis process, the time taken to transcribe the discussion was considerable. This time requirement will need to be considered carefully before embarking on the main research study, which will inevitably produce far greater amounts of data to be analysed.

2.8 Conclusion and implications for main study

Following this pilot study and after careful consideration of the issues highlighted by it, the arguments for adopting focus group methodology as the design for this study are considerably weakened. The 'rich' data sought did not materialise and the study design brought with it additional problems in the form of social roles and expectations as well as practical and logistical considerations. The notion of 'rich' data is explained by Charmaz,

'rich data are detailed, focused, and full. They reveal participants' views, feelings, intentions, and actions as well as the contexts and structures of their lives. Obtaining rich data means seeking 'thick' description such as . . . compiling detailed narratives (such as from transcribed tapes of interviews)' (Charmaz, 2006, page 14).

The data obtained from the transcript of the focus group discussion could not be described as 'detailed', 'focused' or 'full'. In order to access the views and

perceptions of girls about the provision made for them it was decided that it would be better to use individual interviews, which through the use of prompts and body language, could be expected to generate more detailed and fluent interactions, or if focus groups were to be used, limit them to 2 or 3 participants and consider more carefully the establishment of the social roles required by the exercise.

To facilitate the participants engaging with the questions and to help them focus on the types of provision being made for them, it might be more helpful to work with girls for whom a specific intervention has been organised. Ideally, this intervention should draw on some suggestions from the literature as to what strategies are likely to be most effective with girls. Individual interview data would need to be triangulated with quantitative data such as rating scales or inventories. Information should also be collected from interested adults, including teachers and parents, who would be more likely to be able to engage with the questions and to give responses of sufficient depth and richness to generate sufficient data to analyse using grounded theory.

It was therefore decided following this initial study that the second stage of this research study would move away from focus group methodology. The aim of the second stage of this research study was to implement individual interviews with girls who were receiving additional support for the emotional and behavioural difficulties they were experiencing. These interviews were to be recorded and were to take the form of structured interviews of around half an hour in length. In addition to this, the teachers of these girls would also be interviewed. It was anticipated that this combination of pupil and teacher interviews, in sufficient quality, should provide rich enough data to allow more generalisable conclusions to be drawn. This utilises some of the positive aspects of the approaches taken by Lloyd and O'Regan (1999) and Osler et al (2002), which are described in the Literature Review.

MAIN STUDY

METHOD

3.1 Introduction

With the government's 'Inclusion' agenda, mainstream schools are increasingly being required to meet the needs of pupils with emotional difficulties. Girls make up a small but significant minority of children who are considered to be experiencing EBD. Research has been carried out into adults' differing perceptions about the behaviour of boys and girls (Gibbs 1996 and Hood 1996). It has been suggested that girls and boys express their EBD differently (Daniels et al 1996 and Farrell et al 1996), with boys tending to externalise their behaviour (displaying aggression and violence towards property and other people), and girls tending to internalise their behaviour (self harm, depression and school refusal).

If it is the case that girls and boys are displaying different behaviours, should the responses to their behaviour be different? Research into what works for children with EBD makes little or no reference to the small numbers of girls within this group, and there is no consideration of whether girls have the same or different needs to boys and whether the provision made for them should therefore be the same or different (e.g. Cole et al 1999 and Morris 1996). In addition, few researchers, with the exception of Lloyd and O'Regan 1999 and Osler et al 2002 have considered accessing girls' views about the provision that is made for them.

This research aims to access girls' views about the provision that is made for them through face-to-face interviews. Interviews were carried out with teachers to ascertain their views. Conclusions were drawn to inform good practice in the provision that is made for girls with EBD. Are their needs the same as the needs of boys with EBD and should the provision for girls be the same as that for boys?

This research project aims to investigate the educational provision that is made for girls with EBD, and whether this provision is meeting girls' needs.

3.2 Research Questions

The research involved interviewing pupils and staff from two educational settings in order to investigate the following hypotheses:

1. Girls with EBD have needs that are similar to those of pupils with EBD in general,
2. Girls also have some specific and different needs,
3. Current provision is not meeting some important needs of girls with EBD,
4. Such information will have direct implications for improving the education of girls with EBD and for pupils in general.

3.3 Research Design

This research involves conducting 40 face-to-face, structured interviews with staff and pupils in two educational settings (a mainstream secondary school and a non-mainstream, pupil referral unit). A pupil referral unit was chosen as there was no other local non-mainstream provision for girls with EBD, but it was likely that some girls who were experiencing difficulties in managing their behaviour might find themselves placed, temporarily at the unit before returning to more permanent arrangements for their educational provision. None of the pupils had statements of special educational needs, but all had been identified by school staff as experiencing difficulties in managing their behaviour in school.

Interviews were carried out with 20 female pupils and 20 staff. The interviews were structured around the following research questions:

1. What are pupils' and staff's beliefs about girls' behaviour?
2. What are pupils' and staff's beliefs about the educational provision that should be made to meet girls' needs?

3. What do girls and boys need to help them manage their behaviour better?
4. Is there anything that would specifically help girls to manage their behaviour better i.e. is there something special that needs to be done for girls?

The interviews were conducted by two interviewers, with separate scripts for the pupil and teacher interviews (see Appendices II and III) to ensure consistency. The interviews were carried out in the educational settings, in a small, quiet room made available for the purposes of the interviews, between June and August 2004. The interviews were tape-recorded and then transcribed. The data was then analysed using Max QDA software to address the following issues:

- What are the key concepts emerging from the interviews?
- How can these concepts be organised appropriately into categories?
- How do these categories interlink with each other?

The analysis was carried out by both researchers in order to maximise inter-rater reliability.

Quantitative data was also collected, including numbers of pupils out of school, looked after, involved in crime, on School Action Plus for EBD, excluded, and with statements for EBD.

3.4 Grounded Theory

The early stages of this exploratory study were informed by Grounded Theory. Grounded Theory was originally developed as a method of qualitative research by social scientists Glaser and Strauss (see Glaser and Strauss 1967). The aim was that this method would enable researchers to generate new theories that would 'emerge' from the data gathered, rather than relying on existing theories and then gathering data to support or disprove them. New theories developed using this method of enquiry would remain 'grounded' in the data and to the social context from which that data was drawn.

The way that Grounded Theory has been applied has evolved over the intervening years and there has been much debate about whether Grounded Theory can be counted as a rigorous and valid method of enquiry and if so, how it should be best employed. Even Glaser and Strauss eventually came to disagree about the nature of the methodology. Glaser argued that Grounded Theory should be an inductive approach where theories emerge directly from the data, researchers bring no pre-existing assumptions to the process, and verification of the categories used is not necessary. Strauss and Corbin, on the other hand, argued that some deductive strategies should be incorporated into Grounded Theory approaches, that researchers are necessarily sensitised by pre-existing theories, and that some verification of the categorisation used is essential if the method is to stand up against established social science methodologies.

Later researchers, such as Charmaz 2006, have further developed the thinking around the Grounded Theory methodology to argue for a more constructivist approach to Grounded Theory research. She asserts that some researchers using this method mistakenly try to apply to it a positivist objectivism. They see data as real in itself, and separate from the social context, representing '*objective facts about a knowable world*' (Charmaz 2006, page 131). In using terms such as 'emerge' and 'discover', the assumption is made that there is a truth out there somewhere waiting to be discovered, requiring only the efforts of an unbiased researcher to observe and discover the theory that is waiting to emerge. Charmaz argues in favour of a constructivist approach to Grounded Theory, arising from the interpretive tradition, where analysis arises from the shared experiences of the researcher and participants. The focus of study then becomes how and why participants construct meanings. In order to investigate this researchers must get as close as possible to the participants' experience but never make the mistake of thinking that this experience can be replicated. Theory is unashamedly an interpretation and depends on the views, assumptions and experiences of the researcher. It cannot be seen as separate from the researcher. Grounded theorists taking this approach adopt a reflexive stance and consider how the theory develops. Both data and the analysis of that data are seen as socially

constructed. Theorists attempt to become aware of their own assumptions and prejudices and to consider how these might influence their understanding of the data.

Unlike Glaser, who argued that even the focus for study should emerge from the data, Charmaz acknowledges the influence of prior knowledge and assumptions on research. This later thinking around the Grounded Theory methodology does continue, however, to stress the importance of grounding the theory in the data and the social context in which that data was collected. As Charmaz explains,

'A contextualised grounded theory can start with sensitising concepts that address such concepts as power, global reach, and difference and end with inductive analyses that theorise connections between local worlds and larger social structures' (Charmaz, page 133).

She argues that researchers often interpret the GT method too narrowly. She sees the development of theory as the central activity, with Grounded Theory providing a framework to do this, within a particular context.

In essence, Grounded Theory involves,

'the progressive identification and integration of categories of meaning from data. Grounded Theory is both the process of category identification and integration (as method) and its product (as theory). Grounded Theory as method provides us with guidelines on how to identify categories, how to make links between categories and how to establish relationships between them. Grounded Theory as theory is the end-product of this process' (Willig 2001, page 33).

Grounded theory research involves a systematic process of coding the data collected in order to generate theory that is grounded in the data. As explained by Strauss and Corbin, Grounded Theory is

'designed to help analysts carry out the steps of theory building – conceptualising, defining categories, and developing categories in terms of their properties and dimensions – and then later relating categories through hypotheses or statements of relationships' (Strauss and Corbin 1998, page 121).

Strauss and Corbin (1998) refer to three key stages of analysis: open coding, axial coding and selective coding. 'Open coding' is the initial coding procedure. It involves generating categories from the data that has been collected. In this sense, then, the categories or concepts that emerge are grounded in the data. This labelling of the emerging categories in the data allows similar items to be grouped together according to their shared characteristics. This labelling enables concepts to be shared and developed through further analysis of the data, coding and categorisation. As the data is categorised, so it becomes more manageable by reducing the number of items the researcher has to deal with. The conceptual labels used to categorise the data become increasingly complex as the analysis continues. Links between categories, queries about the interpretation of the data and the reflections of the researcher(s) are noted and highlighted throughout this process for further consideration later in the analytical process.

The second stage of analysis, which can be referred to as 'axial coding', involves further systematic organisation of the data into a coherent structure. The categories that have emerged from the initial stages of the process are further linked and organised along shared axes and paradigms. Strauss & Corbin (1998) refer to this as the 'Coding Paradigm'. This is the perspective that the researcher takes towards the data and enables further organisation of the data according to the links between categories. Creswell (1998) further breaks down the coding paradigm into a 'central phenomenon', 'strategies' (or actions resulting from this), 'context', 'intervening conditions', and 'consequences'. This second level of coding therefore results in the further systematic development of the initial categories and concepts.

The final stage of the analysis is referred to as 'selective coding'. During this stage the categorised data is integrated in order to refine the emerging theory. This can only be done once there are no new categories emerging from the data. The researcher will then aim to identify a central theme that integrates all of the categories and concepts that have been identified at earlier stages in the analysis. Creswell referred to this central theme as a 'story line'. This is

the point at which the links and issues that have been highlighted by the researcher throughout the process are returned to in order to ensure that all categories and concepts have been fully developed. In some cases, additional data may be sought at this stage, in order to further develop identified categories. The resulting 'grounded theory' can be expressed in a number of ways, pictorially, as a narrative or as a series of hypotheses or propositions (e.g. see Creswell 1998, Strauss & Corbin, 1998 and Wolcott 2001). The use of Grounded Theory to analyse the data collected in this study is discussed in more detail in the Results section.

There are a number of critics of Grounded Theory. Even those who agree that such qualitative enquiry is a valid pursuit, conclude that it is difficult to do. Much of the criticism of Grounded Theory as a method arises from the claims that advocates make about what Grounded Theory can offer to the academic world. Thomas and James (2006) summarise the main areas of weakness of the methodology as follows: Firstly Grounded Theory can be seen as oversimplifying complex meanings and their interrelationships within the data; secondly it can be argued that Grounded Theory actually constrains rather than facilitates the generation of new theories by over-emphasising the importance of the procedure and under-emphasising the importance of interpretation, and thirdly although Grounded Theory strives to be seen as a rigorous method of research ideally suited to social science enquiry, it cannot, as it claims, explain or predict reliably. I will consider a number of the specific criticisms of Grounded Theory in more detail.

A central notion of Grounded Theory is that the theory that is generated remains grounded in the data. This concept is problematic in itself. Whilst the researcher aims to ground the theory firmly in the data they have collected, there is also inevitably a strong influence from the researcher's prior assumptions and knowledge. The hope that the data remains 'grounded' (on neutral ground?) belies implicit assumptions of the interpreter about their social reality and does not fit well with a constructivist approach.

The second problematic central notion is the disagreement about what is meant by the term, 'theory'. The assumption is made that the aim of qualitative research should be to produce theory. Why? Probably because the concept of 'theory' carries weight and importance within social science and therefore justifies the research. The term, 'theory' is used to mean both the 'a-ha' moment of inspiration for the researcher in understanding what has gone before, as well as an explanation that has a predictive function. Even natural scientists, however, now question the inductive-predictive nature of theory. Einstein is credited with saying that there is no logical path, only intuition.

In an attempt to address this ambiguity, Charmaz refers to weak theory and strong theory. Weak theory maybe cannot claim to explain, just to aid and enhance understanding. Another way of expressing this is the idea that there are two types of theory: Theory as a tool for thinking and aiding understanding (i.e. process), and theory as '*a set of statements telling us something new about the social world and which can be proved or disproved by empirical investigation*' (Thomas and James 2006, page 772) i.e. end product. Even Thomas and James concede that '*understanding is a no less worthy ambition and there is a paradox in grounded theorists' continuing strivings for explanation*' (Thomas and James 2006, page 771). The problem, they claim, is that social science theory is claiming, inappropriately, to do what natural science theory can do. There is also, however, a need for Grounded Theory, if it is to claim any status for its 'theory', to provide more in terms of understanding than could be derived from common sense and everyday experience.

A third central theme of Grounded Theory that can be seen as problematic is the notion of patterns and theories 'emerging' from the data. It is argued by critics of this methodology that subjectivity cannot be divorced from the research process and that Grounded Theories are the product of the minds of the theorist and influenced by all their experiences and assumptions. It is suggested that rather than using terms such as 'emerging' or 'discovering' in relation to Grounded Theories, a more accurate term would be 'inventing'. '*Discovery is a process of uncovering, revealing, disclosing that which is*

there. The assumption in the use of 'discovery' is therefore that meaning is laid open for all to see following the application of some method of finding' (Thomas and James 2006, page 780). The use of these terms suggests that Grounded Theory offers definitive answers rather than tentative interpretations. Their suggestion that invention of theory is a better term than the discovery of theory, however, is not looked on favourably by exponents of grounded theory as it suggests that the resulting theory is just one of a series of possible explanations rather than offering the one 'true' explanation.

Critics warn advocates of Grounded Theory of over-generalisation. They warn of making the mistaken assumption that by defining and refining the research method and by using ever more sophisticated research techniques with increasing skill, accuracy and expertise, Grounded Theory narrative can be transformed into inductive theory to reveal 'the truth' about the data. It can be argued that seeking interpretation and enhanced understanding are valid pursuits in themselves in the messy and unpredictable social world that we inhabit. Perhaps what makes us human is the sense we make of our world and the sense others make of our narrative. This raises a fourth issue with Grounded Theory methodology, that of subjectivity and the role of the researcher.

Many researchers, both supporters and critics of Grounded Theory agree that a researcher cannot suspend their biases and assumptions while interacting with data. True objectivity is therefore unachievable and its potential value is questionable even if it could be achieved. Research cannot be achieved without a researcher. In choosing the area for investigation and making decisions about the treatment of the data, they are inevitably interacting with it and bringing their unique contribution to it;

'the researcher uses his or her skills to represent, in a systematic and accessible fashion, a clear picture of what is going on in the slice of social reality they have chosen to study' (Willig 2001, page 48).

Critics would argue that this devalues the end product of Grounded Theory, and it perhaps does, unless the researcher includes some reflection on their unique contribution to the data and enhanced understanding arising from it.

Meaning is socially constructed. This is as true within social science research as in everyday life. In the messy social space that is created in the interactions between fellow human beings, it is perhaps unlikely that anything can be considered predictable and therefore the attempt by Grounded Theorists to create theory that has a predictive function could be argued to be a futile quest,

'a starting point of such researchers is surely that meaning is constructed by the interpreter. The interrelationship between interpreter and interpretation is indissoluble; there is no ground, no hidden truth residing somewhere in the data ready to inscribe itself' (Thomas and James 2006, page 778)

Proponents of Grounded Theory would counter-argue that most research arises out of pre-existing theory and therefore results in repeated studies that simply verify and confirm the theories that already exist. Grounded Theory, they assert, avoids this problem as the theory emerges from the data.

'And here is the problem for grounded theory. Interpretations of the kind made in grounded theory research offer, on their own, no inference tickets – they enable no prediction or explanation, or at least no better prediction or explanation than any of us would make on the basis of our many years of experience of being human. What such interpretations offer is merely a narrative. But the point is not to be apologetic about narrative in social analysis. Narrative can be argued to offer more in the way of enlightenment than putative theory, while forsaking its epistemic pretensions. By saying it is merely a narrative, we are saying that it is not a narrative and something else: rather it is a narrative and nothing else. There's no shame to be admitted in this. Nor does one assert that the ideographic constitutes an illegitimate kind of knowledge in educational inquiry. The particular and the narrative – the vignette, the portrait and the story – are valid and proper ways of doing educational inquiry' (Thomas and James 2006, page 775)

Maybe Grounded Theory over-promises and under-delivers. Maybe it cannot offer theory, just enhanced understanding. Maybe this is enough!

In the current research, the initial stages of the data analysis were informed by the Grounded Theory. Then, having used this approach to identify key issues and themes, it was decided to analyse the frequency with which these themes were emerging from the transcribed interview data. The view was taken that, in the light of the research questions being investigated, there was some value in looking at how often particular themes were mentioned by interviewees. The view was also taken that themes arising more often could be assumed to be of greater relevance to the participants and therefore of importance in the analysis.

Content analysis is often described as a quasi-statistical qualitative approach to analysing data. Whilst sharing many similarities with other qualitative research methods, a content and thematic analysis has the advantage enabling '*content to emerge in the process of a researcher analysing a text relative to a particular context*' (Krippendorf 2004, page 19). Content analysis is an unobtrusive research technique, with the advantage of enabling data to be collected in natural settings and therefore ensuring that data is unaffected by the method of measurement. Content analysis can enable researchers to approach unstructured data, imposing structure on it through the process of analysis. This method has the additional advantage of being sensitive to the context within which the data has been generated, increasing the likelihood that the analysed data will be generalisable and hold meaning for others. Finally, this method is ideally suited to the analysis of large quantities of data (see Krippendorf 2004). Disadvantages of content analysis include the notion that rich data is reduced through coding and that the original context can be lost. To counteract this, in writing up the current study, quotes from interviewees have been used where possible in order to retain the connection with the actual words used. A further consideration is how to ensure that issues of reliability and validity are addressed in the application of this method. For the current study, reliability and validity are discussed further in section 4.2.

For the reasons outlined above, the results of this study, whilst initially analysed using an approach informed by Grounded Theory in order to identify key themes, have subsequently been subjected to an analysis of the frequency with which those key identified themes emerged. The results have therefore been presented as an exploratory quantitative content analysis.

3.5 Participants

The participants were selected by the head teacher of each school/unit. The head teacher was contacted initially and asked to identify a number of pupils and staff who would be willing to be interviewed. Pupils were identified in Years 8 and 9 who had some first hand experience the school's behaviour management policies being put into practice. Staff were identified who had some involvement in implementing these policies. The selected staff tended to be pastoral year heads.

Participants were selected from four groups:

- Girls in a mixed mainstream secondary school
- Girls in a mixed Pupil Referral Unit
- Staff in a mixed mainstream secondary school
- Staff in a mixed Pupil Referral Unit

Interviews lasted between 30 and 45 minutes each.

For a copy of the interview schedules used see Appendices.

3.6 Limitations of the approach

Using Grounded Theory to analyse qualitative interview data has advantages in that it is a flexible approach. Theory is drawn from and arises out of the data in a constructive process that occurs over time. Each step in this process builds on the previous one. As theories begin to emerge from the data their validity can be tested by comparing the propositions articulated to other aspects of the data. In an ideal world, and to enable this process to develop

purely based on the data collected, each interview should be analysed before moving on to the next. In this particular study, however, this was not possible as there were two interviewers collecting data. All interviews were conducted and transcribed first, before the data was collated and analysed as a whole.

The decision to present the data as a quantitative content analysis overcomes some of these difficulties. The research carried out was exploratory so there were no pre-determined categories to impose upon the data, the categories 'emerged' through the course of the analysis. The quantitative element of the analysis did, however, allow some consideration to take place of the frequency with which issues were being raised by the participants. The view was taken that issues that were considered to be important would be more likely to be raised more often and by more of the interviewees.

Having two researchers collecting data could be seen as a disadvantage as it potentially allows inconsistencies to creep into the data collection process, in this study it could also be seen as bringing with it a number of advantages. Because there were two people conducting interviews, the interview schedule had to be more prescriptive than might otherwise have been the case to ensure that the two researchers used the same questions in the same order and did not bias the interviews in different ways. Although conducted as semi-structured interviews, as well as specifying the main questions to be asked of respondents, the interview schedule also included follow up questions or probes in case the initial question was misunderstood by the interviewee or insufficient information was given in the answer. Making the decision whether to ask the follow up question was left for the interviewer to decide based on the length of the original answer.

So, rather than introduce an element of unreliability into the data collection process, having two interviewers could be argued to increase the reliability of the research procedure. Certainly, sufficient detail was necessary in the interview schedule to enable replication of the sequence of interview questions asked by another researcher. It should be noted, however, that interviews are social situations and inevitably not replicable in the same way

as some other forms of data collection, not involving people in real life situations, are replicable.

As for validity, it could be argued that the current research has good validity as the interviews were carried out in real life settings, where the interviewees were most likely to feel comfortable. The interviews were semi-structured and were carried out in a fairly informal manner in order to elicit sufficient verbal information from the interviewee. The influence of factors such as interviewees' perceptions of their role in this situation should be considered. For example pupils being interviewed by an adult may have believed that they needed to adopt a particular role and this may have influenced the responses they gave. Hopefully this possibility was reduced to some extent by the preamble that was given to each interviewee in order to set the context at the start of the interview, and the fact that the interviewer was clearly not a member of school staff, but external to the school.

A major disadvantage of conducting research that mainly relies on qualitative methods of data collection is the amount of time required to conduct the interviews, transcribe the data, and analyse the data. Practical considerations inevitably limit the number of interviews that can be conducted within the time available, however if only a small number of interviews are carried out, the conclusions drawn have to be made very tentatively as there is a greater possibility of anecdotal data having a major influence on the results.

Inevitably all decisions made in the planning and designing of research studies such as this one are made by balancing the relative advantages and disadvantages of pursuing particular actions and the likely influence of those actions on the results and conclusions of the research. Often a compromise has to be found that minimises the confounding influences of a number of different factors and maximises the likelihood of obtaining results that can be generalised to wider situations and contexts.

3.7 Consideration of ethical issues

A number of ethical issues were considered in designing and implementing this research. These issues in the main relate to the recruitment and protection of participants. The participants for this research came from two educational establishments – a mainstream secondary school and a pupil referral unit in the same local authority. The head teachers of these establishments were approached directly, based on the researcher's knowledge of the area. Another mainstream secondary school that had originally been asked to take part declined to do so. It was decided not to include the school where the pilot project had taken place as the pupil participants' views had already been sought and might be influenced by what was said within the focus group context.

Once schools had been identified, the requirements of the project were explained and school staff were asked to identify staff who would be willing to take part and who had some dealings, as part of their role in school, with girls experiencing behavioural difficulties. The staff who were interviewed tended therefore to be Year Heads and others with pastoral roles. During initial discussions staff were also asked to identify girls who would be willing to be interviewed and who had had involvement from school staff regarding behavioural issues over the past year. It was essential that these participants had direct experience of the school's systems and strategies for dealing with inappropriate behaviour as they were to be asked to comment on this. Pupil participants recruited from the pupil referral unit had, by definition, experienced behaviour difficulties prior to placement in the unit.

Once potential pupils had been identified, a letter was sent to obtain parental consent for them to take part. The letter was sent to the schools and they collected the reply slips and passed them to the researcher. The justification for using potentially vulnerable young people in this research is that it was considered to be essential to obtain the views of pupils directly, for the reasons explained in the Research Review.

In addition to obtaining informed parental consent, pupils and staff participants were informed about the aims and process of the research in the preamble to the interviews (see Interview Schedule in the Appendices). They were therefore given the opportunity to give their own informed consent and they were given the opportunity to withdraw from the study. No participants chose to withdraw. It was decided not to offer any payments to participants as this may have given the impression to the young people that they 'owed' the interviewer a particular type of response, rather than feeling free to give their own opinions.

RESULTS

4.1 Initial analysis using the grounded theory methodology

Strauss and Corbin (1998) describe the process of Coding as '*a dynamic and fluid process*' while emphasising the '*logic that lies behind analysis*' (Strauss and Corbin 1998, page 101). As described in the Methodology section, analysing data using Grounded Theory involves 3 stages of coding: Open, Axial and Selective.

'Open Coding' is the first stage in the process. The main purpose of Open Coding is to conceptualise or to name phenomena, '*in conceptualising, we reduce large amounts of data into smaller, more manageable pieces of data*' (Strauss and Corbin 1998, page 121). Conceptualisation is necessary in order to classify the data collected. Open Coding is so-named because it refers to opening up the text in order to achieve a shared understanding of the concepts identified. As Strauss and Corbin explain,

'to uncover name, and develop concepts, we must open up the text and expose the thoughts, ideas, and meanings contained therein. Without this first analytic step, the rest of the analysis and the communication that follows could not occur. Broadly speaking, during open coding, data are broken down into discrete parts, closely examined, and compared for similarities and differences. Events, happenings, objects and actions/interactions that are found to be

conceptually similar in nature or related in meaning are grouped under more abstract concepts termed ‘categories’ (Strauss and Corbin 1998, page 102).

The following is a worked example illustrating how Open Coding took place in the current research. This interview was with a female teacher in a mainstream school. Conceptual names are included in brackets. The interview schedule is included in the Appendices.

Interviewer: *Now I want to talk about girls’ and boys’ behaviour in school.*

Tell me about the sorts of behaviour that girls and boys get into trouble for at school. What sort of behaviour difficulties do you see girls and boys experiencing at school?

Interviewee: *The behaviour is slightly different. The girls tend to be more amenable up to a point and then from that point they are almost worse than the boys because they are in your face **[behaviour by sex/girls/direct other]**. They just tell you what they’re thinking, they don’t act it out, whereas the boys tend to act it out. They’ll throw a chair down because they’re angry or if you’ve crossed them and they don’t think it’s fair they will thump the table or something like that. It’s more physical than in your face with boys. It is different **[behaviour by sex/boys/direct physical]**.*

Interviewer: *Are there any behaviours you see from girls that are different to those you see from boys? Do you think that girls and boys behave differently at school?*

Interviewee: *Girls (with each other) are very bitchy – the old ‘cat fight’, but that’s more outside school than inside school. They do bully each other **[behaviour by sex/girls/direct other]**. Girls in the classroom tend to be slightly more underhand, so they’ll be surreptitiously doing something that they’re not supposed to, like playing with their mobile phone, or the earphone in underneath the hair so you can’t see it **[behaviour by sex/girls/direct other]**, or not actually doing anything at all, whereas they should be. Boys will*

do just stupid stuff, throwing a pencil, flicking a bit of paper, being a nuisance to someone else, taking stuff from somebody else, or out of their seat maybe when they shouldn't be [behaviour by sex/boys/direct other]. It tends to be low-level stuff. When it's really bad, boys will just flounce off – as do girls. If they can't take anymore they'll go off and cry and boys will do exactly the same.

Interviewer: *What are the consequences of inappropriate behaviour for girls and boys at school?*

Interviewee: *We tend to have quite good systems for behaviour management in this particular school. Everybody knows the system we work with. If they step over that system then maybe it's slightly different. If you look in 'Isolation' at the moment you'll find it's mainly boys [consequences by sex/boys/sanctions]. They are girls in there, but mainly boys. We do have an Inclusion teacher who has a number of different strategies that he uses with girls as well as boys. The girls' behaviour is generally linked with what's happening with their life outside – boys not necessarily so. It's often linked to anger, and so anger management comes into it [consequences by sex/boys/interventions]. I work with individuals within school (as a Connexions PA) and we have – well we have a variety of different ways that we can use, as well as 'inclusion', as well as 'pupil support services' [recommendations for girls/individual – multi-agency approach]. I think it's tailored to the individual – what we actually do.*

Interviewer: *Are there any differences in what happens to girls and boys to help them manage their behaviour better and should there be any differences in what happens to girls and boys to help them manage their behaviour better?*

Interviewee: *In the classroom, probably not, because a crime is a crime and the punishment should be the same. But when you're working one-to-one, then I think you have to work with the child and where that child is. How to move them on depends on the child.*

Interviewer: *What do you think would be particularly helpful to girls in helping them manage their behaviour better?*

Interviewee: *Giving them time to talk through what it is that's happening in their lives [recommendations for girls/individual – talking]. Giving them time to . . . Giving them responsibility for their behaviour, so if they're not managing it they know what to do [recommendations for girls/group – teaching strategies] and they can go out of the classroom and find support outside, if that's what they need [recommendations for girls/individual – time out].*

Interviewer: *What would you suggest should happen to help girls manage their behaviour better?*

Interviewee: *I think because they are good (usually) at voicing how they're feeling, then it's often easier to manage their behaviour by talking through, whereas that's not always the case with the boys because they can't always put into words what they're feeling at the time. Perhaps as they get older it's slightly different [recommendations for girls/individual – talking].*

Once this initial stage of Coding had been completed, the following categories had been identified. This process comes to an end once no new categories are being identified and all of the data can be assigned to existing categories.

Categories identified

Behaviour types

- Indirect behaviours
- Direct behaviours
 - Self destructive behaviours
 - Physical behaviours
 - Verbal behaviours
 - Other behaviours

Consequences

- Sanctions
- Rewards
- Interventions
- Other

Recommendations for girls

- Individual
 - Assessment
 - Future options
 - Incentives
 - Involving parents
 - Multi-agency approach
 - One-to-one support
 - Responsibility
 - Staff-pupil relationship
 - Time out
 - Timetable
 - Talking
 - Target setting
 - Other
- Group
 - Activities
 - Group work
 - Health issues
 - Parenting skills
 - Peer mentoring
 - Role model
 - Self esteem
 - Teaching strategies
- Whole school
 - Behaviour management
 - Curriculum
 - Ethos

- Expectations
- Provision
- Resources
- Staff communication
- Policy

The next step in the coding process is ‘Axial Coding’. Strauss and Corbin explain the purpose of Axial Coding as follows:

‘The purpose of Axial Coding is to begin the process of reassembling data that were fractured during Open Coding. In Axial Coding, categories are related to their subcategories to form more precise and complete explanations about phenomena . . . procedurally, Axial Coding is the act of relating categories to subcategories along the lines of their properties and dimensions’ (Strauss and Corbin 1998, page 124).

It should be noted that while the text gives some indications about how categories relate, this linking process takes place at a conceptual rather than a descriptive level. One tool that aids this process is the Paradigm. This is a ‘*perspective taken toward data*’ (Strauss and Corbin 1998, page 128). The Paradigm helps the analyst to identify the relationships between the phenomena.

In the current study, this process of Axial Coding took place through a system of Memos and comments on the text, identifying issues and connections that emerged through the process of Open Coding. Some examples of the memos noted in relation to one staff interview (coded 1.1 to ensure anonymity) are included below:

| | |
|----------------|--|
| Title: | Money |
| Text source: | Staff Interviews/staff 1.1 |
| Related Codes: | Behaviour by sex/girls/indirect |
| Comment: | Family socio-economic background determines behaviour type |

| | |
|----------------|---|
| Title: | Perceptions |
| Text source: | Staff interviews/staff 1.1 |
| Related Codes: | Consequences/sanctions |
| Comment: | The point he's making here is that the pupil's perception of what's happening is not the same as what is actually happening |
| Title: | Recommendations |
| Text source: | Staff interviews/staff 1.1 |
| Related Codes: | Consequences/indirect Recommendations for girls/whole school – provision |
| Comment: | Highlights the importance of positive role models for behaviour i.e. remaining in mainstream |

The final stage of the coding process is referred to as 'Selective Coding'. This is *'the process of integrating and refining categories'* (Strauss and Corbin 1998, page 143). This integration is an on-going process that involves interaction between the analyst and the data over time through 'immersion' in the data and results in the emergence of theory from the data as the researcher selects the key pieces of information that enable sense to be made of the whole. The first step in this process is the selection of a 'central' or 'core' category that all other categories can be related to. Techniques such as writing a storyline, diagrams or a series of propositional statements can aid the identification of the central, explanatory category. Strauss and Corbin explain the final part of this process as follows:

'Once the researcher has outlined the overarching theoretical scheme, it is time to refine the theory. Refining the theory consists of reviewing the scheme for internal consistency and for gaps in logic, filling in poorly developed categories and trimming excess ones, and validating the scheme' (Strauss and Corbin 1998, page 157).

The results of this process are included in the following sections. As Strauss and Corbin explain,

'A theory that is grounded in data should be recognisable to participants, and although it might not fit every aspect of their cases,

the larger concepts should apply' (Strauss and Corbin 1998, page 161).

4.2 Reliability and Validity of Results

The final analysis of the data in the current study is more accurately described as a quantitative content analysis. Content analysis can be defined as,

'a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from texts (or other meaningful matter) to the contexts of their use. As a technique, content analysis involves specialised procedures. It is learnable and divorceable from the personal authority of the researcher. As a research technique, content analysis provides new insights, increases a researcher's understanding of particular phenomena, or informs practical actions. Content analysis is a practical tool' (Krippendorff 2004, page 18).

As explained above, the advantage of using a quantitative content analysis as a research tool is that it enables the researcher to demonstrate reliability and validity. Research techniques and processes can be considered reliable if they can be replicated i.e. if different researchers at different points in time are able to achieve the same results and the same interpretation of the data. In the current research, an exercise designed to achieve 'reliability data' (Krippendorff 2004, page 212) was carried out and is described below. To be replicable, a process must follow a system of explicit rules, consistently applied. As explained below,

'Data, by definition, are the trusted ground for reasoning, discussion, or calculation. To stand on indisputable ground, content analysts must be confident that their data (a) have been generated with all conceivable precautions in place against known pollutants, distortions and biases, intentional or accidental, and (b) mean the same thing for everyone who uses them. Reliability grounds this confidence empirically.' (Krippendorff 2004, page 211).

Validity is achieved if research conclusions and claims can hold up against independent scrutiny. There are different types of validity. Face validity can be said to have been achieved when the research findings make sense and can be considered believable. Social validity can be said to have been achieved when the research findings contribute to our understanding of important social phenomena, i.e. they make sense beyond an academic audience. Empirical validity is achieved when the research findings can be said to stand in the face of other research and despite scrutiny.

It is not true to say that any such process can be completely objective, as interpretation always involves an element of subjectivity, however, various influences and confounding variables need to be considered and biases minimised or made explicit. There is a relationship between reliability and validity. Unreliable data is unlikely to be valid, but reliability does not guarantee validity. Achieving high reliability may in fact reduce validity.

The analysis used in the current study is not simply Computer Aided Text Analysis (see Krippendorf 2004, page 261). It is not just a quantification of the number of times words or phrases are used in a text. Software was, however, used to aid the analysis, as described elsewhere. The use of computer software to analyse text can be useful, but can present problems of semantic validity if relied upon too heavily (e.g. see Krippendorf 2004, page 260).

The original analysis of the data was carried out by two researchers in order to ensure that there was some validity in the concepts being assigned. The inter-rater reliability was extremely high. The very small number of differences in the categorisation of text were discussed and an agreement reached before the final analysis.

In order to further test out the reliability and validity of the categories used in the analysis, a representative sample of 10% of the interview transcripts was explicitly analysed to demonstrate the validity of the categorisation process (see Appendices). The transcripts were chosen to be representative of the whole sample (i.e. to include both members of staff and pupils from both the

mainstream and non-mainstream settings). The categorised and segmented transcribed text was then shown to two independent researchers who had had no prior involvement with the study. The categories used were explained to them and they were asked to assign each segment of text to a category. The current researcher was not present during this process to avoid bias.

Both researchers assigned the segments of text relating to Consequences of Behaviour with 100% accuracy. Recommendations were assigned with 94% accuracy. Behaviour categories were assigned with 71% accuracy.

This outcome is taken to confirm that the categorisation of both the Consequences of Behaviour and the Recommendations have good validity and reliability. The slightly lower concurrence of ratings for the Behaviour categories is disappointing, however further analysis reveals that the differences related to different interpretations of certain key words e.g. 'bitchy' and 'gossipy' and mainly related to the pupil interviews, with pupils being more likely to be imprecise in their articulation of concepts, and more likely to use ambiguous language and context-embedded phrases.

Overall, this represents evidence of good reliability and validity for the categories used in the analysis, particularly given that the percentages refer to small numbers of segments of text and so even slight differences in interpretation between researchers result in large differences in the percentages of concurrence reported. For further details see Appendices IV and V.

4.3 Research questions

1. What are pupils' and staff's beliefs about girls' behaviour?
2. What are pupils' and staff's beliefs about the educational provision that should be made to meet girls' needs?
3. What do girls and boys need to help them manage their behaviour better?

4. Is there anything that would specifically help girls to manage their behaviour better i.e. is there something special that needs to be done for girls?

For a list of actual questions asked, see Appendices II and III.

The following results are presented in three sections, relating to the above research questions, broadly categorised as: Behaviour, Consequences and Recommendations.

5.0 Behaviour

Interview questions were posed in order to answer the following research question:

What are pupils' and staff's beliefs about girls' behaviour?

The interview questions required interviewees to identify 'the sorts of behaviours that girls and boys get into trouble for at school'. This was further clarified in the adult version of the interview only as 'behaviour difficulties'. Participants were also asked to identify any differences that they perceived in the behaviour of girls and boys. The pupil version asked whether respondents 'see girls getting into trouble for different things than boys' and vice versa. The adult version asked for a more belief-based statement about whether the interviewees 'think that girls and boys behave differently at school'.

It emerges from the data that behaviour was described by interviewees in terms of whether it was considered to be direct or indirect. Direct behaviours included physical and verbal aggression, for example swearing, throwing chairs and tables, and getting into fights. Indirect behaviours included not wearing school uniform, truancy, and underachievement.

Direct behaviours could be further categorised as:

- Physical (e.g. fighting and physical intimidation),

- Verbal (e.g. teasing and name calling),
- Self destructive (e.g. smoking and drinking alcohol),
- Other (e.g. unspecified bullying and attention-seeking behaviour).

The tables presented below summarise the data collected. It should be noted that in the following tables, which summarise the results, some percentages do not add up to exactly 100% due to rounding up or down. A decision was made to present the figures to one decimal place.

5.1 Boys' behaviour

5.1.1 Staff perceptions of boys' behaviour

The table below shows a breakdown of the references that were made to boys' behaviour by staff from both the mainstream and non-mainstream settings.

Table 1: References to boys' behaviour by staff

| Type of behaviour | Actual | Percentage |
|---------------------------|-----------|-------------|
| Direct – physical | 22 | 38.6 |
| Direct – verbal | 19 | 33.3 |
| Direct – self-destructive | 2 | 3.5 |
| Direct – other | 9 | 15.8 |
| DIRECT – Total | 52 | 91.2 |
| INDIRECT – Total | 4 | 7.0 |
| Other | 1 | 1.8 |
| TOTAL | 57 | 100 |

There were in total 57 references to boys' behaviour by staff in both settings. The vast majority of these referred to direct behaviours (91.2% of the total), with direct physical behaviours forming the largest proportion of these (38.6% of the total), followed by direct verbal behaviours (33.3% of the total). Very

few indirect or self-destructive behaviours were noted for boys (7.0% and 3.5%, respectively).

5.1.1.1 Boys' behaviour: Direct - physical

The data suggests that staff perceive boys as being much more likely to display direct physical behaviour, as suggested by the following quotations from interviewees:

Boys 'tend to be more upfront and aggressive-looking, getting angry and mucking around'

'they will throw tables and chairs'

'they hit another child or teacher, smash things up'

'the boys are more likely to be violent, kick the door in . . .the boys are probably more likely to be physical with each other and brag about their fighting'

'boys have a tendency to do the 'empowering' behaviours, walking round the classroom, taking things from people, threatening just by gesturing'

Many interviewees commented that this display of physical aggression seems to be the way that boys express themselves. For example:

'with boys there are usually only two of them involved. One says one thing, the other says something else and the other just smacks him'

'the boys tend to act it out. They'll throw a chair down because they're angry or if you've crossed them and they don't think it's fair they will thump the table or something like that. It's more physical than in your face with boys. It is different'

The implication of this is that girls and boys may feel the same underlying emotions, but that for some reason they express these emotions in different ways. It is not possible to do any more than speculate on the reasons for this from the present study, but there are a number of possible explanations. There may be a biological or physiological difference, with evolutionary implications, resulting in a tendency for girls and boys to express their emotions differently. Males, for example may have needed a predominant fight response to physiological arousal in order to fulfil their function as predator. It may, equally be the case that girls and boys have been socialised into expressing their emotions in different ways through the consequences and responses that their behaviours draw. Rewarding boys for their aggression would serve the purpose of maintain social order, while less physically aggressive girls could more readily fulfil a more nurturing, maternal role in society. Both of these possible explanations therefore have evolutionary advantages.

The differences between the way that girls and boys express themselves is also highlighted in relation to their social problem solving skills. For some reason, whether it be biologically predetermined or socially reinforced, boys have a tendency to use direct physical aggression as a way to solve their disputes. As exemplified in the following quotations:

'the thing that I have noticed in boys – they can have a disagreement, it could lead to a full punch-up and they're best mates within two hours'

'I feel that girls, when they fall out, or when they have issues they go on for a long time, whereas boys, quite often, it will come to a head, they'll have a bit of a barney and it's alright again. Boys tend to just get it over and done with, maybe have a fight and face up to the consequences'

5.1.1.2 Boys' Behaviour: Direct - verbal

The second most commonly referred to type of boys' behaviour was verbal aggression. This included a number of examples that referred to swearing, such as:

*'they'll get in a temper and tell you to f*** off'*

*'There will be a few f***s and blinds with boys'*

In this second quotation, there is the implication that such behaviour is more likely to be accepted from boys, as if the response to this behaviour would be different, depending on the gender of the person acting in this way.

Some interviewees referred to 'verbal abuse', name calling and teasing, in particular teasing boys about their families. Examples include:

'boys 'take the mickey' verbally, more banter goes about'

'if you mention someone's mother, the boys really don't like that'

Some of the 'teasing' and verbal abuse referred to was directed specifically at girls. This included the following:

'some of the kids, males, are quite sexist towards the girls'

'boys use much more sexually offensive language than girls'

5.1.1.3 Boys' Behaviour: Direct – self destructive

Very few boys direct behaviours were noted by staff that didn't fall into these two categories or physical or verbal behaviours. Only two examples of self-destructive behaviours were referred to. Both of these were in relation to smoking – tobacco and cannabis.

5.1.1.4 Boys' Behaviour: Direct - other

A number of other direct behaviours were noted. Some of these were fairly low level, as well as more serious disruptive or immature behaviours. Examples include:

Boys might walk out of class or *'leave the room'*

'Childish behaviour, a total lack of discipline'

with *'boys it's more disruption'*

'affecting the learning of others'

'boys will just do stupid stuff, throwing a pencil, flicking a bit of paper, being a nuisance to someone else, taking stuff from someone else, or just out of their seat when they shouldn't be'

'quite major disruption, boys will stop, actually physically stop lessons taking place'

Others included more serious anti-social and criminal behaviours, not necessarily occurring in school. Examples of these include:

'Crime – breaking into cars'

'dealing'

'to be involved with gangs'

'they are involved in anti-social behaviour outside of school and in school. They are doing it in big gangs of boys'

5.1.1.5 Boys' Behaviour: Other

Only one boys' behaviour was identified by staff that it was not possible to categorise under any of these headings, as it was referred to only vaguely as 'a catalogue of problems'.

5.1.2 Pupils' perceptions of boys' behaviour

The table below shows a breakdown of the references that were made to boys' behaviour by pupils from both the mainstream and non-mainstream settings.

Table 2: References to boys' behaviour by pupils

| Type of behaviour | Actual | Percentage |
|---------------------------|-----------|-------------|
| Direct – physical | 8 | 47.0 |
| Direct – verbal | 2 | 11.8 |
| Direct – self-destructive | 1 | 5.9 |
| Direct – other | 4 | 23.5 |
| DIRECT – Total | 15 | 88.2 |
| INDIRECT - Total | 2 | 11.8 |
| Other | 0 | 0.0 |
| TOTAL | 17 | 100 |

There were in total 17 references to boys' behaviour by pupils in both settings. The vast majority of these referred to direct behaviours (88.2% of the total), with direct physical behaviours forming the largest proportion of these (47.0% of the total), followed by other direct behaviours (23.5% of the total). Fewer direct verbal, indirect or self-destructive behaviours were noted for boys (11.8%, 11.8% and 5.9% of the total, respectively).

5.1.2.1 Boys' behaviour: Direct - physical

The data suggests that, like staff, pupils perceive boys as being much more likely to display direct physical behaviour, as suggested by the following quotations from interviewees:

'the boys fight'

'play fighting by the boys'

'the boys here are just too violent'

'boys are more aggressive'

In fact, of the total number of eight references to direct physical behaviour by pupils, five mentioned fighting. The other three mentioned either violence or aggression.

5.1.2.2 Boys' behaviour: Direct - other

Other direct behaviours mainly referred to 'messaging around', an example includes the following:

'boys muck around more'

5.1.2.3 Boys' behaviour: Direct - verbal

There were two references to boys' direct verbal behaviours. One referred to verbal aggression aimed at girls, the other referred to swearing, as follows:

'if a boy starts on a girl'

'they let boys swear'

5.1.2.4 Boys' behaviour: Indirect

Indirect behaviours included truancy and refusal to work, as follows:

'I suppose bunking'

'I mean boys just don't care. They'll just sit there won't they? They'll just sit there and switch off'

5.1.2.5 Boys' behaviour: Direct – self destructive

The one reference to boys' self destructive behaviour was a reference to smoking, as follows:

'boys normally go off site for a fag more'

5.2 Girls' behaviour

5.2.1 Staff perceptions of girls' behaviour

The table below shows a breakdown of the references that were made to girls' behaviour by staff from both the mainstream and non-mainstream settings.

Table 3: References to girls' behaviour by staff

| Type of behaviour | Actual | Percentage |
|---------------------------|-----------|-------------|
| Direct – physical | 28 | 23.0 |
| Direct – verbal | 24 | 19.7 |
| Direct – self-destructive | 17 | 13.9 |
| Direct – other | 11 | 9.0 |
| DIRECT – Total | 80 | 65.6 |
| INDIRECT - Total | 36 | 29.5 |

| | | |
|--------------|------------|------------|
| Other | 6 | 4.9 |
| TOTAL | 122 | 100 |

There were in total 122 references to girls' behaviour by staff in both settings. The largest categories were once again direct physical (23% of the total) and direct verbal behaviours (19.7% of the total). A much larger proportion of indirect and self-destructive behaviours were also noted for girls (29.5% and 13.9% of the total, respectively).

5.2.1.1 Girls' behaviour: Direct - physical

References to direct physical behaviours generally suggested lower levels of behaviour than that exhibited by boys. For example:

'Intimidation of teachers and aggressive behaviour towards staff has grown in girls'

'chucked food at a member of staff continuously'

More serious behaviours, although less common, were also referred to. Examples included the following:

'a full punch up'

'there have been occasions where girls have had fights in the girls' toilets'

'I think girls are becoming more aggressive and violent among themselves'

5.2.1.2 Girls' behaviour: Direct - verbal

There were many references to direct verbal behaviours. These included fairly minor examples, such as the following:

'they're very gossipy'

with 'girls it's more to do with just low-level, ongoing, just an undercurrent of maybe chatter, just an undercurrent of conversation'

'girls ,with each other, are very bitchy

'girls are much more critical of each other's appearance''

There were also many examples of more serious types of verbal aggression. These included:

'the way they speak to people that's foul'

'blatantly talk to each other across the [class]room, totally sexually explicit'

'girls particularly will use vile language or a lot of body language to show, not displeasure, but they have disrespect for you'

'girls aren't afraid to screech and shout'

Some staff made reference to differences between boys and girls, in their language and social skills and the different ways that they use these in order to express their frustration and to deal with social problems. Examples include the following:

'they just tell you what they're thinking, they don't act it out'

'girls tend to be much more vocal and they also tend to be more 'clinical' in what they say. They say exactly what they feel, which can be quite offensive. They are able to use the English language better than the boys, generally, to get their point of view across. Sometimes it's quite cold'

The suggestion here is that girls tend to verbalise their frustration and aggression, whereas boys have a tendency to resort to physical violence.

5.2.1.3 Girls' behaviour: Direct – self destructive

References were made to a wide range of direct, but self-destructive behaviours engaged in by girls. These included substance mis-use, including the following:

'alcohol and risk-taking behaviour. That seems to be more for the girls'

'smoking'

'doing the drugs'

References were also made to criminal behaviour, but whereas boys were seen as more likely to engage in dealing and car crime, girls were seen as more likely to shoplift. An example of this includes the following:

'she's going to go into town and steal from Primark, when she's going to put herself in a situation that's just kind of vulnerable'

Many interviewees talked about young girls engaging in underage sexual behaviour and pregnancy. Many interviewees felt that girls deliberately set out to conceive and speculated as to some of the possible reasons for this. Examples include the following:

'they feel this lack of control and it's so sad and they control it by then having sexual relations with boys that they shouldn't be having it with'

'to have a baby by the time they're 16 because that's what they want. They want to take care of somebody'

'also you find girls that because they feel nobody loves them, they'll have a baby because they feel that that will be a solution. They also see it as a solution for housing problems or whatever and getting out of a situation that is very dangerous'

The factor that all of these descriptions of potentially self-destructive behaviours had in common was risk-taking. Perhaps this category of behaviour could be more accurately defined as 'risk-taking behaviour'. While some of the behaviour referred to was more extreme than others, there were potentially serious and long-term consequences of all the behaviours described, often involving the girl's health. This final example in this category includes both substance mis-use and sexual behaviour. It is included here because this is the meaning given to it by the interviewee, although it could be argued that it reflects more on the behaviour of the boys concerned than the girl.

'but the drinking – the girls are just as bad as the boys – I don't think there's much difference there. They can get so totally out of it that they don't know or care what's happening to them. I taught a girl who got totally drunk and was raped by half a dozen. She was in hospital for that. They just don't care when they're drunk'

5.2.1.4 Girls' behaviour: Direct - other

References to other direct behaviours could be divided into two distinct categories: attention-seeking behaviours and peer group relationship difficulties. Examples of attention seeking behaviours included the following:

'showing off'

'one girl was balancing a cloth on her nose to wipe her glasses with for a whole lesson'

Examples of peer group relationship difficulties included the following:

'there are friendship issues that are more sincerely felt between girls than boys'

'dirty looks and fallings out with each other'

'the mobile phone thing, texting under the table' in class

'girls will harp on and on and then try to get into little gangs and try to recruit their mates to harbour this grudge or to keep on'

'bullying, they do a lot of bullying'

5.2.1.5 Girls' behaviour: Indirect

There were far more references by staff to indirect behaviours engaged in by girls than by boys. Some of these related to non-compliance. Examples included the following:

'deliberately wearing their jewellery when they're not supposed to – the flaunting of the rules'

'put loads of make-up on, wearing jewellery and nose rings'

'truancy'

Some indirect behaviours involved refusals to complete work. Examples include the following:

'not bringing in bags, not having the correct equipment and then sometimes not bringing in homework'

'lack of effort, underachievement'

Other indirect behaviours involved social manipulation. Examples include the following:

'ignoring'

'they're very manipulative'

'girls are much more sly'

5.2.1.6 Girls' behaviour: Other

Behaviours that it was not possible to categorise in any other way included those expressed in more vague terms. For example the following:

'stretching their limits and boundaries'

5.2.2 Pupil perceptions of girls' behaviour

The table below shows a breakdown of the references that were made to girls' behaviour by pupils from both the mainstream and non-mainstream settings.

Table 4: References to girls' behaviour by pupils

| Type of behaviour | Actual | Percentage |
|---------------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| Direct – physical | 0 | 0.0 |
| Direct – verbal | 9 | 69.2 |
| Direct – self-destructive | 0 | 0 |

| | | |
|-------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Direct – other | 4 | 30.8 |
| DIRECT – Total | 13 | 100 |
| INDIRECT - Total | 0 | 0 |
| Other | 0 | 0 |
| TOTAL | 13 | 100 |

There were in total 13 references to girls' behaviour by pupils in both settings. In contrast to all other groups of respondents, no direct physical behaviours were referred to. All the behaviour mentioned could be categorised into two types: direct verbal behaviours (69.2% of the total) and other direct behaviours (30.8% of the total).

There were no references to any other types of behaviour such as indirect behaviours and self-destructive behaviours. This may be an issue of perception. Girls may not see either potentially self-destructive behaviours or indirect behaviours as ways of misbehaving. Alternatively, they may see these behaviours as problematic, but their experience may be that these behaviours do not get you into trouble.

5.2.2.1 Girls' behaviour: Direct - verbal

Direct verbal behaviours included five, out of a total of nine, references to swearing. There was some differing opinions in the interview data collected about whether girls or boys swear more and who is the more likely to get into trouble for this behaviour. As follows:

'girls can say the 'F' word and blame it on a boy'

'they won't let girls swear'

'girls swear more than boys'

'swearing at a teacher'

'we swore in the class'

The direct verbal behaviours that did not involve swearing included the following:

'if a girls starts an argument with a boy'

'bitching for the girls'

'I'm a bubbly person so it's just kind of about my loudness and just the way I come across that gets me into trouble'

5.2.2.2 Girls' behaviour: Direct - other

The other direct behaviours that pupils referred to included two references to walking out of the classroom or school, as well as the following:

'we just laugh and we get into trouble for it'

'some of the girls show off. The girls show off to the boys'

5.3 References to behaviour by staff

The following table shows an analysis of all the references made to behaviour by staff from both the mainstream and non-mainstream settings, in order to compare the types of behaviours attributed to girls and boys.

Table 5: References to behaviour by staff

| Type of behaviour | Boys | Girls | Total |
|--------------------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|
| Direct - physical | 22 (38.6%) | 11 (9.0%) | 33 (18.4%) |

| | | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Direct - verbal | 9 (15.8%) | 28 (22.9%) | 37 (20.7%) |
| Direct – self-destructive | 2 (3.5%) | 17 (13.9%) | 19 (10.6%) |
| Direct – other | 19 (33.3%) | 24 (19.7%) | 43 (24.0%) |
| DIRECT - Total | 52 (91.2%) | 80 (65.6%) | 132 (73.7%) |
| INDIRECT - Total | 4 (7.0%) | 36 (29.5%) | 40 (22.3%) |
| Other | 1 (1.7%) | 6 (4.9%) | 7 (3.9%) |
| TOTAL | 57 (99.9%) | 122 (99.9%) | 179 (99.9%) |

This data shows that staff, overall, made far more references to direct behaviours (73.7% of the total) than to indirect behaviours (22.3% of the total). This difference was more marked for boys' behaviour (where direct behaviours make up 91.2 % of the total, compared to 7.0% of the total referring to indirect behaviours) than for girls' behaviour (where direct behaviours make up 73.7 % of the total, compared to 22.3% of the total referring to indirect behaviours). This represents a difference of 84.2 percentage points for boys, compared to 51.4 percentage points for girls.

Another area of difference was direct physical behaviours. The data shows that just 9.0% of the total number of references to girls' behaviour were of this type, compared to 38.6% of references to boys' behaviour.

This is in contrast to direct verbal and direct self-destructive behaviours, both of which were more likely to be mentioned by staff in relationship to girls' behaviour than boys. The data shows that 22.9% of references to girls' behaviour were for direct verbal behaviours, compared to 15.8% of references to boys' behaviour. The difference is even more marked for direct self destructive behaviours, with 13.9% of references to girls' behaviour being of this type, compared to just 3.5% of references for boys' behaviour.

In total there were 122 references to girls' behaviour of all types, compared to 57 references to boys' behaviour. This is not surprising as the focus of the

research was girls' behaviour, so this will have been what was foremost in participants minds and may have lead to some task demands effects. It should be noted, however, that the effects of the references to boys' behaviour are potentially exaggerated due to the smaller sample size.

5.4 References to behaviour by pupils

The following table shows an analysis of all the references made to behaviour by pupils from both the mainstream and non-mainstream settings, in order to compare the types of behaviours attributed to girls and boys.

Table 6: References to behaviour by pupils

| Type of behaviour | Boys | Girls | Total |
|---------------------------|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Direct - physical | 8 (47.0%) | 0 (0.0%) | 8 (26.7%) |
| Direct - verbal | 2 (11.8%) | 9 (69.2%) | 11 (36.7%) |
| Direct – self-destructive | 1 (5.9%) | 0 (0.0%) | 1 (3.3%) |
| Direct – other | 4 (23.5%) | 4 (30.8%) | 8 (26.7%) |
| DIRECT - Total | 15 (88.2%) | 13 (100%) | 28 (93.3%) |
| INDIRECT – Total | 2 (11.8%) | 0 (0.0%) | 2 (6.7%) |
| Other | 0 (0.0%) | 0 (0.0%) | 0 (0.0%) |
| TOTAL | 17 (100%) | 13 (100%) | 30 (100%) |

This data shows that pupils, overall, made far more references to direct behaviours (93.3% of the total) than to indirect behaviours (6.7% of the total). This is an even more marked difference than that observed in staff's responses. The difference, this time, was more marked for girls' behaviour, where there were no references to indirect behaviours at all, compared to boys' behaviour (where direct behaviours make up 88.2 % of the total, compared to 11.8% of the total referring to indirect behaviours). This

represents a difference of 100 percentage points for girls, compared to 76.4 percentage points for boys.

Pupils, similarly, generated no references to direct physical behaviours for girls and no references to direct self destructive behaviours for girls, whereas they were able to come up with examples of both of these categories for boys' behaviour (making up 47.0% and 5.9% of the total number of references to boys' behaviour, respectively).

In contrast, there was a higher percentage of the total number of references to girls' behaviours that could be categorised as direct verbal behaviours (69.2%) than the percentage of the total number of references to boys' behaviours that could be similarly labelled (11.8%).

In total there were 13 references to girls' behaviour of all types, compared to 17 references to boys' behaviour. This is interesting and may suggest that the girls being interviewed were unable to accurately identify and take responsibility for their own behaviour, or that they were reluctant to admit to behaving in negative ways because of the impression of themselves they wanted to present in school or because they had particular expectations about what the interviewers wanted to hear. It should be noted that all the pupils interviewed were girls.

The effects of the pupils' comments are potentially exaggerated due to the smaller sample size (30 references to behaviour in total compared to 179 references by staff to behaviour). It does reinforce, however, the decision to triangulate pupils' responses with adults' responses, as the pupils were unable to generate sufficient quantity or quality of responses to analyse.

5.5 Mainstream and non-mainstream references to behaviour

The following tables show an analysis of all the references made to behaviour by staff and pupils from the mainstream setting and the non-mainstream setting, separately, in order to compare the types of behaviours they attributed

to girls and boys, by respondents from the two types of setting and to identify any differences between them.

Table 7: References to behaviour by staff and pupils from the mainstream setting

| Type of behaviour | Boys | Girls | Total |
|---------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Direct – physical | 15 (44.1%) | 6 (10.0%) | 21 (22.3%) |
| Direct – verbal | 2 (5.9%) | 18 (30.0%) | 20 (21.3%) |
| Direct – self-destructive | 2 (5.9%) | 6 (10.0%) | 8 (8.5%) |
| Direct – other | 11 (32.3%) | 12 (20.0%) | 23 (24.5%) |
| DIRECT – Total | 30 (88.2%) | 42 (70.0%) | 72 (76.6%) |
| INDIRECT – Total | 4 (11.8%) | 16 (26.7%) | 20 (21.3%) |
| Other | 0 (0.0%) | 2 (3.3%) | 2 (2.1%) |
| TOTAL | 34 (100%) | 60 (100%) | 94 (100%) |

Table 8: References to behaviour by staff and pupils from the non-mainstream setting

| Type of behaviour | Boys | Girls | Total |
|---------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Direct – physical | 15 (38.5%) | 5 (6.6%) | 20 (17.4%) |
| Direct – verbal | 9 (23.1) | 19 (25.0%) | 28 (24.3%) |
| Direct – self-destructive | 1 (2.5%) | 11 (14.5%) | 12 (10.4%) |
| Direct – other | 11 (28.2%) | 16 (21.0%) | 27 (23.5%) |
| DIRECT – Total | 36 (92.3%) | 51 (67.1%) | 87 (75.6%) |
| INDIRECT – Total | 2 (5.1%) | 21 (27.6%) | 23 (20.0%) |
| Other | 1 (2.5%) | 4 (%.3%) | 5 (4.3%) |

| | | | |
|--------------|-------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| TOTAL | 39 (99.9%) | 76 (100%) | 115 (99.9%) |
|--------------|-------------------|------------------|--------------------|

It is interesting to note the overall consistency of the percentage breakdowns of references to each category of behaviour. These vary very little between the mainstream and non-mainstream participants' responses (i.e. 76.6% compared to 75.6% for mainstream and non-mainstream references to direct behaviours, as a percentage of the total number of references to behaviour by each group, and 21.3% compared to 20.0% for mainstream and non-mainstream references to indirect behaviours, as a percentage of the total number of references to behaviour by each group), when references to both girls' and boys' behaviours are looked at together.

These differences remain when references to girls' and boys' behaviours are looked at separately. The size of the difference, however, does vary. For boys, there is a greater percentage point difference between the number of references to direct and indirect behaviours in non-mainstream settings, compared to mainstream settings (87.2 compared to 76.4 percentage points difference). For girls, in contrast, this phenomenon is reversed. There is a slightly greater percentage point difference between the number of references to direct and indirect behaviours in mainstream settings, compared to non-mainstream settings (43.3 compared to 39.5 percentage points difference). It is interesting to speculate on the possible reasons for this. Does girls' direct, inappropriate behaviour stand out more in a mainstream setting? Does the norm for expected and acceptable behaviour differ between the two types of setting?

There is some variation when the categories of behaviour are scrutinised in more detail. There are a greater percentage of references to boys' direct verbal behaviours, as a percentage of the total number of references to boys' behaviour, from non-mainstream interviewees, compared to mainstream interviewees (23.1% compared to 5.9%). Does this mean that there is more likely to be verbal aggression from boys in a non-mainstream setting, than a mainstream one, and if so is it because more severe behaviours are being

targeted, because there is greater tolerance of inappropriate use of language, or because inappropriate language is more likely to be picked up by staff because smaller groups mean that what is said is more likely to be heard?

5.6 Summary of all references to behaviour

The following table shows a summary of all the references made to behaviour by staff and pupils from both the mainstream and the non-mainstream setting.

Table 9: Summary of total references to behaviour

| Type of behaviour | Boys | Girls | Total |
|---------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Direct – physical | 30 (40.5%) | 11 (8.1%) | 41 (19.6%) |
| Direct – verbal | 11 (14.9%) | 37 (27.4%) | 48 (23.0%) |
| Direct – self-destructive | 3 (4.0%) | 17 (12.6%) | 20 (9.6%) |
| Direct – other | 23 (31.1%) | 28 (20.7%) | 51 (24.4%) |
| DIRECT – Total | 67 (90.5%) | 93 (68.9%) | 160 (76.6%) |
| INDIRECT – Total | 6 (8.1%) | 36 (26.7%) | 42 (20.1%) |
| Other | 1 (1.3%) | 6 (4.4%) | 7 (3.3%) |
| TOTAL | 74 (99.9%) | 135 (100%) | 209 (100%) |

This data shows that, overall, there were sufficient items in each category in order to justify its existence. The largest category, overall, was direct behaviours (76.6% of the total number of references to behaviour), compared to indirect behaviours (20.1% of the total number of references to behaviour). When the numbers of references to girls' and boys' behaviour are examined separately, the difference is found to be more marked for references to boys' behaviours.

The data shows that boys are perceived overall by staff and pupils from both mainstream and non-mainstream settings to be more likely to display direct behaviours than girls (90.5% of the total number of references to boys'

behaviour, compared to 68.9% of the total number of references to girls' behaviour, were of this type). Girls, by contrast, are perceived overall by staff and pupils from both mainstream and non-mainstream settings to be more likely to display indirect behaviours than boys (26.7% of the total number of references to girls' behaviour, compared to 8.1% of the total number of references to boys' behaviour, were of this type).

References to direct behaviours can be further broken down into the following types: physical, verbal, self destructive and other. Each of these types of direct behaviour can be studied in turn. The data shows that boys are perceived as more likely to display physical behaviours (40.5% of the total number of references to boys' behaviour, compared to 8.1% of the total number of references to girls' behaviour were of this type). The data shows that girls, by contrast, are perceived as more likely to display verbal behaviours (27.4% of the total number of references to girls' behaviour, compared to 14.9% of the total number of references to boys' behaviour were of this type). It also emerges from the data that girls are perceived as more likely to display self destructive behaviours (12.6% of the total number of references to girls' behaviour, compared to 4.0% of the total number of references to boys' behaviour were of this type). Other examples of direct behaviours accounted for a further 20.7% of the total number of references to girls' behaviour and 31.1% of the total number of references to boys' behaviour. A small percentage of behaviours (3.3% of the total) were unable to be classified as fitting into any particular category. This was mainly because the references that were made in the interviews were insufficiently precise to allow a judgement to be made.

5.7 Summary of key issues relating to behaviour

Boys were perceived by both staff and pupils as being more likely to display direct physical behaviours than girls.

Boys were much more likely to be described by staff and pupils as engaging in direct behaviours than indirect behaviours. Boys were most likely to be

described by staff and pupils as engaging in direct physical behaviours. Boys were least likely to be described by staff as engaging in indirect or self-destructive behaviours.

Girls were more likely to be described by staff as engaging in direct behaviours than indirect behaviours, including direct physical behaviour, but the difference between the staff references made to direct and indirect behaviours was not as marked as the difference for boys.

Staff explained sex differences in behaviour in terms of boys and girls experiencing the same emotions, but expressing these differently i.e. boys tend to act out and girls tend to internalise their emotions. This concurs with previous research studies.

Pupils overall were more likely to mention direct than indirect behaviours. Girls themselves made no references to their own direct physical behaviour, although they were able to think of examples of boys' direct physical behaviours. They also made no references to their own indirect or self-destructive behaviours.

Girls were more likely to be described by staff as engaging in indirect and self-destructive behaviours than boys. When referring to criminal behaviours, girls were described by staff as being more likely to shoplift, whereas boys were described as more likely to engage in dealing and car crime.

Staff also expressed concerns about girls engaging in underage sexual activity and becoming pregnant. This has been included as potentially self-destructive behaviour for girls, although recent evidence shows that girls who become teenage mothers can go on to exceed expectations academically (reference Guardian newspaper 9th June 2006).

Staff described girls as being more likely to verbalise their feelings, rather than resorting to physical violence. Staff were more likely to mention direct verbal and direct self-destructive behaviours in relation to girls than boys.

Pupils were also more likely to mention direct verbal behaviours in relation to girls than boys.

6.0 Consequences

Interview questions were posed about the likely consequences of girls' and boys' behaviour.

The interview questions required interviewees to identify 'the consequences of inappropriate behaviour for girls and boys at school'. In the pupil version of the interview schedule, this question was asked as, 'what happens when a girl or boy gets into trouble at school?' To prompt interviewees to include a broad range of possible consequences, including some possible positive consequences, the following prompts were added: 'what helps them to stay out of trouble in the future?' (pupil version) and 'what happens to help girls and boys manage their behaviour better in school?' (teacher version).

Further questions went on to investigate whether there were any differences in the strategies employed to help pupils manage their behaviour, and whether in the participants' view there should be any differences. This was expressed in the adult version of the interview schedule as, 'to help them manage their behaviour better' and in the pupil version as, 'to help them stay out of trouble in the future'.

It was possible to classify the range of consequences referred to in the interview data into the following categories:

- Sanctions
- Rewards
- Interventions
- Indirect
- Other

6.1 Consequences: Sanctions

6.1.1 Staff perceptions of sanctions for girls' behaviour

All the references by staff to the potential sanctions imposed as a consequence of girls' behaviour referred to exclusion from school, for example the following:

'I know a couple of girls I've been working with have been excluded for swearing at the teacher'.

6.1.2 Pupil perceptions of sanctions for girls' behaviour

One reference by a pupil to the potential sanctions imposed as a consequence of girls' behaviour referred to detention, as follows:

'the girl would just get detention'.

The rest were less specific and tended to refer simply to getting *'into trouble'*.

6.1.3 Staff perceptions of sanctions for boys' behaviour

When talking about possible sanctions for boys' behaviour, staff referred to internal exclusion from lessons, or 'isolation' (almost half of the references to sanctions for boys' behaviour were of this type), as well as exclusion from school (a third of the references to sanctions for boys' behaviour were of this type). Examples include the following:

'if you look in 'Isolation' at the moment you'll find it's mainly boys'

'in our isolation room just at the minute there are eleven boys and one girl'.

6.1.4 Pupil perceptions of sanctions for boys' behaviour

Pupils' references to sanctions for boys' behaviour included descriptions of getting sent out of class, '*suspension*' as well as the more vague, getting '*into trouble*'. Examples include the following:

'the boy would get suspended or something'

'boys get told off for fighting'.

6.2 Consequences: Rewards

6.2.1 Staff perceptions of rewards for girls' behaviour

Staff interviewees were able to generate seven times more references to rewards for behaviour than pupils were able to. Some examples include phone calls home and treats, as follows:

'some of them love a good phone call home . . . the girls have a good day and it's one day out of ten, but they'll beg you to get in touch with their parents, which I'm happy to do and I do constantly because I think the mums and dads need a warm pat too, just to say 'thank you'

'a trip to the snooker hall wouldn't quite appease some of our girls. Certainly, some of the rewards are stereotypically appropriate. We did a beauty day for girls. Now to be fair, there were some girls at that beauty day that would have rather gone to the snooker. There are girls like that and I would have been one of them'

'last week the girls had a pampering session'

'I've had a Health and Beauty day here, I've had my hairdresser come in and she did the hair for the girls, cut their hair'.

6.2.2 Pupil perceptions of rewards for girls' behaviour

There were no references by pupils to rewards for girls' behaviour.

6.2.3 Staff perceptions of rewards for boys' behaviour

There was only one reference by a member of staff to rewards for boys' behaviour, as follows:

'the boys need to have something to work for. My tutor group has worked this term to have a trip to do a ropes course. That's something that they've worked on and they've earned the points and that was a really good motivator for the boys'.

6.2.4 Pupil perceptions of rewards for boys' behaviour

There was only one reference by a pupil to rewards for boys' behaviour, as follows:

'the boys are always on the pool table'.

6.3 Consequences: Interventions

6.3.1 Staff perceptions of interventions for girls' behaviour

This was the largest category of potential consequences generated by interviewees. The interventions described by staff included group work, such as anger management groups, social skills groups and self esteem groups. These accounted for a quarter of the references to interventions put in place for girls.

Interventions involving mentoring, through developing relationships with an older role-model accounted for another quarter of the references to interventions put in place for girls.

A further quarter of the references to interventions put in place for girls involved having a counsellor or someone to talk to.

The remaining references included a variety of creative approaches, such as health and sexual health education. One intervention involved the girls working with younger children, and acting as role models themselves, in order to boost their self esteem, as follows:

'she loved it. She loved the responsibility. She said 'I loved it' because one of them kept holding her hand. She felt loved really and she felt important and she felt valued and also she said, 'I can teach her something that I know'.

6.3.2 Pupil perceptions of interventions for girls' behaviour

Pupils were able to generate a number of references to the interventions that had been put in place for them, with varying success, including anger management, a part time timetable, and being able to talk to someone about their difficulties. Examples include the following:

'I've been given anger management but all they do is ask you questions like, what sort of food do you like? Do you have a boyfriend? Anger management doesn't work for me'

'they felt I was better in the afternoons than in the mornings so now I just come in the afternoons and I feel much more better'

'they usually talk to us about it, whereas with the boys, they'll leave it before they talk to them.'

There is further exploration of the perceived differences between the interventions put in place for girls and boys at the end of this section.

6.3.3 Staff perceptions of interventions for boys' behaviour

Anger management was mentioned in a third of the references by staff to interventions for boys. Examples include the following:

'with anger management we do just boy groups and just girl groups'.

Other interventions suggested included humour, conflict resolution strategies and work with parents. Examples include the following:

humour and *'being spoken to jovially'*.

6.3.4 Pupil perceptions of interventions for boys' behaviour

There was only one reference by pupils to interventions put in place as a consequence of boys' behaviour, which was about discussing the behaviour with the boys following an incident.

6.4 Consequences: Indirect

A very small number of indirect consequences of behaviour were noted, or consequences that it was not possible to classify under any other category. These included boys being blamed for behaviour that was not their fault and being given different activities (when it was unclear whether taking part in these alternative activities was rewarding in itself or not).

6.5 Differences between the consequences for girls and boys

One of the questions asked during the interview specifically asked for participants' views about whether there are differences between the consequences of boys' and girls' behaviour, and whether they felt there should be differences.

6.6 Staff views

Staff were able to recognise some unintentional differences in the way they responded to boys and girls. Examples of this include the following:

For me, as an individual, I might be softer, with girls’.

Some deliberate and intentional differences in the way that girls and boys were dealt with in school were identified. Examples of this include the following:

‘I think the girls that we have need to have a little bit more reasoning behind things. When they get in trouble, it needs to be . . . it works better for me when I can explain to them what they’ve done wrong, why it’s a problem – and usually after they’ve calmed down a bit I think they need a lot more talking it through. I just think that the difference is that girls are so needy and so talking to them and spending time with them and letting them still get in trouble, but if they’re in collegial support, not just ignoring them and making them work on their own – just talking to them’

we do have a school nurse who comes in to talk to boys and girls but she is very much an obvious person for girls to go to and they can book an appointment. Boys will do the same, but it tends to be more for the girls. We feel it’s more for the girls’

‘but I also think there’s scope for a girls’ counsellor, and probably for a boys’ counsellor, but particularly for a girls’ counsellor because there are differences and I think girls on a one-to-one basis and in very small groups might welcome and find value in the opportunity to discuss things about their week’.

Staff also identified a common perception among pupils that there was a difference in the way that girls and boys were treated. Some staff also offered possible explanations for this belief. Examples of this include the following:

'I think there's a perception from the girls that it's different, in terms of, if there's fights, suspensions would always follow, and the perception is maybe the girls sometimes get away with that, maybe because it doesn't happen as much so it seems that way'

'I think there's a perception of a difference, definitely. Maybe it's because there are more boys than girls, that more boys are excluded. Maybe it's a case of well that wouldn't happen if I was a girl'.

Some staff referred to the potential advantages of having a female member of staff work with girls and a male member of staff work with boys. This was seen as a positive strategy, not only in terms of providing positive, same sex role-models, but also because it subtly changed the nature of the interaction between the adult and child. Examples of this include the following:

'obviously with lads, as a male member of staff, I can put a pat on the shoulder or be a little bit more blunt with them'

'whereas a female member of staff dealing with a girl can put their arm round her or whatever'

'because I'm younger I can have pretty good relationships with the girls because I know the songs on the radio and things like that. In a lot of ways, I think they look up to me a lot because I'm ten years older than them so I'm not that much older and I got into trouble a lot at school. I think that's a motivator for them too, is hearing there are options out there'.

6.7 Pupil views

These examples highlight some of the girls' perceptions of a difference between the consequences of behaviour for boys and girls. In general girls were considered to get away with more. Examples of this include the following:

'say we swore in class and we say 'sorry', we'll probably get away with it, but if a boy done it then it would be a different story really. They'll probably get sent out or something like that'

'I suppose boys get into trouble for more cheekier things and the girls don't. Totally. Yeah. Boys will just do something and the teacher will be like 'Get off that pattern' or hugging in the hallway. You get into trouble for hugging and kissing in the hallway and even if it's still in our own time. But girls don't.'

There was not total agreement with this point of view, however, some contradictory comments include the following:

'if a girl starts on a boy, then the girls will get in trouble, obviously, but if a boy starts on a girl, then the girl still gets into trouble'

'sometimes they let the boys swear but they won't let the girls swear'

'they always check up on the girls. I never see them checking up on the boys.'

It is not possible to say from the current research whether this perceived difference in the way that girls' and boys' behaviour is responded to at school is the reflection of a genuine difference or simply the perception of the staff and pupils involved, as represented by those interviewed here. It is likely that there are some differences in the way that we deal with girls and boys within the context of a school, as there have been found to be differences in the

research in many contexts. If this line of argument is followed, it is also likely that some of these differences will be unintentional and that those acting in this way will be unaware of the differences that are exhibited in their behaviour.

The tables presented below summarise the data collected.

6.8 Consequences of girls' behaviour

The following table shows a breakdown of perceived consequences of girls' behaviour identified by pupils and staff.

Table 10: Consequences of girls' behaviour identified by pupils and staff

| Type of consequence | Identified by staff | Identified by pupils | Total |
|---------------------|---------------------|----------------------|------------------|
| Sanction | 3 (11.5%) | 8 (53.3%) | 11 (26.8%) |
| Reward | 6 (23.1%) | 0 (0.0%) | 6 (14.6%) |
| Intervention | 16 (61.5%) | 4 (26.7%) | 20 (48.8%) |
| Indirect | 1 (3.8%) | 1 (6.7%) | 2 (4.9%) |
| Other | 0 (0.0%) | 2 (13.3%) | 2 (4.9%) |
| TOTAL | 26 (99.9%) | 15 (100%) | 41 (100%) |

The data presented in this table shows that pupils see sanctions as the most frequent consequences of girls' inappropriate behaviour at school (53.3% of the total number of references to consequences for girls by pupils were of this type). Staff, by contrast, see interventions as the most likely consequence of inappropriate behaviour (61.5% of the total number of references to consequences for girls by staff were of this type). In a sense, this is not surprising as pupils could be expected to be more likely to perceive any adult intervention in their behaviour as punitive, whereas the member of staff is

likely to be choosing the particular way they intervene in order to make it less likely that the behaviour is repeated in the future. Pupils were also unable to identify any rewards that might occur as a consequence of behaviour.

6.9 Consequences of boys' behaviour

The following table shows a breakdown of perceived consequences of boys' behaviour identified by pupils and staff.

Table 11: Consequences of boys' behaviour identified by pupils and staff

| Type of consequence | Identified by staff | Identified by pupils | Total |
|---------------------|---------------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| Sanction | 7 (38.8%) | 8 (61.5%) | 15 (48.4%) |
| Reward | 1 (5.6%) | 1 (7.7%) | 2 (6.4%) |
| Intervention | 10 (55.6%) | 1 (7.7%) | 11 (35.5%) |
| Indirect | 0 (0.0%) | 1 (7.7%) | 1 (3.2%) |
| Other | 0 (0.0%) | 2 (15.4%) | 2 (6.4%) |
| TOTAL | 18 (100%) | 13 (100%) | 31 (99.9%) |

The data presented in this table shows that pupils see sanctions as the most frequent consequences of boys' inappropriate behaviour at school (61.5% of the total number of references to consequences for boys by pupils were of this type). Staff, by contrast, see interventions as the most likely consequence of inappropriate behaviour (55.6% of the total number of references to consequences for boys by staff were of this type). This is a similar picture as the one that emerged for girls' behaviour.

6.10 Consequences of behaviour in mainstream settings

The following table shows a breakdown of perceived consequences of behaviour identified by pupils and staff in a mainstream setting.

Table 12: Perceived consequences of behaviour identified by pupils and staff in mainstream setting

| Type of consequence | Boys | Girls | Total |
|---------------------|------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Sanction | 10 (66.7%) | 4 (33.3%) | 14 (51.8%) |
| Reward | 0 (0.0%) | 0 (0.0%) | 0 (0.0%) |
| Intervention | 5 (33.3%) | 8 (66.7%) | 13 (48.1%) |
| Indirect | 0 (0.0%) | 0 (0.0%) | 0(0.0%) |
| Other | 0 (0.0%) | 0 (0.0%) | 0 (0.0%) |
| TOTAL | 15 (100%) | 12 (100%) | 27 (99.9%) |

This data shows that the pupils and staff from this mainstream setting who were interviewed only identified consequences in terms of sanctions or interventions. Interestingly, the majority of consequences that were referred to in relation to girls' behaviour were interventions (66.7% of the total number of references to consequences of girls' behaviour from staff and pupils in this mainstream school), and the majority of consequences that were referred to in relation to boys' behaviour were sanctions (also 66.7% of the total number of references to consequences of boys' behaviour from staff and pupils in this mainstream school). This difference could be a genuine difference of perception, or could be a consequence itself of the task demands, in the sense that participants knew the research was focused on girls' behaviour and may therefore have been more 'tuned in' to thinking about interventions that they might put in place to help girls improve the management of their behaviour.

6.11 Consequences of behaviour in non-mainstream settings

The following table shows a breakdown of perceived consequences of behaviour identified by pupils and staff in a non-mainstream setting.

Table 13: Perceived consequences of behaviour identified by pupils and staff in non-mainstream setting

| Type of consequence | Boys | Girls | Total |
|---------------------|-------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| Sanction | 5 (31.2%) | 7 (24.1%) | 12 (26.7%) |
| Reward | 2 (12.5%) | 6 (20.7%) | 8 (17.8%) |
| Intervention | 6 (37.5%) | 12 (41.4%) | 18 (40.0%) |
| Indirect | 1 (6.2%) | 2 (6.9%) | 3 (6.7%) |
| Other | 2 (12.5%) | 2 (6.9%) | 4 (8.9%) |
| TOTAL | 16 (99.9%) | 29 (100%) | 45 (100.1%) |

Staff and pupils interviewed from the non-mainstream settings were able to identify a wider range of potential consequences of girls' and boys' behaviour. The most common consequences referred to were interventions, for both girls' and boys' behaviour (41.4% of the total number of references to consequences of girls' behaviour and 37.5% of the total number of references to consequences of boys' behaviour).

Sanctions were more likely to be referred to as a consequence of boys' behaviour (31.2% of the total number of references to consequences of boys' behaviour, as compared to 24.1% of the total number of references to consequences of girls' behaviour). Rewards were more likely to be referred to as a consequence of girls' behaviour (20.7% of the total number of references to consequences of girls' behaviour, as compared to 12.5% of the total number of references to consequences of boys' behaviour).

6.12 Summary of all references to consequences of behaviour

The following table shows a summary of all perceived consequences of behaviour identified by pupils and staff in mainstream and non-mainstream settings.

Table 14: All perceived consequences of behaviour

| Type of consequence | Boys | Girls | Total |
|---------------------|-------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Sanction | 15 (48.4%) | 11 (26.8%) | 26 (36.1%) |
| Reward | 2 (6.4%) | 6 (14.6%) | 8 (11.1%) |
| Intervention | 11 (35.5%) | 20 (48.8%) | 31 (43.0%) |
| Indirect | 1 (3.3%) | 2 (4.9%) | 3 (4.2%) |
| Other | 2 (6.4%) | 2 (4.9%) | 4 (5.6%) |
| TOTAL | 31 (99.9%) | 41 (100%) | 72 (100%) |

This data shows that, overall, the consequences of behaviour referred to by staff and pupils from mainstream and non-mainstream settings, were most likely to be interventions (43.0% of the total number of references to consequences), followed by sanctions (36.1% of the total number of references to consequences).

In this study sanctions were most often referred to as a consequence of boys' behaviour (48.4% of the total number of references to consequences of boys' behaviour, compared to 26.8% of the total number of references to consequences of girls' behaviour were of this type). By contrast, rewards and interventions were more often referred to as a consequence of girls' behaviour (14.6% of the total number of references to consequences of girls' behaviour, compared to 6.4% of the total number of references to consequences of boys' behaviour concerned rewards, whereas 48.8% of the total number of references to consequences of girls' behaviour, compared to 35.5% of the

total number of references to consequences of boys' behaviour concerned interventions. It is unclear from the present research whether this is due to a genuine tendency for schools to make use of behavioural interventions and rewards in order to modify girls' behaviour and sanctions in order to modify boys' behaviour, a perception by pupils and staff that this is the case, or an effect of the task demands (a result of the participants' perceptions about what was required of them in this context).

6.13 Summary of key issues relating to consequences

When asked about the consequences of behaviour in schools, both staff and pupils identified more sanctions for boys than for girls. Staff identified more rewards for girls than for boys, but girls made no mention of any rewards for girls.

The most frequent type of consequence of behaviour that was identified by staff was interventions. The most frequent type of consequence of behaviour that was identified by pupils was sanctions.

Staff identified some intentional and some unintentional differences in the way that boys' and girls' behaviour is dealt with in school. Girls also expressed the view that there were differences in the way that boys' and girls' behaviour was responded to in school, with some girls believing that boys were more harshly dealt with and some believing that girls were more harshly dealt with.

7.0 Recommendations

Interview questions were posed in order to answer the following research questions:

- What are pupils' and staff's beliefs about the educational provision that should be made to meet girls' needs?

- What do girls and boys need to help them manage their behaviour better?
- Is there anything that would specifically help girls to manage their behaviour better i.e. is there something special that needs to be done for girls?

The interview questions that were designed to elicit this information included: 'What do you think would be particularly helpful to girls in helping them to manage their behaviour better?' and 'What would you suggest should happen to help girls manage their behaviour better?' In the pupil version of the interview schedule, the wording of these was slightly altered so that instead of, 'to help girls manage their behaviour better', the phrase, 'to help girls stay out of trouble' was used.

Many recommendations emerged from analysis of the data of strategies that could be implemented to help girls manage their behaviour better. During the analysis of the data, the strategies were separated into the following categories:

- Whole school
- Group
- Individual
- Other

At the next level of analysis, these four broad categories were refined further.

Whole school strategies were further categorised as:

- Behaviour management
- Curriculum
- Ethos
- Expectations
- Policy
- Provision
- Resources
- Staff communication

Group strategies were further categorised as:

- Activities
- Group work
- Health issues
- Parenting skills
- Peer mentoring
- Role model
- Self-esteem
- Teaching strategies

Individual strategies were further categorised as:

- Assessment
- Future options
- Incentives
- Involving parents
- Multi-agency approach
- One to one support
- Responsibility
- Staff-pupil relationship
- Talking
- Target-setting
- Time out
- Timetable

7.1 Recommendations made by staff and pupils

This table shows the recommendations made by staff and pupils for strategies that are likely to be useful in helping girls to improve their behaviour in school.

Table 15: Recommendations of behaviour management and intervention strategies made by staff and pupils

| LEVEL | STRATEGY | Recommended by | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| | | Staff | Pupils |
| Whole School | Behaviour Management | 7 (3.1%) | 0 (0.0%) |
| Whole School | Curriculum | 15 (6.8%) | 2 (5.5%) |
| Whole School | Ethos | 6 (2.7%) | 0 (0.0%) |
| Whole School | Expectations | 12 (5.4%) | 1 (2.8%) |
| Whole School | Policy | 5 (2.3%) | 0 (0.0%) |
| Whole School | Provision | 12 (5.4%) | 5(13.9%) |
| Whole School | Resources | 6 (2.7%) | 2 (5.5%) |
| Whole School | Staff Communication | 8 (3.6%) | 1 (2.8%) |
| Total Whole School | | 71(32.0%) | 11(30.5%) |
| Group | Activities | 7 (3.1%) | 4 (11.1%) |
| Group | Group work | 17 (7.7%) | 1 (2.8%) |
| Group | Health issues | 12 (5.4%) | 0 (0.0%) |
| Group | Parenting skills | 2 (0.9%) | 0 (0.0%) |
| Group | Peer mentoring | 1 (0.5%) | 0 (0.0%) |
| Group | Role model | 18 (8.1%) | 2 (5.5%) |
| Group | Self esteem | 7 (3.1%) | 0 (0.0%) |
| Group | Teaching strategies | 8 (3.6%) | 0 (0.0%) |
| Total Group | | 72(32.4) | 7 (19.4%) |
| Individual | Assessment | 2 (0.9%) | 0 (0.0%) |
| Individual | Future Options | 3 (1.3%) | 1 (2.8%) |
| Individual | Incentives | 8 (3.6%) | 2 (5.5%) |
| Individual | Involving parents | 8 (3.6%) | 0 (0.0%) |
| Individual | Multi-agency approach | 13 (5.9%) | 0 (0.0%) |
| Individual | One-to-one support | 4 (1.8%) | 1 (2.8%) |
| Individual | Responsibility | 4 (1.8%) | 0 (0.0%) |
| Individual | Staff-pupil relationship | 6 (2.7%) | 1 (2.8%) |
| Individual | Talking | 24(10.8%) | 6 (16.7%) |
| Individual | Target setting | 2 (0.9%) | 0 (0.0%) |
| Individual | Time Out | 5 (2.3%) | 2 (5.5%) |

| | | | |
|-------------------------|-----------|------------------|------------------|
| Individual | Timetable | 0 (0.0%) | 4 (11.1%) |
| Total Individual | | 79(35.6%) | 17(47.2%) |
| Other | | 0 (0.0%) | 1 (2.8%) |
| TOTAL | | 222(100%) | 36(99.9%) |

The most common recommendations made by staff and pupils were individual strategies (35.6% and 47.2% respectively). Pupils were much less likely to recommend group interventions than staff (19.4% compared to 32.4%). Similar percentages of staff and pupils recommended whole school interventions (32.0% and 30.5% respectively).

7.2 Staff recommendations for individual strategies

The most common individual strategy to be recommended by staff was 'Talking'. Examples include:

'the most successful way of managing their behaviour is getting them to talk about things'

'giving them time to talk through what is happening in their lives'

'some schools do that by having days off and the kids book interviews for a good half hour with their tutor, not with their parents, just with their tutor . . . you can give them the strategies and help'

'we have counselling'

'I think because they are good (usually) at voicing how they're feeling, then it's often easier to manage their behaviour by talking through, whereas that's not the case with boys because they can't always put into words what they're feeling at the time'

The second most common individual strategy to be recommended by staff was some form of 'Multi-agency approach'. Most of the examples made reference to specific, localised agencies or particular multi-agency services that they might contact for support. Examples of more general comments include:

'there are other agencies as well, which we try and get for the girls'

'I think they try and contain it but anybody they identify as being unmanageable or not responding to support in school, they'll then look at getting outside agencies'

Staff recommendations for individual interventions involving 'Incentives' included the following:

'I think making it meaningful, finding something that really matters to them, in terms of a reward system. I mean I love ropes courses and I thought that would be a fantastic thing to do for all of us as a group. We'd earned it as a group . . . we'd geared ourselves up for it but they just didn't want to do it . . . Next week I'm taking them all to TGI Fridays for a proper dinner because they've never gone out to a proper restaurant. I think it's just finding out what motivates these kids'

'we do a lot of reward systems and obviously what we dangle in front of a boy will be different to a girl. A trip to the snooker hall wouldn't quite appease some of our girls . . . We did a beauty day for girls. Now to be fair, there were some girls at that beauty day that would have rather gone to the snooker. There are girls like that and I would have been one of them . . . but for the rest of them, their hair and nails are probably more important'

Some staff made recommendations for individual interventions that included 'Involving parents', such as:

'I phoned her dad every week'

'Some of them love a good phone call home and they're different in the sense of the boys, sometimes they care and sometimes they don't, but the girls have a good day, and it's one day out of ten, and they'll beg you to get in touch with their parents, which I'm happy to do and I constantly do because I think the mums and dads need a warm pat too'

Staff recommendations for individual interventions that involved developing a positive 'Staff-pupil relationship' included the following:

'I do think that to manage her behaviour, it's very difficult if you don't know the children, if you don't know what buttons to press. You press the ones that are appropriate for that child'

'we've got key people that the kids respect and will listen to from that sex, that makes a huge difference for the youngsters'

'I think it's relationship-building that's the key, anyway'

'I know that I deal with students differently depending on their gender. It's just a case of appealing to their interests really. If you're working with them closely and you're trying to establish relationships with them, in any society you do deal with males and females differently. I certainly go along with that when I'm working with the kids. I try to treat them as an equal and therefore treat them as I would anyone else. Although it's a professional relationship, you're doing your best to make sure the kids see that it's a sort of social relationship. They see that it's the kind of relationship they can have trust in and some sort of faith in'

Staff recommendations for individual strategies that involved 'Time Out' included the following:

'it's about her removing herself from the room and going outside'

'we have isolation which gives opportunities for pupils to take time out but also gives opportunities for other pupils in that group to have a break'

'they usually have nominated people then that they can go to, to calm down and have time out'

Staff recommendations for individual strategies that involved 'One-to-one support' included the following:

'In situations where we know things are more likely to be fraught, we'll try and put in extra staff, so those that are less able, very poor communication span or whatever, if there's LSA help or just more adults in the place, you can sort of isolate someone and work with an individual that's more likely to cause problems'

'the kids think that they're then getting more individualised attention, which is what they crave'

Some staff recommended individual interventions that involved giving pupils additional 'Responsibility'. These included the following:

'you put them in a situation where they have to help look after someone's baby, their face changes and they're superb'

'Three weeks ago we took two kids from here into a primary school and they were responsible for helping to run the cross-country and they were absolute angels. . . I actually asked one particular child. She said to me 'I've never been so good for so long' and I said, 'Was it easier to be good this morning when you were out with me or is it easier to come in here and run up and down the corridor like a complete bonk?'

'Our kids love younger children purely because they're no threat . . . The two that I took out a couple of Fridays ago – you wouldn't believe they were the same children. One of them in particular was just so protective over the little kids that she was in charge of . . . she loved it. She loved the responsibility. She said 'I loved it', because one of them kept holding her hand. She felt loved really, and she felt important and she felt valued and also she said, 'I can teach her something that I know'

Some staff recommendations for individual interventions involved focusing pupils' attention on their 'Future Options' in order to help them manage their behaviour better now. These included:

'I suppose alternative things in life . . . that can basically open them to the world . . . therefore basically look at their experiences of the past . . . look at the things they've got now and look at the way that the kids can be introduced to new things later and in a sense that would guide their character or guide their ambitions or guide their hopes'

Some staff recommendations for individual interventions involved an element of 'Assessment'. Examples of these include the following:

'the main thing is that you have to assess them for being that individual and look at the whole environment and where they fit in their family structure to see what might affect them'

A small number of staff recommendations for individual interventions made reference to 'Target setting'. These included the following:

'The tutoring is perhaps far more important than we sometimes give it credit for and there is scope for us to get together as tutors within particular year groups and discuss individuals and look at the way they're managing the behaviour of individuals and look at what the differences are across the genders and that might help us set more

appropriate targets to keep them under review, so I think that's something we could possibly do'

No staff recommended interventions based on manipulating an individual pupil's timetable.

7.3 Staff recommendations for group strategies

When staff recommended group interventions, they were most likely to suggest those that are based on the influence on behaviour of a positive 'Role model'. Examples include:

'I've had a group of Year 11 and a group of Year 10 and within the first week they were all very very open, because I was very open. I was saying this is how I was at school, anger has affected me and this is how it has affected my life, and I've had to learn ways of dealing with it . . . and this is why I'm trying to help you with it. They've really accepted it, rather than someone who's trying to teach them something they don't understand themselves. I'm immediately giving them examples of things I've done which are bloody stupid, through anger, and I say, 'I regret doing that and this is what I've done to try and deal with it' and they can then go, 'oh yeah'.

Some mentioned the need for the positive role model to be of the same sex, for example:

'Males take the male groups and females the female groups'

it tends to be with a mentor-type year head or deputy head, it is usually a woman for girls'

'some girls will respond better to a female who's talking to them about their behaviour'

'I think having role models who are either male or female, working specifically with that sex, is the key bit'

Many staff recommended specific 'Group work' interventions, including the following:

'we have social skills groups'

'we've had a friendship group'

'classroom behaviour skills group'

'they have group work where they do anger-management'

'in the afternoons we're going to try to have all the girls together and all the boys together and try to split them up into little groups within that and do things that are just specifically – talk about things that maybe girls want to talk about and things that boys maybe want to talk about'

Many staff recommended group interventions that focus on 'Health issues'. Examples include the following:

'I think we should address it more in PSHE and be more open in discussing the obvious: sex education, drugs education etc'

'we always get them involved with the school nurse for sexual health'

'there is a vulnerable group that C___ [female member of staff] particularly works with . . . specifically through sexual health matters'

Some staff recommended group interventions where the emphasis was on 'Teaching strategies' and the influence of these on behaviour. Examples include the following:

'so often we'll find that they don't like doing the science or they don't like doing the history so they'll kick off in those lessons . . . and what we've got to try and teach these kids is how to manage those teachers. That's what we're doing, because these teachers that have been teaching for 30 years are not going to change overnight'

'what I deal with mostly is where that behaviour has been inflamed, sometimes by poor teacher reaction to it and not calming the situation down'

A number of group interventions recommended by staff referred to group-based 'Activities'. These included the following:

'if they can be given tasks and jobs that take them out of that classroom situation that gives them some sense of worth, that does work as well'

Some staff referred to the benefits of group-based interventions on pupils' 'self-esteem'. Examples include the following:

'he's working very hard to boost the self-esteem of the youngsters'

'you have to be really careful that you're working the whole time to build them up, even if they've been horribly abusive'

'I think they all need confidence-building but I feel that girls do need a lot more 'them'-time'

'I just think it's generally all our pupils come here with self esteem issues. They think they're crap. They come across all brave and brash and they're always offensive because they need to be defensive because they're waiting for you to tell them how crap they are. They're hiding things, like perhaps they just can't spell properly or perhaps their

home life is poor and they want to lash out before they get lashed out at'

A small number of the group interventions recommended by staff referred to developing the 'Parenting skills' of pupils' parents, and 'Peer mentoring' was also recommended by a small number of staff as a specific group intervention considered to be effective.

7.4 Staff recommendations for whole school strategies

When staff made recommendations based on whole school strategies, these were most likely to involve manipulating the 'Curriculum' in some way. Examples include the following:

'we run PSHE where we look at appropriate and inappropriate behaviour'

'intensive work on literacy and numeracy and that sort of thing so that they can access the curriculum later on'

'we have the integrated studies group in the learning support – I mean the behaviour is part of the inappropriateness of the lessons. So we differentiate to make it more practical, more enjoyable, so hopefully that will eliminate some of the behaviours that we're getting with these pupils'

'an appropriate curriculum so there are more kids going to college to study a more vocational curriculum'

'the behaviour of the youngsters in Key Stage 4 is significantly better because they've got courses that actually suit their needs. In many cases they've failed for years with a pen in their hand so we have to set them up to succeed. So the courses are built into the system and it sounds pathetic but in my humble opinion the curriculum is the crux of

the behaviour of the youngster and if you get the curriculum right for the youngster then at least that one's out of the way and then if they still manifest the behaviour then let's look behind the scenes and see what other support needs to be done'

'poor behaviour is shown by kids who are less able, or at least below average ability, then the relevance of the curriculum is what we use mostly to motivate them and keep them in school'

'generally speaking, most mis-behaviour in class is generally down to poor teaching'

'we differentiated by outcome and the actual tasks because the girls are a lot more understanding of language, the very simple differences'

While there were some aspects of the curriculum that interviewees believed should be covered in mixed groups, as exemplified by the following:

'I think we should be more open in considering the emotional tensions that can exist for girls and the emotional tensions that can exist for boys and that, as far as I can see, ought to be discussed in mixed groups so it isn't taboo or it isn't something that's kept locked away or it isn't something that's never looked at so that it's never understood'

There were also arguments put forward for covering certain aspects of the curriculum in single sex groups. Examples include the following:

'the girls probably will be happy to talk about tampax and tampons and putting on a condom more easily in front of other girls and will be less giggly and funny about it than they would if the boys were there'

The staff recommendations that were made concerning special 'Provision', were mostly highlighting the importance of maintaining girls within a mainstream setting, whenever possible. The reasons given for this included

the influence of positive role models on behaviour (i.e. social learning), motivation, identity and self esteem. Examples include the following:

'if you can keep them to the mainstream schools 'til the end of Key Stage 3, you'll keep them throughout. If you've lost them in the first and second years that they're in secondary school then you won't get them back'

'they make everything more extreme when they come here [to a special unit]. I don't necessarily think that keeping them all together works'

'I feel sad for the girls at a school like this, just for the social aspect. They're not meeting any nice, mannerly other little girls . . . at least if they were in a regular school they would have more people around and they would have more opportunities to do the right thing. In a school like this I think most of the opportunities are to do the wrong thing'

There was some recognition, however, that a separate provision (such as a resourced unit) might be able to offer benefits in terms of staffing and individualised learning packages. Examples of this include the following:

'units where it's not just for specific educational learning difficulties but for the emotional side of the pupils' misbehaviour . . . can sometimes pull them out and give them a different pace to work at'

'I think if we do make provision, because we have relatively few girls we would probably be looking at making provision on a very individual basis'

'I think the smaller group-work is amazing. I think if you talk to any of the parents, that's the one thing that they say, because we've got the smaller groups, we are able to address things before they start escalating. When you put them into a group of 30 they can hide for so

long and get so entrenched in that behaviour, it's really hard to make any bridges or go backwards, but in the smaller groups they can't escape – but they appreciate it and the kids appreciate it. The kids think that they're then getting more individualised attention which is what they crave'

'I've been in mixed schools. I've been in single-sex schools and a lot of the issues are the same. I really think it's an individual thing. I really don't think they have time in mainstream to get to know these kids. They are just a pack and I think the individual person is just lost'

Some recommendations for whole school approaches concerned 'Expectations'. Interviewees highlighted the importance of expectations in influencing behaviour as well as pointing out that there are frequently different sets of expectations for boys and girls. Examples include the following:

'I think as a school we have very high expectations. Poor behaviour isn't tolerated'

'I think having high expectations is critical'

'where boys used to achieve and now girls well out-achieve boys – the problem then is that for the girl who can't achieve, there's suddenly more girls up there to hate and despise. The incredible success at one end is causing more problems at the other end, only in the extreme ones, because they do perceive that they are worse than the others perhaps. I think that might not help them. Whereas naughty boys always do get the attention because they think, 'So what, I'm a good sportsman still' but girls don't seem to have that ethic, they don't think that way'

'she's loud and she's obnoxious and she's a horrible pain in the ass but any other outlet she's ever had has been closed for her because she's too much and people expect it out of boys but they don't expect it from

girls and they don't know what to do with that, because girls are louder and they're meaner and they're more hateful, but the bark is worse than the bite'

'the girls exhibit an extreme form of laddishness. Only with the girls, they seem to go further. They seem determined to show themselves as being hard and they are – I don't know if it's perception and because they're girls you expect them not to be so hard'

'I think they still have the same idea that the girls will sit in the corner and the boys are allowed to be a bit of a tearaway'

Some interviewees mentioned the importance of 'Good Communication' between staff members in managing behaviour effectively across the school, and acknowledged the difficulties of ensuring consistency across the staff of a secondary school. Examples include the following:

'the tutoring is perhaps far more important than we sometimes give it credit for and there is scope for us to get together as tutors within particular year groups and discuss individuals and look at the way they're managing the behaviour of individuals and look at what the differences are across the genders and that might help us set more appropriate targets to keep them under review, so I think that's something we could possibly do'

'we do early intervention, put strategies in, meet the families, meet the youngsters, look at the case study information we've got, put strategies in place to try and prevent problems when they start'

Some sound, whole school 'Behaviour Management' strategies were referred to by the staff who were interviewed. Examples of these include the following:

'it's assertive discipline'

'groupings and seating plans'

'by dealing with behaviour before it escalates, dealing with low level behaviour, finding alternatives'

A number of staff also referred to the effectiveness of more creative approaches and strategies that can be employed if additional 'Resources' are made available. These referred to either time or staffing and included the following:

'the Inclusion Manager'

'we've also paid for an Inclusion Assistant'

'the heads of year have got protected time within the week'

'it's all about having time'

An example of a reference to the importance of having a positive school 'Ethos' was the following:

'and she said, 'We only do it for a laugh. We just terrorise teachers. It's part of a group cult, a gang. It's something I'm expected to do when we come here but in another environment I can behave totally different''

Staff also referred to the use of effective 'Policies' in managing behaviour across the school. An example of this was as follows:

'it's all about putting things into practice, into policy to make sure that we can relay as much as possible'

7.5 Pupil recommendations for individual strategies

The majority of the individual strategies recommended by pupils involved the 'Talking cure'. Examples include the following:

'there should be a teacher you can always go to so you can go there and talk to them and they'll listen to you, and not just someone you go to and you just sit in their classroom. There should be a teacher there and not teaching a class so they can just sit down and talk to you'

'it would be better to have a female teacher to talk to and to have them trained in what they do, trained to work with children with anger problems'

A number of interviewees also referred to strategies involving manipulation of the 'Timetable'. These included the following:

'they felt I was better in the afternoons than the mornings. So now I just come in the afternoons and I feel much more better'

'they try to help you and they give you part-time timetables like half a day or an hour a day or two hours'

Over a quarter of responses from pupils referred to individual strategies involving either talking or manipulating the timetable. Other strategies mentioned by pupils included use of 'Incentives', 'Time out', the development of a positive 'Staff-pupil relationship', 'One to one support' and presenting positive 'Future options'.

Pupils did not recommend individual interventions involving assessment, multi-agency approaches, giving additional responsibilities, target-setting or involving parents.

7.6 Pupil recommendations for group strategies

Most of the recommendations pupils made for group strategies involved providing activities for pupils to engage with. The activities that were suggested tended to be physical and sporting activities such as those that are made available during unstructured times. Examples of the 'Activities' suggested include the following:

'more things to do at break and lunchtime 'cos the boys are always on the pool table and we never get to go on it'

'there should be more for us to do, instead of just what boys are doing. Like they do table tennis and we do basket ball'

There were a small number of recommendations for group strategies made that involved use of a 'Role model' and 'Group work'.

Pupils did not recommend group interventions focusing on health issues, parenting skills, peer mentoring, self-esteem or teaching strategies. Group interventions were least likely to be recommended by pupils. This may be because they do not perceive group interventions to be deliberate strategies.

7.7 Pupil recommendations for whole school strategies

The majority of the recommendations for whole school strategies made by pupils referred to changes to the 'Provision' and in particular the 'Curriculum' made available. The following is an example of this:

'next year I'll be doing work experience two days a week, one day at college and two here'

Some recommendations highlighted the importance of the availability of sufficient 'Resources' to manage behaviour at a whole school level. An example is included below:

'I've got a teacher I can go to but sometimes you go to them and they're too busy and they can't talk to you and it makes me even angrier'

A small number of the strategies recommended referred to 'Expectations' and 'Staff communication'.

Pupils did not make recommendations for whole school approaches to behaviour management based on ethos or policy.

7.8 Recommendations made by mainstream and non-mainstream staff and pupils

This table shows the recommendations made by staff and pupils from mainstream and non-mainstream settings for strategies that are likely to be helpful in helping girls to improve their behaviour in school.

Table 16: Recommendations of behaviour management and intervention strategies made by staff and pupils from mainstream and non-mainstream settings

| LEVEL | STRATEGY | Recommended by | |
|--------------|----------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| | | Main stream | Non-main stream |
| Whole School | Behaviour Management | 7 (5.4%) | 0 (0.0%) |
| Whole School | Curriculum | 12 (9.3%) | 5 (3.9%) |
| Whole School | Ethos | 3 (2.3%) | 3 (2.3%) |
| Whole School | Expectations | 5 (3.9%) | 8 (6.2%) |
| Whole School | Policy | 3 (2.3%) | 2 (1.5%) |
| Whole School | Provision | 0 (0.0%) | 17(13.2%) |
| Whole School | Resources | 7 (5.4%) | 1 (0.8%) |
| Whole School | Staff Communication | 8 (6.2%) | 1 (0.8%) |

| | | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Total Whole School | | 45(34.8%) | 37(28.7%) |
| Group | Activities | 0 (0.0%) | 11(8.5%) |
| Group | Group work | 16(12.4%) | 2 (1.5%) |
| Group | Health issues | 2 (1.5%) | 10(7.7%) |
| Group | Parenting skills | 2 (1.5%) | 0 (0.0%) |
| Group | Peer mentoring | 1 (0.8%) | 0 (0.0%) |
| Group | Role model | 9 (7.0%) | 11(8.5%) |
| Group | Self esteem | 2 (1.5%) | 5 (3.9%) |
| Group | Teaching strategies | 4 (3.1%) | 4 (3.1%) |
| Total Group | | 36(27.8%) | 43(33.2%) |
| Individual | Assessment | 2 (1.5%) | 0 (0.0%) |
| Individual | Future Options | 2 (1.5%) | 2 (1.5%) |
| Individual | Incentives | 4 (3.1%) | 6 (4.6%) |
| Individual | Involving parents | 4 (3.1%) | 4 (3.1%) |
| Individual | Multi-agency approach | 6 (4.6%) | 7 (5.4%) |
| Individual | One-to-one support | 3 (2.3%) | 2 (1.5%) |
| Individual | Responsibility | 0 (0.0%) | 4 (3.1%) |
| Individual | Staff-pupil relationship | 6 (4.6%) | 1 (0.8%) |
| Individual | Talking | 16(12.4%) | 14(10.8%) |
| Individual | Target setting | 0 (0.0%) | 2 (1.5%) |
| Individual | Time Out | 5 (3.9%) | 2 (1.5%) |
| Individual | Timetable | 0 (0.0%) | 4 (3.1%) |
| Total Individual | | 48(37.0%) | 48(36.9%) |
| Other | | 0 | 1 (0.8%) |
| TOTAL | | 129(99.6%) | 129(99.6%) |

The most common recommendations made by both mainstream and non-mainstream staff and pupils were individual strategies (37.0% and 36.9% of recommendations made respectively). Mainstream staff and pupils were almost as likely to recommend whole school approaches and strategies as ways of managing behaviour (34.8% of recommendations made), whereas for non-mainstream staff and pupils the recommendation of whole school strategies was less likely (28.7% of recommendations made). Non-mainstream staff and pupils were more likely to recommend targeted group

interventions (33.2% of recommendations made) than mainstream staff and pupils (27.8% of recommendations made).

In total, the figures for recommended strategies were as follows:

Table 17: Total numbers of recommended strategies

| LEVEL | STRATEGY | TOTAL |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|------------------|
| Whole School | Behaviour Management | 7 (2.7%) |
| Whole School | Curriculum | 17 (6.6%) |
| Whole School | Ethos | 6 (2.3%) |
| Whole School | Expectations | 13 (5.0%) |
| Whole School | Policy | 5 (1.9%) |
| Whole School | Provision | 17 (6.6%) |
| Whole School | Resources | 8 (3.1%) |
| Whole School | Staff Communication | 9 (3.5%) |
| Total Whole School | | 82(31.7%) |
| Group | Activities | 11 (4.3%) |
| Group | Group work | 18 (7.0%) |
| Group | Health issues | 12 (4.6%) |
| Group | Parenting skills | 2 (0.8%) |
| Group | Peer mentoring | 1 (0.4%) |
| Group | Role model | 20 (7.7%) |
| Group | Self esteem | 7 (2.7%) |
| Group | Teaching strategies | 8 (3.1%) |
| Total Group | | 79(30.6%) |
| Individual | Assessment | 2 (0.8%) |
| Individual | Future Options | 4 (1.5%) |
| Individual | Incentives | 10 (3.9%) |
| Individual | Involving parents | 8 (3.1%) |
| Individual | Multi-agency approach | 13 (5.0%) |
| Individual | One-to-one support | 5 (1.9%) |
| Individual | Responsibility | 4 (1.5%) |
| Individual | Staff-pupil relationship | 7 (2.7%) |

| | | |
|-------------------------|----------------|-------------------|
| Individual | Talking | 30(11.6%) |
| Individual | Target setting | 2 (0.8%) |
| Individual | Time Out | 7 (2.7%) |
| Individual | Timetable | 4 (1.5%) |
| Total Individual | | 96(37.0%) |
| Other | Other | 1 (0.4%) |
| TOTAL | | 258(99.7%) |

This shows that the recommendations made were fairly evenly divided with a third referring to whole school strategies, a third to group strategies and a third to individual strategies. This suggests that a balance of all of these types of behaviour management strategy would need to be in place in order to achieve effective behaviour management in a school.

The most frequently recommended strategies overall were 'Talking', that is having someone to talk to on an individual basis; the use of positive 'Role Models' and similarly 'Group work' which will usually also involve the use of positive role models. The next most frequently recommended strategies were both whole school strategies and were equally frequently recommended. They were alterations made to the 'Provision' and in particular the 'Curriculum' in order to have a positive impact on the pupil's behaviour.

7.9 Summary of key issues relating to recommendations

Recommendations made for strategies that are most likely to be effective for managing girls' behaviour fell about equally into three categories: Whole school, group and individual interventions.

Individual interventions were recommended most often. Of these, interventions based on talking were the most often recommended. Other individual interventions that were recommended for girls were multi-agency approaches, incentives, developing positive staff-pupil relationships, time out, one-to-one support, giving pupils additional responsibility, encouraging a pupil

to focus on their future options, assessment, target setting and manipulating a pupil's timetable.

The group intervention mentioned most frequently by staff was making use of positive role models, especially same sex role models. Staff also recommended group work (e.g. anger management, social skills groups etc), personal, social and health education (including sex education), teaching strategies, providing targeted activities outside of school, group interventions aimed at raising self-esteem, work with parents and peer mentoring. Pupils were most likely to recommend group activities outside of school. They also recommended use of a positive role model and group work.

The most frequently recommended whole school strategies involved manipulation of the curriculum (e.g. teaching some aspects of the curriculum in single sex groups), and consideration of the educational provision (most commonly, maintaining girls within a mainstream setting whenever possible, where there are positive role models). Recommendations were also made that highlighted the importance of maintaining high expectations for behaviour, good communication between staff members, consistent whole school behaviour management strategies, and the creative use of resources. Some mention was also made by staff of the influence of a positive ethos and an effective behaviour policy.

There were few differences in the recommendations made between the mainstream and non-mainstream setting. Non-mainstream staff and pupils were more likely to recommend targeted group interventions, whereas mainstream staff and pupils were more likely to recommend whole school approaches. This is likely to be a reflection that, while it is generally thought to be better for pupils to remain in a mainstream setting, wherever possible, a more highly resourced setting has the advantage of being better able to offer more targeted individual and small group interventions.

8.0 Quantitative data

During this period of time, in the same authority, the following data was collected:

Table 18: Quantitative data from the same period

| | GIRLS | BOYS | TOTAL |
|---|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Pupils with statements for EBD (mainstream and special) | 1.7% | 98.3% | 60 |
| Fixed term exclusions from schools (within the authority) | 19.0% | 81.0% | 84 |
| Children looked after by the local authority (within the authority) | 40.0% | 60.0% | 161 |
| Children looked after by the local authority (outside the authority) | 35.0% | 65.0% | 60 |

This shows that the vast majority of pupils with statements of special education needs are boys, as are the pupils excluded from schools. The majority of children who are looked after by the local authority are also boys.

DISCUSSION

9.0 Discussion of Results

In this section I will consider each of the research questions in turn and use the data collected and reported in the previous section to discuss the issues raised and the implications of these, using grounded theory to derive theory from the data.

9.1.1 What are pupils' and staff's beliefs about girls' behaviour?

The data shows that there are differences in the beliefs of pupils and staff about girls' behaviour, in comparison to their beliefs about boys' behaviour. Girls were perceived as much less likely to display direct behaviours (e.g. physical aggression, verbal aggression or self destructive behaviour) than boys. Girls were perceived as much more likely to display indirect behaviours than boys. In addition, when considering the direct behaviours of pupils, girls were viewed as being much more likely to display verbally aggressive behaviours and self destructive behaviours than boys. Girls were viewed as being much less likely to display physical aggression and other direct behaviours than boys.

The qualitative data collected refers, of course, to the opinions of the interviewees, rather than being a measure of actual behaviour. The question should therefore be posed, Is this a genuine difference in the way that girls and boys express their frustration or is it a matter of perception?

If there is a genuine difference in the behaviour of girls and boys, there are a number of possible reasons for this. It may be that girls have been socialised into expressing themselves in a different way to boys because different behaviours are positively and negatively reinforced for the two

sexes. Alternatively, it may be that there is something distinct in the biological make up of boys and girls that leads to different behaviours. Finally, it may be that different behaviours have developed in boys and girls because there was an evolutionary function of males being more aggressive and females being more nurturing.

Whatever the reason behind this, there is certainly a difference in staff perceptions of girls and boys behaviour. Possibly, girls' behaviour stands out more than boys' because of our own expectations and belief systems as adults,

e.g. *'girls are more noticeable when they are the loud ones in class because we are used to boys taking that role'*.

Alternatively, our perception that girls' behaviour is different to boys' behaviour could be the function of us interpreting what we see as fitting in with our preconceptions about the behaviour of the sexes. Finally, it could be that our different perceptions about the behaviour of boys and girls is the result of the way that the behaviour of the sexes is presented in the media.

Interestingly, this difference in perception was generally consistently held by the different groups represented within the participants for this study. One important difference emerges, however. When staff were referring to girls' behaviour, the category of direct physical aggression was still the largest category (23.0%), although less than for boys (38.6%). When pupils were referring to their own behaviour, however, not one pupil made reference to an example of a direct physical or self destructive behaviour. It is apparent therefore that there are some differences in the perceptions of pupil behaviour between staff and pupils.

Other differences in the perceptions of behaviours by staff and pupils can be identified. Pupils referred to more examples of other direct behaviours than staff, such as laughing and showing off. It could reasonably be assumed that pupils are more directly aware of such behaviours taking place, for example in the classroom. Staff referred to

more examples of direct verbal behaviours, such as talking in class and using '*vile language*'. This difference in perception may well be the result of the different perspectives of pupils and staff, with staff more likely to recall incidents of verbal disruptions to order in the classroom, such as answering back to staff.

Another question that needs to be considered is, what is the influence of language and social skills on girls' and boys' ability to solve social problems verbally rather than physically, and is this difference due to the specialisation of brain hemispheres or as a result of socialisation?

e.g. 'girls are a lot more understanding of language, the very simple differences. Boys are very good at understanding dominance and dominant behaviour. Girls can identify the subtle changes in behaviour and body language much better'

9.1.2 What are pupils' and staff's beliefs about the educational provision that should be made to meet girls' needs?

Not surprisingly, the staff interviewed were able to come up with far more consequences for behaviour than were pupils. This is likely to be because pupils were not aware of some actions being taken as a direct result of a pupil's behaviour. The majority of consequences identified were specific interventions. This may be because interventions were more likely to be put in place than rewards or sanctions. Alternatively, it may be because interviewees believed that interventions would be most relevant to the purposes of the interview, given the context. This is an example of the effect of the task demands.

A number of participants believed there to be a difference in the provision that is put in place for girls and boys, although they differed in their opinions about whether this was desirable or not.

9.1.3 What do girls and boys need to help them manage their behaviour better? Is there anything that would specifically help girls to manage their behaviour better i.e. is there something special that needs to be done for girls?

Participants were invited to make recommendations about what strategies they thought would benefit pupils and in particular girls who are experiencing difficulties in managing their behaviour. The strategies recommended can be categorised into individual, group and whole school approaches.

Participants were most likely to recommend individual strategies. It is significant that the most commonly recommended strategy for girls was talking, in the light of the comments made earlier about girls' verbal skills.

9.2 Discussion of reliability and validity of results

It is recognised that the way the results have been analysed gives more weight to pupil responses and that the data gathered from pupil responses was less rich. It could be argued that, while this was the case, it should not be perceived as a problem as it was considered important to access the voice of the child about whom the research purports to be about (see section 1.5 on Pupil views).

This study has high face validity, as the opinions obtained were gathered through interviews of participants in the field. It should be noted, however, that the data is concerned with opinions and perceptions rather than objective measures of behaviour. It is a potential drawback of using interviews as a research method that the assumption is made that there is an objective 'truth' to be discovered within the interview responses. This may not be the case, there may only be multiple perspectives, however it is argued that this is still a valid subject of enquiry.

Two interviewers were used to gather the interview data. This had the advantage of increasing the number of interviews that could be conducted within the time available. In addition, the categorisation of data was carried out following agreement by both parties. It was also necessary, however, to put safeguards in place to ensure some inter-rater reliability. For this reason a script was used and interviews were taped. A further verification exercise was conducted following the original categorisation of the data (see section 4.2). This demonstrated that the categories used had some robustness, particularly those for Consequences of Behaviour and Recommendations.

The sample obtained was small, and covered just two educational settings, a mainstream and a non-mainstream setting, in one geographical area. The analysis of data shows, however, that categories were generated until no new categories were being generated by the data.

The decision was made, for the purposes of this study, to use individual interviews rather than focus group. The reason for this was due to the outcomes of the pilot study, which provided no evidence that, given the client group, the answers were going to be richer from focus group discussions than from individual interviews. This was as a result of the pupils' lack of skills in peer group interaction. In the pilot study it became evident that pupils were finding it difficult to take turns to speak and to listen to each others' responses and that this fact was preventing the generation of ideas. In addition, the pupils in the pilot study were 'playing to the audience' rather than engaging with the task in hand. This decision proved to be advantageous as during individual interviews, all participants engaged with the task and each was able to provide some helpful data. This justifies the additional time required to collect the data through individual interviews.

For the purposes of this study, it was decided to collect the views only of female pupils. This decision was deliberate as it was not intended to carry out a comparative study.

It was decided to analyse the results using grounded theory. The advantage of this approach is that it is flexible. However there is the danger of subjectivity. It was decided that this approach to analysis was appropriate for this type of study as it is concerned with making recommendations rather than proving a causal relationship.

Whether researchers can ever claim that theory spontaneously emerges from the data is open to debate. Critics of Grounded Theory such as Thomas and James argue that theorists who subscribe to this methodology over-optimistically claim to discover theories that spontaneously emerge from the data, when in reality such theories are the creation of the researcher and subject to all their prior assumptions and expectations.

As Thomas and James argue,

'Discovery is a process of uncovering, revealing, disclosing that which is there. The assumption in the use of 'discovery' is therefore that meaning is laid open for all to see following the application of some method of finding' (Thomas and James 2006, page 780).

This suggests that Grounded Theory offers definitive answers rather than tentative interpretations. They suggest that 'invention' is a better term than 'discovery' and more accurately represents the process of generating theory from the data (as discussed further in section 3.4).

9.3 Discussion of Results in Relation to the Research Review

In this section I will consider the implications of the data collected as part of this study for the body of knowledge outlined earlier in this thesis.

9.3.1 Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties

In this study, the wide range of behaviours referred to by participants supports the view of Cooper (1996 and 1999) that the concept of social, emotional and behavioural difficulties cannot be used to refer to a single homogenous group, but covers a multitude of difficulties, including,

'withdrawal from social involvement . . . truancy or school refusal . . . [preoccupation] with emotional concerns . . . bullying . . . violence towards others . . . self harming . . . attention-seeking behaviours' (Cooper 1999, page 3).

All of the above categories of behaviour are included in the data collected in the current study.

Not only do the results of the current study reflect the very different meanings implied by the term EBD, they also support the view put forward by Gemal (1993) that the populations of children defined as EBD are changing, in particular as a result of the policy of Inclusion, with a greater range of behaviour difficulties being managed within mainstream schools. Just as Gemal reflects that it is not clear whether this change is due to an actual change in the pupil population, or whether it is our understanding that has changed, the results of the current study do not throw any light on whether there are increasing levels of EBD evident in girls, or whether our perceptions of girls' behaviour is changing.

9.3.2 Provision

In the light of the changes in the EBD population, many writers have argued for changes in the way that we support children experiencing EBD (e.g. Cole and Visser 1998). The same researchers examine, in a different paper the nature of these changes in the EBD population (Visser and Cole 1996). They note the *'imbalance'* between boys and girls within the population of pupils in special EBD provision, and highlight the difficulties in ensuring that girls needs are met, given this imbalanced scenario (see Visser and Cole 1996, page 15) but go no

further in suggesting ways forward. It is for this reason that the current research is so important in that it accesses girls' views about the provision that is made for them, as opposed to including girls as an overlooked minority within the group of children categorised as EBD.

Smith and Thomas (1993) suggested that provision for children with EBD tended to focus on addressing behavioural management needs rather than emotional needs. They assumed this to be true for the whole population of boys and girls, although the current research suggests that this might be particularly the case for girls. Cole et al (1999) argued that this is the case for pupils with EBD in mainstream as well as in special provision.

The results of the current study included recommendations for whole school approaches, such as those suggested by Avard and Upton (1992), McNeill (1996), and Gray and Noakes (1998); for group approaches such as those suggested by Royer et al (1999) and Lund (1989); as well as for individual approaches such as those suggested by Spalding (2000). It should be noted, however, that it is more problematic to facilitate group approaches that rely on the positive influence of the group norm, when there are very few girls with EBD being educated together (see McNeill 1996). The current study also gives consideration to recommendations that are applicable to mainstream schools (see also Cole et al 1999 and Hinds 2002), as well as those that are applicable to special schools (see also Cole et al 1999 and Morris 1996).

It may not be the most helpful way of looking at this issue, by artificially polarising mainstream and special provision, as has taken place in the current study. The difficulties in achieving a truly flexible continuum of provision, however, are well documented (e.g. see Farrell and Tsakalidou 1999). Dyke (1985) also identified some barriers to successful re-integration of children from special into mainstream provision. It has therefore been helpful to ask the questions separately of

mainstream and non-mainstream pupils and teachers, in order to see whether any differences emerge.

9.3.3 Gender and special provision

One difference between mainstream and special school settings for pupils with EBD that is not contested is that the majority of pupils in special provision are boys. This is true for learning as well as for EBD provision, the focus of the current study. This issue takes on additional political meaning when considered in terms of equality of opportunity, entitlement, resource allocation and gender.

Most researchers agree that more boys than girls with EBD are educated in special schools because boys express their distress in different ways – typically they are seen to be more outwardly aggressive and more likely to behave violently, whereas girls frequently direct their distress inwardly and are more likely to self-harm or become withdrawn (e.g. see Daniels et al 1996 and Farrell et al 1996). Where there is disagreement is about whether this under-representation of girls in EBD special provision is a disadvantage to girls in that fewer resources are aimed at them, or an advantage in that it has resulted in greater inclusion of girls, with their needs more likely to be met within mainstream provision (e.g. see Kratovil and Bailey 1986 and Riddell 1996). A factor that should also be taken into consideration is that some research shows that fewer resources are aimed at girls within mixed-sex mainstream schools as well (e.g. see Daniels et al 1996). The current study focuses on the perceptions of staff and pupils about girls' and boys' behaviour and their perceptions about the responses to this behaviour. It seems likely that the two are closely linked, in that certain types of behaviour (e.g. 'acting out', aggressive behaviour as opposed to inwardly directed, self harming or withdrawn behaviour) necessitate different responses. This strengthens the argument being made in the current study and reinforces the need for this research that focuses on girls' behaviour and the strategies that need to be in place in response to

this i.e. if girls' behaviour is in reality different to boys' behaviour, it is even more important that we, as educators, are clear about what our appropriate response should be to girls behaviour, as distinct from boys.

It is possible that in the current situation, as Farrell et al argue, '*vulnerable and equally disturbed [girls] may not be receiving help because their problems do not cause difficulties for schools*' (Farrell et al 1996, page 81). Further, this difference in perception and response that is clearly evident in interviewees' responses in the current research, could be argued to be reinforcing the stereotypical behaviour of both males and females: boys receive attention for their violence and outwardly aggressive behaviour, girls do not (see Cooper 1999).

9.3.4 Pupil views

Whether or not participants were explicitly aware of this potential for social learning, they were certainly aware of differences in the behaviour of boys and girls and they perceived there to be differences in the way that behaviour was managed. Few previous studies have accessed pupils' views directly. In the current study this proved to be a difficult task as pupils found it difficult to give their views in a group situation, necessitating the conduction of time-consuming individual interviews. Also, pupils found it difficult to elaborate their ideas and often showed little insight, calling into question the value of basing the research on their verbal testimonies. The researcher felt that this fundamental principle was, however, central to the research for the same reasons as those espoused by O'Brien (1996), Hill (1997), and Doherty (1997). It is for these reasons that individual interviews were carried out, despite the additional time involved, and this qualitative data was triangulated with teachers' views and quantitative data.

Previous important studies accessing pupils' perceptions were carried out by Cooper (1996), who investigated pupils' views about the special education provision made for them, Wise and Upton (1998) and Wise

(2000), who investigated pupils' views about their behaviour. Both highlighted some of the difficulties of accessing pupils' views directly and recognise that this has rarely been the preferred option of researchers in this area, as follows:

'there are those who question the ability of young people to articulate or actually reveal perceptions that hold any value, and this may limit the desire to gain or utilise their perceptions' (Wise 2000, page 14).

It was decided in the current research, however, that the potential benefits of accessing pupil views directly outweighed these possible drawbacks. As Wise has argued, talking to pupils themselves can enable the researcher to get *'into the minds of my pupils'* (Wise 2000, page 13) and by doing so it is hoped that insights can be gained that would not otherwise be accessible.

9.3.5 Teacher Perceptions

It was found to be much more common in the literature reviewed to investigate adults', usually teachers', views about differences between the behaviour of boys and girls (see for example Sherbourne 1998, Valentiner 1996, Gibbs 1996, and Hood 1996). It is interesting also to note that these studies all took place within a relatively short period of time in the mid-nineties, which may indicate a certain cultural and political interests in gender differences at the time. The reasons for the relative prevalence of this type of research include the relative ease of access to teachers as participants in such research.

9.3.6 Accessing girls' views

More problematic than accessing teachers' views and even more difficult than accessing pupil perceptions, even when limited to just those pupils who are experiencing EBD, is accessing the views of girls with EBD. This is problematic because girls form a minority of pupils with EBD, and because there are few institutions where girls with EBD are educated

separately. Two important studies that are based on girls perceptions of their behaviour and the educational support they are given in order to better manage this behaviour are Lloyd and O'Regan (1999) and Osler et al (2002) who investigated girls' views about their exclusion from school. The current research builds on these important previous studies by accessing girls' views directly through individual interviews, about their behaviour and the educational provision that is put in place to help them manage their behaviour better.

9.3.7 Explanations of differences in behaviour and the implications of this for interventions

Explanations as to why there are differences in the aggressive behaviour of girls and boys are provided by Moffitt et al (2001) and Underwood (2003). These authors describe the majority of girls' aggression as social aggression

If the purpose of the inappropriate behaviour is to manipulate the social situation, then the interventions that are put in place to address this behaviour need to take account of this. The most effective strategies and interventions will be those that include talking and language-based strategies, those that utilise the dynamics of the social group, and those that involve the teaching of more effective social skills. Because of the differences in behaviour between the sexes, these strategies are likely to be particularly effective for girls.

CONCLUSION

When this research was initially planned and designed, following extensive reading of relevant research material, very few academics had considered this issue. There was a huge gap in the available literature that focused on the needs of girls with EBD. Over the past few years,

there has been increasing interest in a number of factors that have proved central to this thesis, namely:

- The increasing issue of girls identified as experiencing EBD (e.g. Osler and Vincent 2003, Lloyd 2005),
- The focus on boys' difficulties in school, including EBD, to the exclusion and detriment of girls (e.g. Noble and Bradford 2000, Francis 2000),
- The importance of seeking the pupil's voice, directly (e.g. Wise and Upton 1998, Wise 2000),
- Explanations of girls' EBD and aggressive behaviour in terms of 'social aggression' (e.g. Moffitt et al 2001, Underwood 2003),

No-one has yet looked at the implications of all of the above in making effective provision for girls with EBD. The distinctive contribution of the current research is to take a first step in addressing this long-ignored issue and to start to identify those approaches and strategies that are likely to be most effective in helping girls to manage their behaviour better.

For too long special educational provision within mainstream and non-mainstream contexts, has been made for pupils who are experiencing social emotional and behavioural difficulties, based on the research carried out on a population made up almost entirely of boys. While many of the conclusions drawn are relevant for both boys and girls, this research has shown that there are some important factors that need to be considered in meeting girls social, emotional and behavioural needs that are unique to girls. Educators who ignore this new perspective on an old problem do so at the risk of failing that small but significant (and growing) number of girls who are struggling to manage their behaviour within the normal school environment.

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APPENDIX I**Pilot Study Focus Group Transcript**

You know sometimes people get stressed, frustrated, angry, wound up and people manage their stress in different ways, some people walk away, some people want someone to talk to, some people shout about it and then take it out on someone else, swear. There are loads of examples of how people manage their stress. When you are in school though, teachers expect you manage it in a certain way.

C: 'Have we got to answer these questions?'

There are no right or wrong answers. So when you are in school, you are expected to behave in a certain way, that's what we are going to talk about. I really interested in what you think of these questions. I am going to ask each of you in turn. At the end you will all have the chance to tell me what you think of the questions.

I'm interested in what you say, but I'm not going to be saying your names and who says what, ok. You may have noticed that Miss..... is also in the room, and she is also listening to what you say, but she isn't going to be talking to anyone else about what you say.

I'm going to give you a copy of what we are going to be talking about. I am going to ask each of you in turn.

First question. What behaviours do you think teachers find most difficult to deal with?

A: Psychopathic things.

B: Swearing, punching people, getting angry, chucking chairs.

D: Fighting.

**Right, second question. This time I'll start with you.
What helps you to manage your behaviour?**

B: I'm not allowed to say that I don't think.

Sure – has anyone else got anything?

C: I would say something but what about her – I'm thinking.

B: My mum already knows about the fags – have a cigarette.

Is there anything you do in school to help you to manage?

We talked about that you are expected to behave in certain ways in school, what I want to talk about is what might help you to behave in these ways.

E: Friends.

What might friends do?

C: Nothing really. Some friends just laugh at you and you carry on.

E: They make you laugh.

B: You're trying to be all stressed and then someone makes you laugh.

Does that happen when they want your attention?

B: Leave me alone. Yeah, leave me alone. Is that possible?

C: No. You've always got someone there. Or you're always going round to IS
[Internal Suspension]

What happens if you're left alone?

A: Sometimes you just sit there. That don't work for me.

Is there anything else that we can try to do in school that might help you?

C: Punch the wall, punch the door - that don't help you does it.

D: Punch people, throw things, slam doors, make people know that you are there, stamp your feet.

C: They just keep tapping you on the back and saying it'll be ok, and that don't work.

B: We're stronger than them.

What about when people try and set up strategies with your parents to help you?

C: Oh no, not with my mum.

B: Or mine.

D: That just makes it worse, you just sit there. I got suspended because I didn't want to go to IS.

APPENDIX II

Interview Schedule: Pupil Version

Introduction

Hello _____. My name is Julia. Thank you for agreeing to chat to me.

We are going to be in this room for about half an hour. Are you comfortable?
Do you want a drink? etc

I am going to be asking you some questions. There are no right or wrong answers to these questions. I am just interested in your opinion and your ideas.

I am trying to find out more about girls and boys behaviour in schools and what can help them to manage their behaviour better.

I am really interested in any opinions or ideas you have about this. Anything you can tell me will be really helpful to me in trying to learn more about this.

I am going to tape our conversation so that I can remember what we have been talking about and use the information later.

I eventually need to write about what I have learnt. I won't be using your name in anything I write so whatever you say to me is anonymous.

Do you have any questions?

Are you ready to begin?

Introductory Question

Firstly, I want you to tell me about a day at school that stands out in your memory.

When I was at school, I remember going on a trip to London. I liked getting out of normal school for the day. I can't remember what we were going to see, but I remember sitting on the coach for what seemed like ages and I remember sitting, freezing, in a park to eat our lunch. The teachers would always give us a lecture before we went about how they expected us to behave. I remember that I didn't like having to carry a heavy bag around with me all day and I hated having to wear school uniform because we were on a school trip.

Can you tell me about a particular day at school, any day that sticks out in your memory, maybe a day that you enjoyed. Tell me what you remember about it. What did you enjoy? Was there anything you didn't enjoy? Why does this particular day come to mind?

Question 1/probes

Now I want to talk about boys' and girls' behaviour in school.

Tell me about the sorts of behaviour that would get you into trouble at school.

What things do you see boys and girls doing at school that gets them into trouble?

Question 2/probes

Do you think that girls and boys behave differently at school?

Do you see girls getting into trouble for different things than boys?

Are there any things that girls gets away with that boys get into trouble for?

Are there any things that girls get into trouble for that boys get away with?

Question 3/probes

What happens when a girl or boy gets into trouble at school?

What happens to them if they don't follow the school rules?

What happens to help them stay out of trouble in the future?

Question 4/probes

Are there any differences in what happens to girls and boys to help them stay out of trouble in the future?

Should there be any differences in what happens to boys and girls to help them stay out of trouble in the future?

Question 5/probes

What do you think would be particularly helpful to girls in helping them stay out of trouble?

What would you suggest should happen to help girls stay out of trouble?

Closing Question

Tell about someone at school you really like. It could be a teacher or a pupil.

What do you like about this person? What is good about them?

Thank you for taking part in this interview.

Your answers and ideas have been really helpful to me.

Do you have any questions?

APPENDIX III

Interview Schedule: Teacher Version

Introduction

Hello _____. I'm Julia. Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed.

We are going to be in this room for about half an hour. Are you comfortable?
Do you want a drink? etc

I'd like to explain what we are going to be doing.

I am interviewing a number of teachers and pupils as part of the research for my doctorate.

I am carrying out research into the provision that is made for girls with emotional and behavioural difficulties. I want to investigate what can be done to help girls to manage their behaviour better.

I am really interested in any opinions and ideas you have about this. I am going to tape our conversation so that I can use the information when writing up the research.

When I have carried out all of the interviews, I will be writing up the research. I won't be using your name or the name of the school in anything I write so whatever you say will be anonymous.

Do you have any questions?

Shall we begin?

Introductory Question

Firstly, I want you to tell me about a day at school that stands out in your memory.

When I was a teacher, I remember taking pupils on a trip to London. I really wanted them to be as excited about learning as I was and to see the connections between what they were learning and real life. When it came to it, though, my main concern was that they would behave well when we were away from school and that no-one would get lost. I think I impressed on them so firmly what behaviour I expected from them that they were terrified.

Can you tell me about a particular day at school, any day that sticks out in your memory, what was enjoyable about it, anything that you didn't enjoy. Why does this particular day come to mind?

Question 1

Now I want to talk about girls' and boys' behaviour in school.

Tell me about the sorts of behaviour that girls and boys get into trouble for at school.

What sort of behaviour difficulties do you see girls and boys experiencing at school?

Question 2

Are there any behaviours you see from girls that are different to those you see from boys?

Do you think that girls and boys behave differently at school?

Question 3

What are the consequences of inappropriate behaviour for girls and boys at school?

What happens to help girls and boys manage their behaviour better in school?

Question 4

Are there any differences in what happens to girls and boys to help them manage their behaviour better?

Should there be any differences in what happens to girls and boys to help them manage their behaviour better?

Question 5

What do you think would be particularly helpful to girls in helping them manage their behaviour better?

What would you suggest should happen to help girls manage their behaviour better?

Closing Question

Tell me about someone at school you really like or respect. It could be a teacher or a pupil. What do you value about this person? What is it that you respect about them?

Thank you for taking part in this interview.

Your answers and ideas have been really helpful to me.

Do you have any questions?

APPENDIX IV

Verification Exercise: Textual Analysis

Staff 1.3 (non-mainstream)

Tell me about the sorts of behaviour that girls and boys get into trouble for at school.

Generally, boys seem to be unable to keep out. If something's going on, they have to be involved and generally then their tempers fly **[behaviour by sex/boys/direct other]** whereas with girls its more variable. With the boys its more fists, its kicking off so they draw the line – they don't hit a female teacher **[behaviour by sex/boys/direct physical]** whereas with girls of course they would, but when the girls are aggressive girls, they don't stop, they don't have an on-off button at all **[behaviour by sex/girls/direct physical]**.

What sort of behaviour difficulties do you see boys and girls experiencing at school?

With our boys, I think most of them lack a male figure, so a lot of their anxieties stem from the fact that there is no male role model and if a male role model is there they tend violent and it seems that they have been bullied at home, so these anxieties come through at school where they can begin to build relationships with male staff but they find it difficult or they find it exceedingly difficult to take more authority from a mother, female authority figure, especially if they've got a dad at home saying 'Forget what your mum says'. **[behaviour by sex/boys/indirect]** Girls are very aware of themselves but not sure how to deal with themselves and I think its because they haven't got a relationship, they don't actually speak to someone about what is going on, emotionally and physically to them **[recommendations for girls/individual – talking]** **[consequences by sex/girls/interventions]**. When it gets to a certain stage they don't have the respect for themselves to say 'No' to certain things. You see that they're taken advantage of and that's what we're getting here. They think they're a grown up but they're not a grown up. **[behaviour by sex/girls/indirect]**

Are there any behaviours you see from girls that are different to those you see from boys?

I wouldn't know for Key Stage 4 because I only work with Key Stage 3 so I only really see the behaviours of Key Stage 3 boys and girls so I don't know whether that changes. In a way they're both the same because they're both trying to be top-dog, but we've got one girl who crosses the boundaries – she's very violent in her attitude **[behaviour by sex/girls/direct physical]**. I think they're very much the same. The girls preen themselves more **[behaviour by sex/girls/indirect]** and they're very gossipy **[behaviour by sex/girls/direct verbal]** but we've got a few gossipy boys and its very much generalisations and its very difficult to say especially when we've got so few girls.

What are the consequences of inappropriate behaviours for girls and boys at school?

What is supposed to happen is that they're given three warnings. They're given time out. Then they go to see the centre manager. If its verbal abuse, depending on the type of verbal abuse they can be rested, **[behaviour by sex/boys/direct verbal]** but if its very aggressive – they hit another child or hit a teacher, smash things up, then they're rested (sent home) **[behaviour by sex/boys/direct physical]** in certain places, not all the time.

What do you think happens to boys and girls to help them manage their behaviour better in school?

We've got anger management. They've also got people they no they can go to, so they can go to their tutor or whoever they like to discuss something. They tend to prefer just to use their violent attitude. It is very difficult. I think if they don't have the communication skills, they don't tend to be able to ... It tends to be very much bad language.

Are there any differences in what happens to girls and boys to help them manage their behaviour better?

I think its easier with the boys. They're easier to approach. I don't know why but the parents seem much easier to approach **[consequences by sex/boys/interventions]**. I think with the girls it's more closed, and the parents closed to it. I think they still have the same idea that the girls will sit in the corner and the boys are allowed to be a bit of a tearaway and I think that age is still going through **[recommendations for girls/whole school – expectations]** so it doesn't help if you have got a big problem with the child, to try and sort it out because, a lot of the time when a child goes off and they tend to only have a mother at home, it ends up in a slanging match between the mum and the daughter anyway, so you're not getting anywhere **[recommendations for girls/individual – involving parents]**.

Do you think there should be difference in what happens to help girls and boys manage their behaviour?

Actually, we do have a school nurse who comes in to talk to boys and girls but she is very much an obvious person for girls to go to and they can book an appointment. Boys will do the same, but it tends to be more for the girls **[recommendations for girls/individual – multi-agency approach]**. We feel its more girls **[consequences by sex/girls/interventions]**. I think they all need confidence-building but I feel that girls do need a lot more them-time. Its easy to do football or something for the boys, but the girls are conscious about how they look. They don't want to do that, especially when there are boys around. You can see them, because they are emotionally under-developed in certain ways, they can't cope with having the boys watching them playing sports. They are conscious **[recommendations for girls/group – self-esteem]** and I think sometimes we need to make it more obvious that we are doing something slightly different for them **[recommendations for girls/group – activities]**.

You've talked about giving girls time and giving them things to motivate them. Is there anything else you think would be particularly helpful to help girls manage their behaviour better?

I think there really needs to be a unit for girls with EBD. It would be really useful. There are ones for boys but there isn't for girls and it is needed. They seem to recognise it in the boys and there's something for boys. If they recognise it in girls, then surely there should be a centre for girls. My biggest thing is that this year I have got a child who is extremely deskilled. She can't attend school. She won't come into school. We get her in, but she's very violent and she actually needs some real help but we can't get that because the only place she can come is here and she needs true help but where else can you get it from? Actually at school, she would be very good if she could control her other side, this violence. We seem to be able to cope more with when the boys do that because we've got so many more **[recommendations for girls/whole school – provision]**.

Staff 2.3 (mainstream)

Tell me about the sorts of behaviour that girls and boys get into trouble for at school.

The behaviour is slightly different. The girls tend to be more amenable up to a point and then from that point they are almost worse than the boys because they are in your face. **[Behaviour by sex/girls/direct other]** They just tell you what they're thinking, they don't act it out, **[Behaviour by sex/girls/direct verbal]** whereas the boys tend to act it out. They'll throw a chair down because they're angry or if you've crossed them and they don't think it's fair they will thump the table or something like that. It's more physical than in your face with boys. It is different. **[Behaviour by sex/boys/direct physical]**

Are there any behaviours you see from girls that are different to those you see from boys?

Girls (with each other) are very bitchy **[Behaviour by sex/girls/direct verbal]** – the old 'cat fight', but that's more outside school than inside school. They do bully each other. **[Behaviour by sex/girls/direct other]** Girls in the classroom tend to be slightly more underhand, so they'll be surreptitiously doing something that they're not supposed to, like playing with their mobile phone, or the earphone in underneath the hair so you can't see it, **[Behaviour by sex/girls/direct other]** or not actually doing anything at all, whereas they should be. **[Behaviour by sex/girls/indirect]** Boys will do just stupid stuff, throwing a pencil, flicking a bit of paper, being a nuisance to someone else, taking stuff from somebody else, or out of their seat maybe when they shouldn't be. **[Behaviour by sex/boys/direct other]** It tends to be low-level stuff. When it's really bad, boys will just flounce off – as do girls. If they can't take anymore they'll go off and cry and boys will do exactly the same.

What are the consequences of inappropriate behaviour for girls and boys at school?

We tend to have quite good systems for behaviour management in this particular school. Everybody knows the system we work with. If they step over that system then maybe it's slightly different. If you look in 'Isolation' at the moment you'll find it's mainly boys. **[Consequences by sex/boys/sanctions]** They are girls in there, but mainly boys. We do have an Inclusion teacher who has a number of different strategies that he uses with girls as well as boys. The girls' behaviour is generally linked with what's happening with their life outside **[Behaviour by sex/girls/indirect]** – boys not necessarily so. It's often linked to anger, and so anger management comes into it. **[Behaviour by sex/boys/direct physical]** **[Consequences by sex/boys/interventions]** I work with individuals within school (as a Connexions PA) and we have – well we have a variety of different ways that we can use, as well as 'inclusion', as well as 'pupil support services'. **[Recommendations for girls/individual - multi-agency approach]** I think it's tailored to the individual – what we actually do.

Are there any differences in what happens to girls and boys to help them manage their behaviour better?

In the classroom, probably not, because a crime is a crime and the punishment should be the same. But when you're working one-to-one, then I think you have to work with the child and where that child is. How to move them on depends on the child.

What do you think would be particularly helpful to girls in helping them manage their behaviour better?

Giving them time to talk through what it is that's happening in their lives.

[Recommendations for girls/individual – talking] Giving them time to . . . Giving them responsibility for their behaviour, so if they're not managing it they know what to do **[Recommendations for girls/group – teaching strategies]** and they can go out of the classroom and find support outside, if that's what they need. **[Recommendations for girls/individual – time out]**

I think because they are good (usually) at voicing how they're feeling, then it's often easier to manage their behaviour by talking through, whereas that's not always the case with the boys because they can't always put into words what they're feeling at the time. Perhaps as they get older it's slightly different. **[Recommendations for girls/individual – talking]**

Pupil 2.3 (mainstream)

Tell me about the sorts of behaviour that gets you into trouble at school or what sort of things you see that get girls and boys into trouble at school?

When they talk, when they're talking in class and messing around and a teacher tells you to stop but you carry and then they shout at you and if you start arguing back and not listening to what they say it builds up to a bigger problem and you get into trouble.

Do you think that girls and boys behave differently at school?

No. That's what everyone thinks, that boys are worse than girls, but girls can be exactly the same as boys. **[Recommendations for girls/whole school – expectations]**

Are there any things that girls get away with that boys get into trouble for or are there any things that girls get into trouble for that boys get away with?

I think that sometimes girls are not so naughty and they don't mess around but if they do something and a boy does it, the boy's punishment would be worse. **[Behaviour by sex/boys/direct other]** The girl would just get detention **[Consequences by sex/girls/sanctions]** but the boy would be suspended or something. **[Consequences by sex/boys/sanctions]**

What happens when a girl or boy gets into trouble at school?

Most girls they just get a detention or a day's suspension, but boys' are much worse and they get suspended for much longer.

Are there any differences in what happens to girls and boys to help them stay out of trouble in the future?

No. I've been given anger management but all they do is ask you, like, they ask you questions like, what sort of food do you like? Do you have a boyfriend? Anger management doesn't work for me. **[Consequences by sex/girls/interventions]**

What do you think would be particularly helpful to girls in helping them stay out of trouble?

I think 'Time Out' or 'Exit' cards so you can leave the classroom. **[Recommendations for girls/individual – time out]** There should be a teacher you can always go to so you can go there and talk to them and they'll listen to you, and not just someone you go to and you just sit in their classroom, there should be a teacher there and not teaching a class so they can just sit down and talk to you. **[Recommendations for girls/individual – talking]** I've got an 'Exit' card and I've got a teacher I can go to but sometimes you go to them and they're too busy and they can't talk to you and it makes me even angrier. **[Recommendations for girls/whole school – resources]**

Is there anything else you would suggest should happen to help girls stay out of trouble?

It would be better to have a female teacher to talk to and to have them trained in what they do, trained to work with children with anger problems.
[Recommendations for girls/individual – talking] [Recommendations for girls/group – role model]

Pupil 2.2 (mainstream)

Tell me about the sorts of behaviour that gets you into trouble at school or what sort of things you see that get girls and boys into trouble at school?

With me personally, I'm a bubbly person so it's just kind of about my loudness and just the way I come across that gets me into trouble. **[Behaviour by sex/girls/direct verbal]** Some people are just plain rude. They just sit there and disobey the teacher on purpose. Whatever you tell them to do, some people will just get mad and start throwing things.

Do you think that girls and boys behave differently?

Yeah. I find boys are more aggressive towards the whole getting told off thing. **[Behaviour by sex/boys/direct physical]** I'm not saying that girls handle it, but girls can handle it better.

Is there anything that boys or girls get into trouble for more?

Not really.

Is there anything that girls or boys are more likely to get away with?

Yeah. Say we swore in the class **[Behaviour by sex/girls/direct verbal]** and we say 'Sorry', we'll get away with it but if a boy done it then it would be a different story really. They'll probably get sent out or something like that. **[Consequences by sex/boys/sanctions]** Say a girl could swear and she would notice quicker than a boy does but then it's not until a boy gets sent out that they'll turn round and say 'I'm sorry'.

What happens when a girl or a boy gets into trouble at school?

We get warnings. We get our first warning which is just like basically 'Stop it'. Then we get a second warning which is a 15 minute detention and if we carry on then you just get a 45 but when you get a 45, emergency cover's called which is like a senior teacher will come and take over the class and you have to go and work with them. It can go further but depending on what they've done so you immediately get suspended, even expelled.

What happens to help pupils stay out of trouble in the future?

We have anger management classes that help people and some people have their own personal advisor that they can go to or they have exit cards which you can show the teacher if you're getting a bit angry and you can leave - they don't say 'No. You can't'.

Are there any differences in what happens to girls and boys to help them stay out of trouble in the future?

I don't know because we have a girls' anger management class and a boys' one so I wouldn't know how they were taught in their lesson compared to how I'm taught in mine. **[Recommendations for girls/group – group work]**

Do you think there should be any differences in what happens to girls and boys to help the stay out of trouble?

Yeah. Because everyone reacts differently and girls are more likely to react less aggressive than a boy. **[Behaviour by sex/boys/direct physical]**

Do you think there would be anything that would be particularly helpful for girls in helping them to stay out of trouble?

I think it's just generally giving a girl comfort because when you talk to a lot of the girls in the school that do have anger problems, it's because of a background that they've got or just purely because they're down in the dumps or something like that. But when you say to a boy 'Why did you do that?' it's like 'Oh. I thought it would be funny'. **[Recommendations for girls/individual – talking]** That's the major thing is having someone to talk to **[Recommendations for girls/individual – talking]** and to know that if you tell them something, they're not going to run away and tell someone else about it.

APPENDIX V

Verification Exercise: Summary of Textual Analysis

Staff 1.3 (non-mainstream)

| Text | Category |
|---|---|
| Generally, boys seem to be unable to keep out. If something's going on, they have to be involved and generally then their tempers fly | Behaviour by sex/boys/direct other |
| With the boys its more fists, its kicking off so they draw the line – they don't hit a female teacher | Behaviour by sex/boys/direct physical |
| With our boys, I think most of them lack a male figure, so a lot of their anxieties stem from the fact that there is no male role model and if a male role model is there they tend violent and it seems that they have been bullied at home, so these anxieties come through at school where they can begin to build relationships with male staff but they find it difficult or they find it exceedingly difficult to take more authority from a mother, female authority figure, especially if they've got a dad at home saying 'Forget what your mum says'. | Behaviour by sex/boys/indirect |
| If its verbal abuse, depending on the type of verbal abuse they can be rested | Behaviour by sex/boys/direct verbal |
| if its very aggressive – they hit another child or hit a teacher, smash things up, then they're rested (sent home) | Behaviour by sex/boys/direct physical |
| With the boys its more fists, its kicking off so they draw the line – they don't hit a female teacher whereas with girls its more variable. whereas with girls of course they would, but when the girls are aggressive girls, they don't stop, they don't have an on-off button at all | Behaviour by sex/girls/direct physical |
| we've got one girl who crosses the boundaries – she's very violent in her attitude | Behaviour by sex/girls/direct physical |
| they're very gossipy | Behaviour by sex/girls/direct verbal |
| The girls preen themselves more | Behaviour by sex/girls/indirect |
| Girls are very aware of themselves but not sure how to deal with themselves and I think its because they haven't got a relationship, they don't actually speak to someone about what is going on, emotionally and physically to them. When it gets to a certain stage they don't have the respect for themselves to say 'No' to certain things. You see that they're taken advantage of and that's what we're getting here. They think they're a | Behaviour by sex/girls/indirect |

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| grown up but they're not a grown up. | |
| I think its easier with the boys. They're easier to approach. I don't know why but the parents seem much easier to approach. | Consequences by sex/boys/ interventions |
| Girls are very aware of themselves but not sure how to deal with themselves and I think its because they haven't got a relationship, they don't actually speak to someone about what is going on, emotionally and physically to them | Consequences by sex/girls/ interventions |
| we do have a school nurse who comes in to talk to boys and girls but she is very much an obvious person for girls to go to and they can book an appointment. Boys will do the same, but it tends to be more for the girls. We feel its more girls. | Consequences by sex/girls/ interventions |
| Its easy to do football or something for the boys, but the girls are conscious about how they look. They don't want to do that, especially when there are boys around. You can see them, because they are emotionally under-developed in certain ways, they can't cope with having the boys watching them playing sports. They are conscious and I think sometimes we need to make it more obvious that we are doing something slightly different for them. | Recommendations for girls/group - activities |
| I think they all need confidence-building but I feel that girls do need a lot more them-time. Its easy to do football or something for the boys, but the girls are conscious about how they look. They don't want to do that, especially when there are boys around. You can see them, because they are emotionally under-developed in certain ways, they can't cope with having the boys watching them playing sports. They are conscious | Recommendations for girls/group – self-esteem |
| I think its easier with the boys. They're easier to approach. I don't know why but the parents seem much easier to approach. I think with the girls it's more closed, and the parents closed to it. I think they still have the same idea that the girls will sit in the corner and the boys are allowed to be a bit of a tearaway and I think that age is still going through so it doesn't help if you have got a big problem with the child, to try and sort it out because, a lot of the time when a child goes off and they tend to only have a mother at home, it ends up in a slanging match between the mum and the daughter anyway, so you're not getting anywhere. | Recommendations for girls/individual – involving parents |
| we do have a school nurse who comes in to talk to boys and girls but she is very much an obvious person for girls to go to and they can book an appointment. Boys will do the same, but it tends to be more for the girls. | Recommendations for girls/individual – multi-agency approach |
| Girls are very aware of themselves but not sure how to | Recommendations |

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>deal with themselves and I think its because they haven't got a relationship, they don't actually speak to someone about what is going on, emotionally and physically to them</p> | <p>for girls/individual - talking</p> |
| <p>I think they still have the same idea that the girls will sit in the corner and the boys are allowed to be a bit of a tearaway and I think that age is still going through</p> | <p>Recommendations for girls/whole school - expectations</p> |
| <p>I think there really needs to be a unit for girls with EBD. It would be really useful. There are ones for boys but there isn't for girls and it is needed. They seem to recognise it in the boys and there's something for boys. If they recognise it in girls, then surely there should be a centre for girls. My biggest thing is that this year I have got a child who is extremely deskilled. She can't attend school. She won't come into school. We get her in, but she's very violent and she actually needs some real help but we can't get that because the only place she can come is here and she needs true help but where else can you get it from? Actually at school, she would be very good if she could control her other side, this violence. We seem to be able to cope more with when the boys do that because we've got so many more.</p> | <p>Recommendations for girls/whole school - provision</p> |

Staff 2.3 (mainstream)

| Text | Category |
|---|---|
| whereas the boys tend to act it out. They'll throw a chair down because they're angry or if you've crossed them and they don't think it's fair they will thump the table or something like that. It's more physical than in your face with boys. It is different. | Behaviour by sex/boys/direct physical |
| boys not necessarily so. It's often linked to anger, and so anger management comes into it. | Behaviour by sex/boys/direct physical |
| Boys will do just stupid stuff, throwing a pencil, flicking a bit of paper, being a nuisance to someone else, taking stuff from somebody else, or out of their seat maybe when they shouldn't be. | Behaviour by sex/boys/direct other |
| They just tell you what they're thinking, they don't act it out, | Behaviour by sex/girls/direct verbal |
| Girls (with each other) are very bitchy | Behaviour by sex/girls/direct verbal |
| not actually doing anything at all, whereas they should be. | Behaviour by sex/girls/indirect |
| The girls' behaviour is generally linked with what's happening with their life outside | Behaviour by sex/girls/indirect |
| they are almost worse than the boys because they are in your face. | Behaviour by sex/girls/direct other |
| They do bully each other. | Behaviour by sex/girls/direct other |
| Girls in the classroom tend to be slightly more underhand, so they'll be surreptitiously doing something that they're not supposed to, like playing with their mobile phone, or the earphone in underneath the hair so you can't see it, | Behaviour by sex/girls/direct other |
| If you look in 'Isolation' at the moment you'll find it's mainly boys. | Consequences by sex/boys/sanctions |
| boys not necessarily so. It's often linked to anger, and so anger management comes into it. | Consequences by sex/boys/interventions |
| I work with individuals within school (as a Connexions PA) and we have – well we have a variety of different ways that we can use, as well as 'inclusion', as well as 'pupil support services'. | Recommendations for girls/individual - multi-agency approach |
| they can go out of the classroom and find support outside, if that's what they need. | Recommendations for girls/individual – time out |
| Giving them time to talk through what it is that's happening in their lives. | Recommendations for girls/individual - |

| | |
|---|--|
| | talking |
| I think because they are good (usually) at voicing how they're feeling, then it's often easier to manage their behaviour by talking through, whereas that's not always the case with the boys because they can't always put into words what they're feeling at the time. Perhaps as they get older it's slightly different. | Recommendations for girls/individual - talking |
| Giving them responsibility for their behaviour, so if they're not managing it they know what to do | Recommendations for girls/group – teaching strategies |

Pupil 2.3 (mainstream)

| Text | Category |
|---|--|
| they don't mess around but if they do something and a boy does it, the boy's punishment would be worse. | Behaviour by sex/boys/direct other |
| but the boy would be suspended or something. | Consequences by sex/boys/sanctions |
| The girl would just get detention | Consequences by sex/girls/sanctions |
| I've been given anger management but all they do is ask you, like, they ask you questions like, what sort of food do you like? Do you have a boyfriend? Anger management doesn't work for me. | Consequences by sex/girls/interventions |
| It would be better to have a female teacher to talk to and to have them trained in what they do, trained to work with children with anger problems. | Recommendations for girls/individual - talking |
| There should be a teacher you can always go to so you can go there and talk to them and they'll listen to you, and not just someone you go to and you just sit in their classroom, there should be a teacher there and not teaching a class so they can just sit down and talk to you | Recommendations for girls/individual - talking |
| I think 'Time Out' or 'Exit' cards so you can leave the classroom. | Recommendations for girls/individual – time out |
| It would be better to have a female teacher to talk to and to have them trained in what they do, trained to work with children with anger problems. | Recommendations for girls/group – role model |
| No. That's what everyone thinks, that boys are worse than girls, but girls can be exactly the same as boys. | Recommendations for girls/whole school - expectations |
| I've got a teacher I can go to but sometimes you go to them and they're too busy and they can't talk to you and it makes me even angrier. | Recommendations for girls/whole school - resources |

Pupil 2.2 (mainstream)

| Text | Category |
|---|---|
| boys are more aggressive towards the whole getting told off thing. | Behaviour by sex/boys/direct physical |
| girls are more likely to react less aggressive than a boy. | Behaviour by sex/boys/direct physical |
| I'm a bubbly person so it's just kind of about my loudness and just the way I come across that gets me into trouble. | Behaviour by sex/girls/direct verbal |
| Say we swore in the class | Behaviour by sex/girls/direct verbal |
| Say we swore in the class and we say 'Sorry', we'll get away with it but if a boy done it then it would be a different story really. They'll probably get sent out or something like that. | Consequences by sex/boys/sanctions |
| That's the major thing is having someone to talk to | Recommendations for girls/individual - talking |
| I think it's just generally giving a girl comfort because when you talk to a lot of the girls in the school that do have anger problems, it's because of a background that they've got or just purely because they're down in the dumps or something like that. But when you say to a boy 'Why did you do that?' it's like 'Oh. I thought it would be funny'. | Recommendations for girls/individual - talking |
| I don't know because we have a girls' anger management class and a boys' one so I wouldn't know how they were taught in their lesson compared to how I'm taught in mine. | Recommendations for girls/group – group work |

University College London

**Doctoral Programme for Practising
Educational Psychologists
(DEdPsy)**

Professional Practice Assignment

Title: Evaluating a Service Model of Continuing Professional Development

Name: Julia Katherine

Assignment: 1

Core Curriculum: The Profession and its Context:
Educational Psychology Service Delivery and Personal and
Professional Practice (3.2 and 3.3)

Date submitted: June 2002

SUMMARY – AIMS AND SCOPE OF ASSIGNMENT

This aim of this paper is to review the available literature on Continuing Professional Development (CPD) in relation to Educational Psychologists (EPs). In particular, the introduction of structured systems of CPD as adopted by EP services in response to local and national pressures, and the role such systems for ensuring effective and high quality CPD takes place play in maintaining professional competence, enhancing professional motivation and in ensuring quality.

I will describe the development and implementation of a structured system of CPD in one county EP service with which I have been involved. I will then evaluate this service model of CPD in relation to the available literature.

I will take into consideration issues generated by a single focus group of users of this model, using focus group methodology. I will also consider issues raised through a small-scale survey of users' opinions. From this evaluation it will be possible to make recommendations for future practice in relation to setting up and implementing EP service models of CPD, to draw together theory and practice and to make recommendations for future study.

PSYCHOLOGICAL THEORY AND RESEARCH

Introduction

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) refers to the requirement of professionals, and in this case practising educational psychologists (EPs) to keep their professional skills and knowledge updated to ensure that they can continue to provide a quality service to clients. It is in the interest of EP services to provide a system to support this process. This ensures the quality and accountability of individual EP practice and therefore service delivery.

CPD is a requirement and also a responsibility. The BPS Policy Statement issued as an elaboration of the statement on competence (BPS 1998) describes the responsibilities of psychologists regarding CPD in the following terms,

Chartered psychologists are obliged to maintain occupational competence in the area of their specialism and sustain an academic knowledge base underpinning that specialism'.

It is interesting that this statement refers to the maintenance of professional skills, rather than their development or enhancement. The British Psychological Society (BPS) Division of Educational and Child Psychologists (DECP) Standing Committee (BPS 1992) describe CPD as obligatory and an entitlement, as well as a career-long process.

Watts et al (1988) also describe CPD as a process, one involving a number of stages including: individual professional needs assessment; collation of individual needs together with service development needs; negotiation and prioritisation of development needs; agreed goals for individual, team and service; development activities; and evaluation of outcome and process. They describe this process as cyclical, with the first stage continuing on from the final stage. Essential features of this process include a method of identifying an EPs skills, training needs and the potential contribution they could make to colleagues professional development. This would form the basis of negotiation in relation to team and service needs. In addition to this there needs to be a method of recording CPD in a way that is continuous, cumulative and includes evaluation of CPD activities.

This paper makes a strong case for the need for a whole service, structured and planned, system to facilitate CPD. The benefits of this include the provision of a ready-made profile of strengths and weaknesses within a service, useful for planning, service development, role negotiation and development within the LEA, as well as the effective use of training resources. Other benefits for the service include incentives for recruitment and retention through increased professional motivation, the ability to meet quality standards of service delivery by providing current evidence of the professional competence of EPs within the service.

Review of Literature

CPD has become increasingly important in the light of the issues raised recently in the Phelps case about the interests of client groups and the duty of care. There is also a heightened awareness of the importance of CPD following recent discussion about the initial training of educational psychologists (Department for Education, DfEE 2000). This discussion has noted the relatively short and necessarily intensive period of initial training and the consequent need for structured training opportunities to continue after this period of initial training to ensure the competency and quality of the service EPs offer.

Competence

The notion of competence is becoming increasingly important across the professional groups in the UK. Membership of a professional group usually involves an extended period of initial training, followed by adherence to a Code of Conduct, regulated by a professional body. Systems to support CPD, and thereby to maintain professional competence, exist for professional groups such as architects, accountants and lawyers (see Frederickson 1987 and Hayes 1990 for a fuller discussion of the comparisons to be drawn between the CPD systems of EPs and other professionals). Such systems usually include a minimum requirement for hours spent on CPD each year, a points system to indicate the amount of CPD undertaken by professionals, a method of distinguishing between different types of CPD activities, and a personal development log for recording CPD undertaken. Most professions have voluntary CPD guidelines, although many make reference to CPD in their Codes of Conduct. Some professions have compulsory schemes. Professional bodies such as the BPS are charged with the responsibility to provide clear expectations and guidance to protect EPs, their clients and their employers.

The BPS has issued the following guidance on CPD for its members:

'Psychologists shall endeavour to maintain and develop their professional competence, to recognise and work within its limits, and to identify and ameliorate factors which restrict it'.

Psychologists are required to log their CPD activity and the BPS, in proposals currently undergoing a consultation process, has undertaken to monitor this through a yearly random sample of 2% of those offering services to the public. Within the BPS, the various divisions of the society have developed their own individual guidance on CPD. The Division of Clinical Psychologists (DCP) for example have developed detailed and extensive guidance. This includes the following guiding principles (first published in 1990, revised in 1997): Minimum entitlement of 10 days per year; continual supervision by trained supervisors; prioritisation of needs, at an appropriate level, through annual review; CPD policies specified in contracts, job descriptions and performance review criteria; that CPD should include skills, knowledge and scientific knowledge base; and that CPD should include issues raised by race, culture, gender and class. The DECP has also issued guidance. The BPS are currently working

professional development is vitally important to protect clients and ensure EPs' professional competency.

These arguments focus on the importance of competence to the profession of educational psychology. Some writers such as Hodkinson (1995) and Tennant (1997) have taken a different perspective, by looking at the importance of competence for the individual. An argument is made for the importance of professional development as part of a process of self-actualisation, for the following reasons,

'first, [EPs] professional performance is rooted in their own identity . . . Secondly, they are intimately concerned, in their work, with the self-actualization of others' (Hodkinson 1995 p. 5)

Tennant links self-directed learning to self-actualisation,

'To be 'self-actualised' is to be psychologically healthy, to make full use of one's talents, capacities and potentialities. It is a 'need' or 'direction' the person strives towards to achieve personal growth' (Tennant 1997 P. 13).

Motivation

The opportunities for personal growth through CPD are also of importance in maintaining professional motivation and the desire to develop skills and expertise, to facilitate career progression (see Male and Jensen 1998 for a description of the factors that contribute to motivation and job satisfaction for EPs). Addressing current issues around the recruitment and retention of EPs will contribute towards ensuring the quality of any EP service. Systematic, structured and effective support for personal and professional development will facilitate professional motivation. This will make it more likely that EPs will want to stay with employers who are able to support their professional development. EP services with an established and effective system of CPD will have the edge when recruiting both newly qualified and experienced EPs. This surely will be a considerable advantage for any EP service wanting to attract and retain professionals of the highest quality in the current recruitment and retention crisis.

The available literature broadly supports the view that having a system to support planned and structured professional development increases professional motivation. Research regarding the nature of work motivation, as related to a job or profession, is summarised by Baron and Byrne (1994). They consider the theories of work motivation and job satisfaction, including Equity Theory. However, there is no explicit consideration of the effect of supported professional development on professional motivation. Research studies in other, related professions, including education and health, have found that supported professional development increases professional motivation.

Kennedy (1996) has argued that there has been a growing awareness of the need for continuous professional development within the teaching profession. Mid-career teachers who had maintained their commitment to CPD were surveyed in this study to discover what had influenced this commitment to

PRACTICE AND CONTEXT – THE INTRODUCTION OF A SERVICE MODEL OF CPD

A number of national and local factors conspired to facilitate the development of a service model of CPD within the Northamptonshire EP team.

National context

In 1992 the BPS/DECP Standing Committee on CPD issued guidance to all EP services on CPD including an individual CPD record to ensure that professional development was a guided and structured process rather than a string of ad hoc activities.

In 1998 the BPS/DECP Working Group on Quality Standards for Psychological Services issued a document setting out the quality standards to which EP services could aspire. These included the following activities: professional practice, induction, supervision of EPs in training and of practising EPs, appraisal, and CPD. The standards comprise three components: a statement of policy, a description of the process and a description of the management systems in place to support this.

The document recommended that all EP services should have a written statement of policy stating management commitment to CPD; the obligatory nature of CPD, along with individual responsibilities; what constitutes CPD; how CPD is to be monitored and evaluated; and the links between CPD, induction, supervision and appraisal. The document recommended that the process should be introduced as part of service induction; meet individual and service needs and development goals; ensure equality of opportunity; and be properly resourced and managed.

In 2000 the DfEE Working Group published its report on Educational Psychology Services (England): Current Role, Good Practice and Future Directions. This reported recommended that

Future training and development needs of educational psychologists should be considered in the light of [a number of] issues . . . The issues to be considered should embrace skills, knowledge and experience required for the job, the nature of continuing professional development, and training and development required for specialisms.

The BPS are currently working on producing generic guidance to members on CPD. Members voted last year for CPD to become a mandatory requirement for those psychologists wishing to maintain practicing certificates. This has now been approved by the Privy Council and Statute 13 of the Charter has been amended. The CPD Standing Committee has drawn up an implementation plan. A CPD Officer was appointed in April 2001 to facilitate this. A consultation process has begun, anticipated to take 18 months to 2 years to reach its conclusion. The aim is for members to receive generic guidance on CPD, as a mandatory requirement for the issuing of practicing certificates. There is some variation currently between divisions of the BPS as

to CPD expectations, guidance and requirements. Although the DECP was early in issuing guidance to members, the Clinical Division also has very detailed guidance on CPD for its members. There is however general agreement between the divisions about the nature of the CPD process as being a 4-stage process involving the identification of need, prioritisation, implementation, and finally recording and evaluation.

These developments, along with the challenges of LEA inspection and Best Value principles, at the national level have made it even more important that EP services have in place an explicit and planned system of CPD in order to protect EPs and their clients by ensuring quality and competency.

Local context

Local factors that have facilitated the development of a service model of CPD include the reorganisation of support services to schools within Northamptonshire LEA in 2000/2001. This has included the establishment of an umbrella service, Inclusion and Pupil Support (IPS) that incorporates not only EPs, but also support teachers, education welfare officers, home-school liaison officers and others. The establishment of this umbrella service has led to the separation of EPs from other professionals with whom they have historically worked closely, namely support teachers. At the same time there has been a gradual move towards increasingly close work with professionals with whom they have historically worked less closely, for example education welfare officers. Consequently there has been a need for each professional group within IPS to define, redefine and distinguish their role and contribution as distinct and separate from any other.

Within the EP service, this has involved a close internal examination of the skills EPs can offer and the unique contribution they make to supporting schools. It was thought necessary to implement an audit of EPs skills and competencies and to establish a clear and explicit system of maintaining and updating these skills and competencies. As part of this process, a set of minimum service quality standards was agreed to protect and ensure the continuity of high quality EP services to schools in Northamptonshire in the future.

Introducing a service model of CPD

The above national and local factors have emphasised the necessity and urgency of putting in place a service model of CPD for educational psychologists within Northamptonshire. However, the process had begun before these developments had been fully implemented.

The process began with a county-wide working party, set up September 1998, to devise some general principles for CPD for EPs within the service and to make recommendations to inform the development of a service development plan.

Recommendations were made based on the following model, adapted from the BPD/DECP Standing Committee Guidelines:

Stage 1: Identify needs via appraisal and in a context of team, service and LEA needs

Stage 2: Pinpoint needs to be addressed for individual development

Stage 3: Select organise and implement development activities

Stage 4: Record and evaluate activities for personal development plan

Stage 5: Dissemination of information to colleagues

This model was seen as a cyclical process, facilitated at each stage by a CPD Co-ordinator. These recommendations were incorporated into the service development plan.

Following further work in operationalising this model of CPD, a presentation was made to the EP service. This presentation introduced frameworks to support each stage of the process:

- a CPD Planning Sheet to support stage 1: Planning, and to inform Stage 2: prioritisation through Appraisal,
- a CPD Log to support Stage 3: Selection and implementation of CPD activities, and Stage 4: recording and evaluating CPD activities.

In 2000 one of the newly appointed Senior EPs was given lead responsibility for CPD, jointly with the Principal EP. A CPD Audit was carried out by asking EPs to fill in an overall summary sheet of CPD activities carried out over the past year.

Following feedback from EPs within the service, the supporting materials were further refined, in particular the CPD Log was changed. These materials have been piloted by area teams, over the past academic year. The following section describes how EPs views on the appropriateness of this model and the usefulness of the supporting materials have been elicited using focus group methodology.

EVALUATION USING FOCUS GROUP METHODOLOGY – METHOD AND RESULTS

In order to evaluate the effectiveness of the Northamptonshire EP service model of CPD, it was necessary to utilise a methodology that allows for the identification of subtle themes and issues from the information available and one that allows for the inclusion of a wide range of views and perspectives. I facilitated a focus group to identify the issues. I then explored these further using a brief questionnaire.

Focus Group Methodology

What are Focus groups?

Focus groups are group discussions exploring a specific set of issues. The group is 'focused' in that it involves some kind of collective activity . . . Crucially, focus groups are distinguished from the broader category of group interviews by the explicit use of group interaction to generate data.

(Kitzinger, J. and Barbour, R. S. 1999)

Focus groups consist of informal groups sharing a common experience or interest. This approach is useful in identifying a range of opinions about a particular topic. A focus group facilitator has the role of facilitating discussion in order to encourage participants to share their feelings, opinions and various perspectives on the subject in question. For further information on Focus Group Methodology see Vaughn et al 1996).

Procedure

In order to investigate the following research questions, I have made use of focus group methodology, by running a focus group of EPs from within the Northamptonshire team.

Research Questions

- Is the model known to and understood by all service members?
- How is the model viewed in terms of its usefulness to EPs?
- How useful and user-friendly are the supporting materials?
- What improvement suggestions could be made to the model and the process of its introduction to the service?

Focus Group

I ran a focus group involving EPs from within the Northamptonshire service in July 2001. I used facilitating questions (see Appendix II) to promote discussion. I had intended to tape-record the sessions and transcribe the tapes, but due to technical failure this was not possible. The discussion was therefore recorded on flipchart as it was taking place, giving group members

- CPD is an essential part of our work and as professionals we have a duty to improve and increase our skills over time (2),
- We should make an effort to share the knowledge we gain so that all team members benefit (1),
- The team values CPD highly and EPs are encouraged to use their entitlement (1),

In this section I have presented the data obtained through running the focus group and carrying out the survey. I will now draw out from this data the lessons that can be learned from this exercise and the recommendations for setting up an effective system of CPD in the future.

EVALUATION

My initial research questions in terms of the effectiveness of this particular service model of CPD were:

- Is the model known to and understood by all service members?
- How is the model viewed in terms of its usefulness to EPs?
- How useful and user-friendly are the supporting materials?
- What improvement suggestions could be made to the model and the process of its introduction to the service?

Following my research, I am able to comment on these questions by summarising the main issues that came out of the data.

Is the model known to and understood by all service members?

Participants in the focus group and questionnaire respondents were able to identify the materials that support the CPD process, including the file, proformas and guidance information. They were able to identify an explicit policy, with a time expectation (12 days per year). They associated with this policy an ethos that CPD is valued and involves rights and responsibilities. They saw the CPD model as a coherent and continuous system, with planned CPD linking with individual appraisal aims, team objectives, and service level goals as identified in the Development Plan.

Some similar themes were identified by the small number of respondents. This indicates that there is a shared understanding of the basic features and function of the CPD Model. However, as the sample was so small, it could not be considered to represent the views of the whole EP team. Many of those who did not respond may have chosen not to because they did not understand the model or its relevance to their practice.

How is the model viewed in terms of its usefulness to EPs?

The most frequently cited justification for the usefulness of the model was to clarify EPs thinking, during the process of prioritising and planning CPD. Another important factor was that the model provided a formal system and a systematic process for the professional development of EPs. This was seen as raising the status of CPD within the EP service. Guidance on what CPD might include was also described as useful, in particular in terms of emphasising the broad range of activities that offer professional development opportunities. The model was seen to contribute to a supportive ethos within the service where CPD was actively promoted. However, the less useful aspects of the model were that the proformas to aid recording were not always appropriate to every situation, in particular there seemed to be no satisfactory way of logging shorter or more informal CPD experiences. There was also some confusion about the distinction between some of the stages of the process, as prompted on the supporting materials.

Someone within the service needs to take responsibility for facilitation and co-ordination of the system. However, it is also necessary to link the CPD system to strategic planning and service development planning, so there will need to be a clear link with management, if the system is to be effective.

An effective whole service system of CPD will at minimum ensure professional competence and client protection. There is a clear argument for professional negligence and liability if we do not maintain and develop our professional skills and competences. Such a system will also ensure equality of (development) opportunity among EPs. An effective system has at its maximum the potential to ensure quality of service and best value to clients and to ensure that service quality standards are met. Such a system will ultimately enhance the value of the whole EP service, and the organisation in which it is located.

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Database Search Information

Databases used: Psychinfo
ERIC

Key words used: Continuing professional development
Intrinsic motivation and professional development
Intrinsic motivation and learning

Appendix I

In order to fulfil the BPS/DECP Quality Standards, EP services should have a written statement including the following:

- A statement of commitment of service managers to CPD
- An indication of the (obligatory) nature of CPD
- An indication of the responsibilities of all parties involved
- A definition of what constitutes CPD activities
- An indication of how CPD activities are monitored and evaluated
- A description of how CPD links with induction, supervision and appraisal
- A clear method for introducing the scheme to new members of the service
- A system for supporting and reviewing the CPD needs of each member of the service
- A planned programme of training for the service, designed to meet the needs of the various parties who have an interest in improving the quality of EP services
- Clear indications of how CPD is linked to practice and to service development plans
- Explicit linking of appraisal, performance review, professional development and service development, incorporating the views of key service users
- An indication that CPD activities selected are grounded in psychological theory and that the rationale for their inclusion is explicit
- Clear mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating CPDA person or group with responsibility for managing CPD within the service
- A management system which is supportive, recognises the differential needs of all service members and which ensures equality of opportunity to access all forms of CPD
- Access to and management of an adequate financial budget and time allocation system to support CPD.

- More focused and co-ordinated approach – personal and service needs

6. Is there anything you are unclear about or that does not seem to work well in practice?

- Form is 'over the top' for smaller activities
Suggested spreadsheet to enable recording of smaller activities
Good to have the 2 levels though – overview and in-depth
- Policy unclear – no clear statement
- No clear system for cross county co-ordination
- How will information from individuals feed into whole service development?
- Lack of clarity regarding individuals' confidentiality – personal or open information?
- Links to appraisal are unclear – is the information for us or for the appraisal process?
- Need to evaluate after Summer Appraisals

7. Which of the supporting materials do you use?

- List of CPD Activities
- CPD Log
- Not Planning Sheets yet - unclear when to do these, for what purpose (for appraisal only?) and how many?
- Not Supervision sheet yet

8. What is helpful about these materials?

- Focuses mind on the issue
- Guidance on process – helpful for new EPs
- Focus on continued development
- Feels different from professional development in schools
- File pulls everything together
- Induction prompts provide a framework – helpful for new EPs
- Knowing what you need to know and framework to follow through

9. What is unhelpful about these materials?

- Will need to continue to be developed as they are used
- How will they build up year to year – separate files?
- How to incorporate previous information?

10. What would you keep the same about the way the system has been introduced?

Initially introduced – whole team effort

Felt consulted about it

Pleased that some people took responsibility to develop

Team study days - helpful

11. What would you change about this?

- Lost momentum
- No co-ordinated introduction
- Could have had team discussions at the beginning and then at points during the year
- Other things took priority
- Needed to bring back pilot issues
- Raised consciousness
- Needed regular CPD slot in EP meetings to strengthen this
- Framework was lost, but CPD was happening anyway

12. Any other comments or improvement suggestions?

- Launch – needed smart file and flashy cover for every EP to take away
- Clear service message needed
- Clear introduction/starting point needed – rather than another presentation - not taken on board
- File gives status
- SMT responsibilities needed to be clear
- Needed to be clear about how to introduce to new EPs

Julia Katherine

DEdPsy

University College London

**Doctoral Programme for Practising
Educational Psychologists
(DEdPsy)**

Professional Practice Assignment

Title: Evaluating Group Work: Is developmental group work an effective use of EP time?

Name: Julia Katherine

Assignment: 2

Core Curriculum: Direct Intervention with Groups of Children (1.4.1.2)

Date submitted: December 2003

Abstract/Overview

This assignment examines the theory behind developmental group work as a direct psychological intervention, by reviewing the available literature.

The practice of developmental group work is investigated within one Educational Psychology Service (EPS) that has chosen to adopt this model of working as part of the service they offer to schools.

An attempt is made to evaluate the outcomes and effectiveness of this model of working, using quantitative and qualitative measures obtained from a questionnaire given to Educational Psychologists (EPs) within the service.

This evaluation is discussed in the light of the reviewed literature. The question is posed, 'Is this an effective use of EP time?'

Aims and Scope of Assignment

The aim of this assignment is to evaluate the group work that has been carried out in schools by the educational psychology service in one local education authority between September 2001 and July 2002. It is intended to evaluate the group work using a questionnaire distributed to EPs to gather both quantitative and qualitative measures.

Quantitative measures will enable evaluation of the group work in terms of the number and types of groups carried out, the numbers and ages of pupils participating, the human resources required to carry out the group work, the number of schools involved, and the types of evaluations carried out. In addition to this the questionnaire gave EPs the opportunity to give their views regarding the following: the strengths of group work, the potential benefits of group work to participants, the main difficulties encountered with group work, and the key factors that ensure the success of group work. Finally, there is some consideration of the reported outcomes of group work.

This information will be discussed in the light of the issues raised by the available psychological literature on developmental group work and previous evaluations of its value as a model of intervention. The key questions are how much in terms of resources are required to enable EPs to work in this way, and is group work an effective use of resources?

These are essential questions that need to be answered to ensure that EPs are working most effectively to make a difference for the children with whom they come into contact. This continuous evaluation and development of the EP role enables EP services to continue to show that they are able to meet the needs of the clients they support, within a changing context and to plan more effectively for the future development of the service as a whole.

The Practice Context

The work of an EP is distinctive in its diversity. This is demonstrated by the research on EP competencies (McLatchey 2001). The recent working group report on the role of the EP (DFEE 2000) confirms this. This report describes the core functions of the EP role, including work with individual children, work with groups of children, work with schools and early years providers, work with LEAs and work with other agencies. EPs work with groups of children in a variety of ways, for example on,

'friendship skills, inclusion, managing exam stress, behaviour management, bullying issues, pupils at risk of exclusion, and working with school and early years staff and other LEA services'
DFEE (2000, page 9).

The report identified the following outcomes of this type of work including: improved relationships; progress towards inclusion; emotional development; empowerment of staff and pupils; involvement over time; monitoring and review. The report highlights the following, as features of good practice: early

within the service to collect quantitative and qualitative data regarding the nature and effectiveness of this work. A copy of the questionnaire is attached (see Appendix I).

Questionnaires were sent to all EPs (11 in total). Responses were received from 7 (64%). The results will be summarised, taking each question in turn.

Quantitative Data

Question 1: Please could you list the groups you have run this Year?

This question was designed to gather quantitative data regarding the number and nature of groups run in the service over the academic year.

Numbers of Groups

Results indicated that a total of 19 groups had been facilitated by respondents over the three terms. The number of groups run by individual EPs was not consistent as some EPs were part-time and some were full-time. Also, Different EPs and schools have expertise and preferences for different models of working.

These results show that all (maingrade) EPs within the service delivered at least one group over the course of the year, with EPs delivering a maximum of 8 groups and an average of 2.7 groups over the year.

All of the groups included in this evaluation were facilitated by an EP. Most groups included one co-worker, usually a teacher in the host school. Many groups also included an additional adult as observer, according to the Sharp and Herrick (2000) model. In this sample over half (57.5%) of the groups took place with 3 adults present. Usually this was an, teacher and 1 other such as an assistant EP or learning support assistant (47%). Under half (42.5%) of the groups took place with an EP and a teacher co-working, with no observer. A minority of groups (10.5%) took place with an EP and a non-teaching co-worker such as a learning support assistant or assistant EP.

All groups were reported to take place over 6 sessions. If it is assumed that these sessions are approximately an hour long, with preparation, planning, liaison, follow-up and evaluation time, a single group could account for up to 30 hours of EP time (i.e. 4 days). Groups usually run with at least one and usually two additional adults, such as a teacher, learning support assistant or assistant EP. This means that a single group could account for up to 90 hours or 12 days equivalent professionals' time invested. This makes it even more important that there is some evaluation of the effectiveness of using EPs' time in this way.

In this EP service, a percentage (20%) of EPs time is protected through the Service Level Statement for promoting inclusion work. Such work is allocated through a bidding system. The majority of time dedicated to group work (63%)

was made available through this protected time. However it is interesting to note that the remaining 37% of groups were prioritised and made possible out of the schools' allocated core EP time.

Respondents reported that 105 pupils participated in the 19 groups, an average of 5.5 pupils per group. This figure does not include the pupils who were due to be included in a group but ultimately did not attend due to absence or other circumstances. This point will be discussed later, as it is obviously possible for EPs to have contact with many more children using this model of working than would be possible through a model of working where EP carry out individual assessments or implement individual interventions.

Types of Groups

The focus of the groups varied. The majority were Anger Management groups (31.5%) or Self Esteem groups (31.5%). A number of groups focused on Social or Friendship skills (21%). Other, one-off groups covered areas including co-operative learning and taking responsibility for your own behaviour. These various groups constituted 16% of the total.

Ages of Participants

There are 65 mainstream primary sector, 14 mainstream secondary sector and 6 special schools within this local education authority. The responses to this questionnaire indicate that 10 primary schools (15%) and 5 secondary schools (36%) have been involved in at least one group over the course of the year. None of the respondents reported having run groups in special schools during this time period, however it is understood that this has taken place previously. Most schools were involved in one group, with a maximum of 3 groups running in a school over the year.

The ages of the pupils within the groups varied considerably. Two groups (10.5%) included pupils from key stage 1 (years 1 and 2). Eight groups (42%) included pupils from key stage 2 (years 3 to 6). Nine groups (47.5%) included pupils from key stage 3 (years 7 to 9), with one group including pupils from year 10. Overall, this means that slightly over half the groups included pupils from the primary sector (52.5%).

Evaluation

Most EPs included their evaluation of the group with their questionnaire response. The majority of groups (58%) had been formally evaluated, with a summary of this evaluation sent to schools and recorded in school files. The remaining groups' evaluations (42%) were not available, or had been carried out informally and took the form of notes stored in the school file, or had not been carried out.

Qualitative Data

Question 2: What would you say are the main strengths of group work as a way of working in schools?

This question invited respondents to identify 3 perceived strengths of group work. Responses were categorised and grouped with other similar responses. The most common responses to this question were the following: Group work develops and improves the relationship between EP, school staff and pupils (5 responses). Group work is an effective way of working because it enables EPs to have contact with a greater number of pupils than they would otherwise be able to (5 responses). Group work develops the skills of school staff to enable them to run similar groups in the future (4 responses). Group work is an effective way of working as the resources of the whole group can be drawn upon (3 responses). Group work is an example of good practice for EPs because it ensures that EPs work with children over time (2 responses). For clusters of responses see Appendix II.

Question 3: What would you say are the main benefits of group work for participants?

This question invited respondents to identify 3 perceived benefits of group work to participants. Responses were categorised and grouped with other similar responses. The most common responses to this question were the following: Group work provides a safe environment (which some referred to as 'Unconditional Positive Regard') within which participants are able to explore and express their emotions (6 responses). Group work increases participants' self-awareness and self-esteem (3 responses). Group work improves participants' peer relationships and social skills (3 responses). Group work improves participants' relationships with school staff (3 responses). Group work enables participants to develop coping strategies (2 responses). For clusters of responses see Appendix II.

Question 4: What would you say are the main difficulties you have encountered with group work?

This question invited respondents to identify 3 perceived difficulties with group work. Responses were categorised and grouped with other similar responses. The most common responses to this question were the following: Difficulties experienced when individual participants were not ready for or unsuited to group work (4 responses). Difficulties experienced when a school is finding it difficult to support the group work, for example when there are difficulties enabling staff involvement (4 responses). Difficulties in ensuring that an appropriate (quiet) venue is available and that staff time is protected to take part in the group (3 responses). Difficulties experienced when insufficient time has been available for planning (2 responses). Difficulties experienced in completing evaluations when a school is not committed to ensuring that this takes place (2 responses). Difficulties experienced due to participants' absence (2 responses). Difficulties experienced when the course materials

are inappropriate to the participants (1 response). Difficulties experienced in ensuring parental involvement (1 response). For clusters of responses see Appendix II.

Question 5: What would you say are the main factors that ensure a group is successful?

This question invited respondents to identify 3 perceived factors that ensure the success of group work. Responses were categorised and grouped with other similar responses. The most common responses to this question were the following: The success of group work is dependent upon group dynamics (6 responses). The success of group work is dependent upon the involvement and commitment of school staff, in particular teachers (6 responses). The success of group work is dependent upon the involvement and commitment of parents (2 responses). The success of group work is dependent upon allowing sufficient planning and liaison time before and after group sessions (2 responses). The success of group work is dependent upon pupil's motivation to take part and attendance at sessions (2 responses). The success of group work is dependent upon having a suitable room (1 response). The success of group work is dependent upon all those involved having clear and explicit expectations about the group and the expected outcomes (1 response). For clusters of responses see Appendix II.

Evaluations

All group work should be evaluated with pre- and post- measures selected according to the objectives of the group. For example, some measure of self-esteem would be appropriate for a self-esteem group that is aiming to raise participants self esteem. Sociometric measures of friendship groups might be appropriate for a social skills group aiming to facilitate friendships within a group of participants.

Currently, a written summary proforma exists for EPs to use when evaluating group work, to standardise presentation. In addition to this form, some EPs wrote additional information, as part of their evaluation of the group work. Some EPs sent summaries to schools of which sessions had been attended and what had been covered within the group sessions individually, for each participating pupil. Some EPs sent a letter of congratulations to each participant at the end of the group work. Some EPs sent short reports, summarising the work that had been carried out and the outcomes, including pre- and post- measures, to schools on completion of the group work.

A range of evaluation measures were utilised before and after the group work to assess a variety of factors (dependent on the objectives of the group). These included pupil evaluation questionnaire, pupil behaviour self-rating scales, parent evaluation questionnaires, parent behaviour rating scales, teacher evaluation questionnaire, teacher behaviour rating scales, sociometric measures, measures of self esteem, and anecdotal comments.

Integration of Theory, Research and Practice

Research Review

A number of attempts have been made to evaluate this area of work to consider its effectiveness as an intervention and its appropriateness as a model of working for EPs. The importance of such evaluation was highlighted by Dwevedi and Mymin (1993) who described group-work evaluation as having three functions: a research function, a retrospective or review function and a planning or goal-setting function. The value of evaluation was described in terms of value to the facilitators, the participants as well as to third party researchers. They state that:

'evaluation is fundamentally educative in that it enhances the effectiveness of the clinician because the results can serve as valuable, constructive and therefore corrective feedback, reinforcing the good practices and reducing the bad' (Dwevedi and Mymin 1993, page 46).

They go on to describe in detail some of the methods available to psychologists to carry out on-going and educative evaluations.

In order to review the range of evaluative studies that have been carried out, it is first necessary to acknowledge the variety of different theoretical bases and modes of delivery of group work. Most of the evaluations consider a single group, and although some employ more rigorous measures, many rely on anecdotal evidence as the basis for their evaluation.

One such evaluation was carried out by Turpin and Titheridge (2001). They implemented a case study of a single group aimed at encouraging expression of emotions, raising self-esteem, and developing strategies for managing difficult situations through a programme based on art therapy techniques. The course was facilitated by a teacher and specialist nurse. The group comprised five 7 to 9 year olds, selected for participation by the school special needs co-ordinator in relation to specified criteria. It ran for one and a half hours, weekly, over two terms. Group facilitators arranged fortnightly supervision for themselves. The group was evaluated using qualitative (anecdotal) comments. The evaluation identified key factors in the success of the group, including the duration of the intervention and close liaison with teachers.

An evaluation that also relied upon the collating of qualitative comments through informal interviews was carried out by Carabine and Downton (2000). The evaluation concerned, once again, a single group, this time aimed at raising pupils' self-esteem through drawing on the resources of peer support. The programme was delivered by an EP, over 4 hour-long sessions, spread over 10 weeks. There were 4 participating pupils selected by the school special needs co-ordinator and EP from years 7 and 8. The evaluative comments were largely positive, about improved self-esteem and academic performance. However, there were no quantitative pre- and post- measures to verify this. The positive perceptions were found to be maintained over time. However, the authors consider that it would have been more useful to have involved a member of school staff in the group work.

facilitated by teachers, with 15 participants selected through a formal screening process. The pupils came from the equivalent of years 7, 8 and 9 in the UK. The programme ran over 9 weeks, with three 75-minute sessions each week. However the results found only an improvement in pupils' own perceptions of their behaviour. Problems were encountered for pupils in transferring their new skills to the classroom. None of the other measures used identified significant changes. This could be because the measures selected were not sensitive enough to detect the more subtle outcomes of the intervention.

Roberts (1997) evaluated a group aimed at encouraging pupils' self-expression, self-confidence and co-operation through a programme based on expressive activities and cognitive methods. The group was facilitated by an EP, teacher and learning support assistant and took place in a special school over a period of 10 one and a half hour sessions. There were 7 participants, from year 8, identified by the class teacher. The outcomes were evaluated using a post-test pupil and teacher questionnaire. The results indicate that pupils benefited from the framework that such a programme offers to facilitate a systematic developmental approach to intervention. The issues raised by staff included the importance of allowing sufficient planning time. Staff also reported that pupils enjoyed the programme and stressed the value of utilising the group dynamics as an agent of change.

Some of the evaluations were able to include a number of groups. Squires (2001) for example evaluated 3 groups based on cognitive behavioural therapy. These groups were run in 2 schools, over 6 hour-long sessions with homework activities. Each group comprised 6 to 9 participants ranging from year 5 to year 8, selected by teachers. The programme was delivered by an EP and teacher. Evaluation took place using pre- and post-test rating scales. There were measurable improvements in participants' self-concept, peer relations, perceived self-control, and in the teacher rating of their behaviour. The perceived improvements were still found to be present even after 6 months, indicating that the benefits are long-lasting. Other measurable outcomes included reduced exclusions, reduced need for pastoral support programmes, reduced requests for statutory assessments, and reduced incidents of behaviour interfering with learning. In addition to this it was reported that there was an improved whole school ethos, following the work. The main issue raised by the evaluation was the difficulty of accessing adequate human resources to implement this type of work in schools, which can be an effective preventative strategy.

Four social skills training programmes aimed at improving participants' social skills were evaluated by Nelson (1996). The groups were delivered by 2 teachers over 6 hour-long sessions. Participants were selected by form tutors, against specified criteria. There was a maximum of 8 pupils in each group, from years 7, 8 and 9. The groups were evaluated using formal pre- and post-test measures including the B/G Steem self-esteem inventory. Parental and teacher qualitative comments were also collected as part of the evaluation procedure. This B/G Steem identified one of the outcomes of the intervention as increased pupils' self-esteem. These gains were found to be sustained

provided by West (1994). West identified the interaction between task and social reflexivity as a key determinant of group effectiveness. Any evaluation of developmental group effectiveness should consider these aspects of group dynamics in order to comment on the group's effectiveness.

There is evidence for the positive value of group work, and the theoretical basis for its effectiveness. This explains the large amount of literature available to support professionals choosing to adopt this approach (see for example Dwivedi 1993 and Edwards et al 2000). However most of the evidence for the effectiveness of this way of working is anecdotal and the type of evaluations that have been carried out vary enormously. In trying to make sense of this information, it is important to recognise both the variety in the types of group and the variety of different methods of evaluation employed by psychologists in relation to this area of group work. The literature summarised here covers groups that focused on social skills, self esteem and anger management. The group work was sometimes delivered by school staff and sometimes by the EP, external to the school. The programmes lasted from 6 weeks to a year. The participants varied in age and in the reasons participants were selected for the groups. Given these vast differences, it is difficult to draw any universal conclusions about the potential outcomes of group work as a model of EP work in schools. The evaluations carried out employed a range of methods, from anecdotal comments to formal measures such as rating scales and self-esteem inventories. The evaluations identified a range of outcomes of group work, mainly positive. These include improvements in behaviour, as perceived by pupils, parents and school staff; increased self-esteem; and reduced exclusions. The benefits were often found to be maintained over time. Identified issues included difficulties in generalising skills into the classroom situation, and issues of time and other resources. The main difficulty with evaluation was the difficulty in identifying appropriate measures that are valid, reliable and sensitive enough.

In summary, there has been very little formal evaluation of this type of intervention. What evaluation has been carried out has been mainly anecdotal, based on a single case study and lacking in 'hard' evidence of outcomes and scientific rigour. It has been assumed that this is a valuable way for EPs to spend their time, without sufficient evidence to back up this claim. It is essential that such evaluation take place if EPs are to continue to invest their time in this approach. This investigation makes an attempt at a more formal evaluation of group work, on a wider scale than has previously occurred.

Discussion of results

The results of this study show that a large amount of EP service time and resources in this particular authority, not to mention school time and resources, is being invested in developmental group work. The groups are mainly focused on anger management, self-esteem and social skills, with group work being developed in a number of other areas. All EPs are involved in facilitating groups. This is made possible by the protected 20% of time

made available for promoting inclusion. Some EPs have been able to develop this area as part of their regular work in schools. This may be due to personal interest or the openness of some schools to working in this way. The group work covers the primary and secondary sectors equally. Each group offers therapeutic input to an average of 5 to 6 children. Given that each group is estimated to account for up to 12 days of professionals' time in total, this means that children are gaining approximately 2 days of professional therapeutic input over time through the group work model.

The EPs surveyed saw a number of strengths of group work. There was a large amount of overlap between the responses given. In general the themes highlighted this model of working as an example of good practice, enabling EPs to work therapeutically, collaboratively with schools in order to share skills, over time, and with larger numbers of children than would otherwise be possible. One respondent described the strength of group work in the following way, '*EPs model skills of facilitation and psychological understanding that are qualitatively different from teaching skills*'.

There were a number of potential benefits to participants highlighted by respondents. All respondents mentioned the value of a safe, therapeutic environment within which participants could experience positive support and could reflect on and express their own emotions. The majority of respondents also noted potential benefits as raised self-esteem, self-awareness and social skills with peer and adults. These benefits were perceived to exist, regardless of the type of group, for example one respondent stated, '*whatever the focus of work, participants often improve aspects of their social skills*'.

The widest range of responses were given when EPs were asked to identify the difficulties they had encountered with group work. Of these, the recurring themes were to do with group processes and group composition, as well as environmental factors. Such factors included prioritising group work so that sufficient time is protected by the school and EP for planning, implementation and evaluation. One respondents described this difficulty as, '*schools not entirely committed i.e. think it is a quick solution to a number of problems*'. This reflects a difficulty that may arise if the EP service value group work more highly than the schools they are working in.

When asked to identify the main factors that ensure the success of group work, there was much agreement between responses. All respondents included group dynamics and group processes as a key factor. All respondents also identified the commitment of school staff to the piece of work as a key factor, described by one EP as, '*co-working with a member of staff who is committed to group work*'. The implications of this are that in order to ensure the maximal success of future groups, EPs need to ensure that the group composition is carefully planned with schools staff and parents. The processes and objectives for the group need to be clearly explained to ensure that both pupils, parents and school staff are involved and supportive of the work. As part of the prioritisation of the work, resources (including time and venue) need to be protected.

With regard to the evaluation of group work, there is clearly a need for time to be prioritised by both the EP and school to ensure that this happens. It is interesting to note that many of the evaluations identified similar outcomes in terms of pupil behaviour and the school's enthusiasm to run future groups. However, the measures used to identify these outcomes vary considerably. There would be some value in establishing more consistency between evaluations in order to allow easier comparison between groups.

Discussion of results in relation to previous literature

Current research is consistent with the previous literature. In general, group work, of the type described here, can be considered to be an effective use of EP time and an example of good practice, as part of an EPs core role (see DFEE 2000).

The advantages of group work identified consistently between the current research and previous literature include: improved behaviour, self-awareness, self-esteem and social skills. These terms have been used here to summarise the variety of terms used and do not take account of differences in measurement and definition. These outcomes were found to be the case regardless of the type of group. For example, groups aimed at improving anger management skills were still likely to result in increased self-esteem etc, not just those groups focused on raising self-esteem. In considering this conclusion, it should be noted that the outcomes were measured in a variety of different ways, so any universal findings should be treated with caution.

The improvements in behaviour noted in the current and previous research, however measured, were found in a number of studies to be maintained over time. This involved follow-up work some time after the initial group work. It suggests that the positive changes made were stable, 'real' changes, not just perceived changes based on a 'halo effect'. Likewise, changes were generally, but not always, found to be consistent across different contexts, most often home and school. This again suggests that changes were not simply the perceptions of an individual, but 'real' changes in behaviour.

The use of group work as a model of EP practice has been shown to be effective in terms of the number of children EPs have contact with, the sharing of skills with teaching professionals and the consequent effect of this for whole school ethos and processes, as well as measured outcomes. It is interesting, also, to consider the unique role of group work. What does group work allow EPs to achieve that could not be achieved in any other way, for example through individual work with a child. When this issue was considered by respondents, it was generally agreed that group work was seen to allow EPs to utilise the power of group processes to effect change for individual group members. This is a strength that has been harnessed in other areas of psychology, such as family therapy. Further work needs to be carried out to identify and understand these group processes further in order to make most effective use of the psychology behind group work within educational psychology.

It is easier to access 'hard' quantitative evidence to evaluate group work, such as the numbers of exclusions and attendance figures. Such data is reliable in the sense that it is available, regardless of who is collecting it, and replicable over time. However it may not be as valid as some more qualitative and subtle data sources in accessing the variable that needs to be measured.

One of the factors that is consistently reported to change as a result of group work is people's perceptions of the problem. This includes teachers' parents' and the pupils' own perceptions of their behaviour. This factor has been found to be the case in the present study as well as previous studies. A number of possible explanations can be offered as to why this factor is so often identified in evaluations. It may be that most evaluations make use of questionnaires and therefore a feature of this type of data is that respondents' views and perceptions are elicited. Another possible explanation is that group work inevitably makes pupils, parents and teachers more aware of the problem and more aware of any small changes that might happen as a result.

Not all of the outcomes identified through evaluations are positive. Often respondents referred to the issue of children that cannot cope with group work. Some children may not be ready for group work, others may not be able to benefit due to their difficulties. Consideration should also be given to the mix of personalities and difficulties within the group. This was identified as an important factor in ensuring the success of the group. It will be important for future group work to continue to be effective use of EP time, that the success factors identified in this and other studies are taken heed of.

There are a number of limitations of this study. The different types of groups that are evaluated here have been considered together and the assumption made that they form one coherent model of working. Potential benefits for example have been considered generically, across groups, rather than each type of group work considered separately. This may be a false assumption to make. It may be the case that distinct factors apply to social skills groups as opposed to anger management groups etc.

The study is also limited in that it relies on the EP questionnaire, which was devised specifically for this purpose, as a way of collected data. This inevitably means that much of the information collected will relate to EPs perceptions of group work rather than any more direct measures. Reliance on this one source of data means that no consideration has been made of pupils views, parents views or teachers views, which are arguably just as important. Finally, this study is limited in that there is so much variation in the types of evaluations carried out. These have been assumed to be a fairly homogenous group, but in reality they vary in terms of the types of measures selected and the implementation of these as well as the conclusions drawn.

Implications for EP practice

There are a number of implications from this study for EP practice. It can be concluded from this piece of work that group work with pupils as a distinct model of working seems to be an effective way of using EP time and should

APPENDIX I

Is group work an effective use of EP time?

I am planning to carry out an evaluation of group work as one of the assignments for my doctorate. I want to look at whether group work is an effective use of EP time.

To do this I need to collect information about the group work that has been carried out in schools this year.

Please could you fill in some details about each of the groups you have run in schools this year.

I will then collate and summarise the information so that I can make some general comments about how many groups have been carried out, what resources this has involved and what the outcomes have been.

I will not be identifying any EP or school by name.

I know that you have recently been asked for information about work to promote emotional literacy in schools and that this includes group work. I have therefore included a list of the groups identified, as an aide memoir.

Please ask me if you have any further questions.

Thank you for your help.

Julia Katherine

Evaluation of Group Work (September 2002 to August 2002)

1. Please could you list the groups you have run this year:

| Type of Group (e.g. Anger Management) | School | Inclusion Bid? (Yes/No) | Number of Pupils | Ages of pupils (or Year Groups) | Number of sessions | Number and designation of adults involved (e.g. 1 EP, 1 LSA) | Evaluation attached? (Yes/No) |
|--|--------|----------------------------|------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------|---|----------------------------------|
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Julia Katherine

DEdPsy

University College London

**Doctoral Programme for Practising
Educational Psychologists
(DEdPsy)**

Professional Practice Assignment

Title: Supervision and Support in Educational Psychology

Name: Julia Katherine

Assignment: 3

Core Curriculum: Interpersonal Effectiveness:
Conceptual Frameworks (2.2.3)

Date submitted: June 2007

SUMMARY – AIMS AND SCOPE OF ASSIGNMENT

This paper describes a small-scale replicated study in one educational psychology (EP) service using some of the questions from the 1993 national survey (Pomerantz 1993). The national survey attempted to find out how supervision was being experienced within the profession and how valued it was by educational psychologists (EPs). The current study uses some of the questions from the previous, national survey in order to determine how EPs within one EP service value supervision and other supportive activities, including training, team meetings, managerial oversight, informal peer discussion, consultation and appraisal, and what EPs feel they gain from each. In order to achieve this, the current paper puts into context what has been written about the purpose and process of supervision, within the field of educational psychology and human resources management. As a result, of this research, recommendations can be made about ways of improving EPs' experience of supervision and other supportive activities and ensuring that the time spent on these activities is used productively.

PSYCHOLOGICAL THEORY AND RESEARCH

Introduction

Supervision can be described as '*a process of examining one's own work and issues arising from it, at a professional and personal level within an individual supervisory relationship*' (Pomerantz 1993b, page 31).

The term, 'Supervision', identifies a process that is familiar and yet difficult to define concisely, not least because the term encompasses more than one activity and has more than one purpose and function. As Nolan (1999) points out, supervision is a '*complex multi-functional concept*' (Nolan 1999, page 98). According to Hawkins and Shohet (2003), the functions of supervision include the following: a supportive function, an educative function and a management function. These different functions are often carried out by the same person, who is in a supervisory and management role, possibly at the same time. This explains why there is so much confusion over the purpose and process of supervision within the profession, leading to a wide range of practice, as documented by Pomerantz et al (1987) and Pomerantz (1993b).

Despite this potential confusion, the importance of supervision within the profession has long been recognised. A Working Party was set up in 1984 by the British Psychological Society (BPS), Division of Educational and Child Psychologists (DECP) Training Committee and the initial training course tutors' group to investigate current practice and to make recommendations for the supervision of EPs in Training (Pomerantz 1987). A follow-up survey was conducted in 1993 to investigate current practice for qualified EPs (see Pomerantz 1993). More recently, the BPS hosted a conference for Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Co-ordinators on 'Developing the Quality of Professional Supervision in Educational Psychology Practice' (London, December 2002). This demonstrates that the issue of supervision is still a topical one and that EP services are continuing to develop their practice in this area.

Review of Literature

Definition of Supervision

It has already been stated that supervision is difficult to define because it has many functions. In essence it is an interactive process with the primary aim of developing professional practice. This process can fulfil the following functions: protecting the client by promoting best practice; providing emotional support and development for the supervisee (e.g. described by Egan as learning 'how to take care of yourself' see Egan 2007, page 24); providing professional and management support for the supervisee; facilitating the continuing professional development of the supervisee; and ensuring quality of service delivery. To fulfil any of these functions, it requires the commitment of all parties involved, who share responsibility for the quality of the process.

Supervision provides a safe and supportive environment for professionals to reflect on their practice in order to improve upon it.

The DECP Professional Practice Guidelines (1992) refer to all of these functions. Continuing professional development can occur through being able to '*explore and learn from the practical, experiential, theoretical components of professional practice*' (DECP 1992). The guidelines emphasize the importance of the relationship between the supervisor and supervisee in evolving an environment of safety, trust, and mutual respect. The roles of supervisor and supervisee within this relationship can be hierarchical, for example line manager and employee, or equitable, for example peer supervision. The relationship can be a one-to-one relationship or take place within a group situation. All those within this relationship share the responsibility for the supervision process. For example, the guidelines state that it is the '*responsibility of the psychologist to ensure that potentially controversial issues, or those with uncertain ethical connotations are presented for supervision*' (DECP 1992). On the other hand, it is the responsibility of the supervisor to provide a context and framework to enable this process to take place, and to take the lead within this. The purpose that both parties are working towards is that as a result of supervision, the supervisee will become a more effective practitioner.

Types of Supervision

The different types of supervision relate to the various contexts within which supervision is required. Hawkins and Shohet (2003) refer to four types of supervision: tutorial, training, managerial and consultancy. Tutorial supervision takes place in an educational context and is likely to include reflection on theory as well as practice. Training supervision takes place in the field or on placement and is likely to focus on practical, process and interpersonal skills. The trainer will have some responsibility for the work being carried out. Managerial supervision occurs when the supervisor is also the supervisee's line manager and has clear responsibility for the work being carried out. Consultancy supervision can involve the supervisee seeking consultation with a more experienced colleague or a peer. Here the supervisee retains full responsibility for the work being consulted about.

Hawkins and Shohet provide a detailed categorisation of supervision according to type (or context). Alternative ways of categorising do exist, however, for example McIntosh and Phelps (2000) refer to university-based and field-based supervision. This distinction is more relevant to supervision during training than on-going professional supervision and can be related to Hawkins and Shohet's tutorial and training supervision. For the purposes of this paper, which is solely concerned with the supervision of educational psychologists, as distinct from other applied psychologists, supervision will be considered in two categories: supervision during training and supervision during qualified practice. Supervision during training (i.e. pre-qualification) incorporates tutorial and training supervision, as defined by Hawkins and Shohet. Supervision during qualified practice incorporates managerial and

consultancy supervision, as defined by Hawkins and Shohet (op cit), and includes supervision during induction, and also peer group supervision.

Models of Supervision

In addition to the categorisation of supervision by type, context or purpose, this process can also be categorised by the model or psychological theory or discipline in which it is rooted. Greenway (2002), in a presentation at the BPS conference on supervision, made reference to three models of supervision: systemic, mentoring and coaching. Supervision through systemic practice is rooted in the mental health tradition. It involves working within an interactional framework, with the supervisee working as part of a team within the system. The focus is on the process, with the supervisor remaining neutral and the supervisee maintaining control of the process. Supervision through mentoring is rooted within the education tradition. It involves taking an individual focus and encouraging reflective self-criticism. The focus is on changing beliefs, with the supervisor taking the role of critical friend, enabling the supervisee to come to conclusions about their own work. Supervision through coaching derives from sports psychology. It involves developing skills through supported reflection on practice. The focus is on changing behaviour through direct feedback from an experienced practitioner, who leads the process. This method of categorisation appears clearly defined, but there are inevitably areas of overlap between them.

One of the most useful models of supervision in this context is the General Supervision Framework developed by Scaife (e.g. see Scaife 1993 and 2001). This model emphasises the importance of the supervisory relationship, while also taking account of the shifting focus of supervision and the medium through which supervision takes place. Another relevant model is the Double Matrix Model devised by Hawkins and Shohet (2003). This similarly emphasises the importance of the supervisory relationship. Hawkins and Shohet also expand on the complexity of the varying focus of the supervision. Another well-known model is the Developmental Model (Stoltenberg et al 1998). This is a more helpful way of thinking about supervision of practitioners in training.

In contrast, Nash (1999) describes a model based on consultation and solution-focused thinking. In this model, solution focused thinking is applied to the supervisory process in order to enable the supervisee to '*identify her own strengths and needs*' and to provide a '*framework for reflecting on progress*' (Nash 1999, page 109). This takes place through the following four '*modes*' of practice: the supervisor '*talking about and reflecting on her own practice*', the supervisee '*observing and reflecting on the supervisor's practice*', the supervisor '*observing and reflecting on*' the supervisee's practice, and the supervisee '*talking about and reflecting on her own practice*' (Nash 1999, page 109). This model was developed as a response to a supervisor being in the position of providing supervision on placement to educational psychologists in training, and feeling that there was insufficient training and guidance to enable her to reflect objectively on the quality of the

supervision experience she was providing. A number of other authors take up this theme of training for supervisors, as discussed below.

Training for Supervision

Training for supervisors, as a topic for analysis, is a fairly recent development. The importance of training in ensuring high quality supervision and the delivery of high quality practice as a result, is highlighted by Wheeler (2004), Green (2004) and Jennings (1996). Jennings summarises research (also referred to later in this paper) that shows that '*supervision as a means of learning and support among educational psychologists [is] becoming more valued and widespread*' (Jennings 1996, page 22). One of the most valuable aspects of supervision, she argues, is the opportunity to reflect on practice in order to develop and improve upon it. The facilitation of this process is the role of the supervisor, by providing a supportive context in which the process of supervision '*brings together a greater association between knowledge, skills, values, beliefs, and personal professional understanding*' (Jennings 1996, page 43). In summary, '*the capacity to stand back and reflect on practice is one of the most important ingredients in developing a professional role*' (Jennings 1996, page 42).

It has been argued that training for supervision is essential in order to ensure the quality of supervision offered to EPs in Training (EPiTs), to ensure the quality of service offered to the LEA, and to protect the interests of the children and families with whom the EP works (Powell, Leyden and Osborne 1990). Powell et al go on to suggest that a curriculum for such training should include training in the following skills: negotiation, giving and receiving feedback, assessment of fieldwork, dealing with difficult issues.

A different view is taken by Clarkson and Gilbert (1991). Writing from the perspective of supervision for counsellors, they advocate a three-stage process for the training of supervisors, rather than a skill-based curriculum. The first stage is 'Awareness', where the supervisor moves from unconscious incompetence to conscious incompetence. This means that they become aware of the skills and knowledge that need to be developed. The second stage is 'Accommodation', where the supervisor moves from conscious incompetence to conscious competence. This means that the supervisor is developing their skills as a result of their training and practising these skills in a conscious and less than fluent way. The final stage is 'Assimilation', where the supervisor moves from conscious to unconscious competence. This means that the new skills become fluent and incorporated into the supervisor's way of working. The authors argue that these three stages are fluid and cyclical, as a supervisor's skills can always be developed further.

This cyclical process begins during a professional's training as an EP. Unfortunately, many EPs in training report negative experiences of supervision (Jennings 1996) giving further weight to the argument for training to be universally available to develop supervision skills. Perhaps there should be a move towards the quality assurance of such training. As a profession, we

should be aiming for high quality supervision to be available from the beginning of EP training and throughout an EP's career.

Supervision during Training

There is a large amount of information available about supervision of EPs during their training year. This is because supervision (both academic and on placement) is a compulsory element of the training and because researchers have investigated good practice within this readily available group of participants.

The most important and systematic survey of fieldwork supervision of EPs in Training was conducted in 1984-5 and is reported by Pomerantz et al (1987) and Lunt (1993). This research highlighted some of the benefits of supervision, such as the giving and receiving of feedback. In addition, it was noted that problems frequently occur when there is not a shared understanding of the purpose of supervision. This research enabled guidelines to be drawn up by the BPS, based on the good practice identified by the survey. In the twenty years since this original research, university training courses have worked hard to improve upon the quality of supervision available to EPs in training on placement by providing training and by making the expectations about time and process explicit.

On-going improvements in the quality of supervisory experience offered to EPs in training during their training year are welcomed by a number of more recent authors (see Pomerantz 1990, and Hamilton Farrell 1993). Osborne, Leyden and Powell (1990) compare EP fieldwork supervision with supervision within other disciplines and argue for training for supervisors to ensure consistency between different individuals and different disciplines.

A considered account of a generalisable and widely applicable framework for supervision is expounded by Scaife (1993). This framework is characterised by the development of a relationship of mutual respect and co-operation, within which learning and professional development can take place for both EPiT and supervisor. Carrington (2004) also argues that supervision should be understood as a reciprocal learning experience, with opportunities for the professional development of both supervisee and supervisor. She gives a very personal, and therefore not necessarily generalisable, account of the ways in which she, as an individual, gained from supervising an EP in training. These included: being challenged by a different perspective of a situation; hearing about new research and resources; being required to reflect on thinking processes in order to explain them to someone else; and receiving feedback on observed practice. She puts forward the argument that viewing supervision as a mutual opportunity for professional development will lead to the status of supervision being raised. This will result in better quality supervision through greater importance being given to the training of supervisors, and through this the improved practice of both parties involved.

Table 1a: Percentages and numbers of respondents rating each value in response to the question, 'How important is this activity for you?'

| Activity | No Value | Limited Value | Some Value | Quite Valuable | Extremely Valuable |
|--------------------------|----------|---------------|------------|----------------|--------------------|
| Informal Peer Discussion | 0.0 | 4.3 | 11.1 | 27.4 | 57.3 |
| Training | 0.0 | 1.8 | 17.9 | 30.4 | 50.0 |
| Appraisal | 2.2 | 13.0 | 21.7 | 41.3 | 21.7 |
| Supervision | 2.0 | 12.2 | 20.4 | 32.7 | 32.7 |
| Formal Consultation | 0.0 | 6.1 | 13.4 | 39.0 | 41.5 |
| Team Meeting | 0.9 | 17.1 | 14.5 | 36.8 | 30.8 |
| Managerial Oversight | 9.8 | 36.6 | 19.5 | 22.0 | 12.2 |

Adapted from Powell and Pomerantz (1993, page 38).

Results show that activities can be ranked in order of importance, as reported by the respondents (see Table 2a).

Table 2a: Comparison of the mean value given to and rank order of support activities

| Supportive Activity | Mean Value | Rank Order |
|--------------------------|------------|------------|
| Informal Peer Discussion | 4.4 | 1 |
| Training | 4.2 | 2 |
| Formal Consultation | 4.1 | 3 |
| Team Meetings | 3.8 | 4 |
| Supervision | 3.7 | 5 |
| Appraisal | 3.3 | 6 |
| Managerial Oversight | 2.8 | 7 |

Adapted from Powell and Pomerantz (1993, page 39).

The authors concluded that, '*the less managerial involvement there may be in an activity and the less it is a requirement, the more likely it is to be valued as a means of support*' (Powell and Pomerantz 1993, page 39).

EPs were also asked to indicate what they felt they gained personally from each type of supportive activity from a list of prompt statements (see Table 3a).

Table 3a: Percentages of respondents experiencing each support activity who marked each description of what they gain from the activity

| ACTIVITY | | | | | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|---------------------|--------------|----------------------|------------|
| TYPE OF GAIN | Informal peer discussion | Training | Appraisal | Supervision | Formal consultation | Team Meeting | Managerial oversight | RANK ORDER |
| Recognises personal issues within job framework | 56.4* | 24.8 | 50.9 | 46.9 | 27.4 | 33.3 | 27.3 | 3 |
| Helps me face issues I might otherwise choose not to acknowledge | 35.0 | 35.1 | 51.9* | 40.8 | 27.4 | 36.8 | 38.6 | 5 |
| Reduces stress | 80.3* | 13.2 | 21.2 | 36.7 | 36.9 | 34.2 | 11.4 | 6 |
| Encourages personal learning | 61.5 | 89.5* | 36.5 | 44.9 | 65.5 | 39.3 | 32.6 | 2 |
| Helps me feel valued and respected | 43.6 | 16.7 | 42.3 | 46.9* | 19.0 | 34.2 | 18.6 | 7 |
| Gives constructive feedback | 60.7 | 21.9 | 63.5 | 59.2 | 70.2* | 48.7 | 53.5 | 1 |
| Helps develop coping strategies | 52.1 | 36.8 | 23.1 | 34.7 | 54.8* | 36.8 | 27.9 | 4 |
| Empowers me | 29.1 | 43.9* | 26.9 | 34.7 | 34.5 | 27.4 | 9.3 | 8 |
| RANK ORDER | 1 | 6 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 5 | 7 | |

Adapted from Powell and Pomerantz (1993, page 41).

The asterisk denotes the activity which produces that type of gain for the highest number of respondents. This shows that the most likely means for EPs to be supported in recognising personal issues within the job framework was through informal peer discussion. This was also the activity that most reduced stress. For EPs to be helped to face up to issues they might otherwise choose not to acknowledge, the most likely means was through appraisal. Training was identified as encouraging personal learning, and also as the most empowering activity. Supervision enabled EPs to feel valued and respected. Formal consultation both gave constructive feedback and helped EPs to develop coping strategies.

It can also be seen from this table that the type of gain EPs reported most often was receiving constructive feedback, while the type of gain reported least often was being empowered.

Local Context

Reason for conducting current study

It was decided to replicate some of the questions asked in this national study within one local authority EP service. It was hoped that this would provide not only up to date data to provide a comparison with that collected 10 years ago in the national study, but also to identify strengths and weaknesses for this individual EP service and by so doing, highlight areas for improvement, as suggested by Nolan (1999).

Local context: Supervision Policy

All EPs working within this EP service receive individual supervision from their line manager (usually a Senior EP). Supervision occurs at least once per half term for experienced EPs and more frequently (at least fortnightly) for newly qualified EPs. The line manager may also provide specific feedback on the quality of an EPs work, 'managerial oversight', for example through work shadowing or joint work. In addition to managerial supervision, EPs have protected time once a month for peer supervision, which occurs in small groups. In addition any EP engaged in therapeutic work, including counselling, is entitled to clinical supervision. It was decided to separate out these different types of supervision for the present study in order to obtain useful feedback on each.

For the purposes of the current, local study, it was also decided to make a distinction between internal and external training opportunities. This would enable evaluation of the frequent internal training opportunities provided (including termly team development days and frequent CPD sessions where EPs are asked to provide professional input to colleagues during team meetings). Evaluation would also be possible for external training opportunities (including external training courses and conferences). Such evaluation would enable decisions to be made about the usefulness and perceived value of the resources spent on these activities and whether they should continue.

The other supportive activities that occur within the service include informal peer discussion (of which there is plenty of opportunity as the service works from an open plan office), formal consultation (for example consulting a specialist EP on a particular case or issue), weekly team meetings, and the formal annual appraisal process, which is in line with city council policies and practices.

In order to obtain feedback on all of these types of supportive activity available to EPs within the service, the original questionnaire used in the

national survey was adapted and administered to EPs within the service, as detailed below.

METHOD AND RESULTS

Procedure

The current, local survey was conducted in one local authority educational psychology service in 2003, adapted from the national survey (see Pomerantz 1993). The aim of this research was to investigate current systems for supervision and support within this EP service in order to look at areas of strengths and weakness, areas where needs were not being met and ways of improving such systems, as suggested by Nolan (1999).

Participants

A questionnaire was distributed to 14 EPs working for a local authority educational psychology service, within a small, urban, unitary authority. The sample included maingrade, senior and principal EPs, both male and female, and ranged from newly qualified EPs to those with a number of years' experience. There was an 86% response rate.

Questionnaire development

The questionnaire was based on the original Pomerantz 1993 survey. Similar to this original study, participants were asked to identify what they gain personally from a number of supervisory activities, by indicating which of a number of phrases applied. They were also asked to rate how important each activity was for them, on a five-point scale. The number of activities included in the survey was expanded from the original seven categories to ten. The category previously covering all forms of supervision was sub-divided into three categories: managerial supervision, clinical supervision and peer group supervision. The category previously covering all forms of training was sub-divided in order to gain separate feedback on internal and external training. For the full version of the revised questionnaire see Appendix IV.

Analysis of Results

EPs were asked to rate how important they felt each activity was for them on a rating scale from 1 to 5 where 1 indicated that the activity held no value and 5 indicated that the activity was thought to be extremely valuable by this EP (see Table 1b).

Although there were only 14 respondents in this study, the results have been represented using percentages and rank order so that a direct comparison can be drawn with the national data.

*A rank order of 2 has been given to both internal and external training. These appeared as just one 'training' category in the original research.

Additional columns have been added to this table to show the mean value and rank order given to activities based on the national survey data for means of comparison. Generally, activities were rated more highly in the current study, with the exception of formal consultation and external training. The data shows that informal peer discussion was seen as most valuable in both the national and current studies. Training was highly valued in the national study. In the current survey, however, there was a difference between the value given to internal and external training, with internal training being rated more highly. Managerial oversight was highly valued in the current study, but not in the original survey, as mentioned previously. Formal consultation was more highly valued in the national study than in the current study. Appraisal was one of the least highly valued supportive activities in both studies.

The researchers conducting the original study concluded that activities were valued more highly where there was less management involvement and where it was not a requirement. This trend is generally mirrored in the current study, with the exception of managerial oversight, as discussed above.

EPs were asked to indicate what they felt they gained personally from each type of supportive activity, from a list of prompt statements (see Table 3b).

Table 3b: Percentages of respondents experiencing each support activity who marked each description of what they gain from the activity

| ACTIVITY | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|--------------|------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|---------------|----------------------|------------|
| TYPE OF GAIN | Peer discussion | Peer supervision | Internal Training | External Training | Appraisal | Management Supervision | Clinical Supervision | Formal consultation | Team Meetings | Managerial oversight | RANK ORDER |
| Recognises personal issues | 63.6 | 45.4 | 18.2 | 18.2 | 72.7* | 72.7* | 36.4 | 9.1 | 18.2 | 27.3 | 5 |
| Helps me face issues | 27.3 | 63.6 | 36.6 | 18.2 | 72.7* | 54.5 | 45.4 | 18.2 | 18.2 | 54.5 | 3 |
| Reduces stress | 90.1* | 72.7 | 18.2 | 9.1 | 9.1 | 63.6 | 36.6 | 18.2 | 36.6 | 9.1 | 6 |
| Encourages personal learning | 54.5 | 63.6 | 90.1* | 90.1* | 45.4 | 36.6 | 36.6 | 45.4 | 18.2 | 36.6 | 1 |
| Helps me feel valued | 81.2* | 72.7 | 18.2 | 9.1 | 45.4 | 54.5 | 18.2 | 9.1 | 27.3 | 18.2 | 7 |
| Gives constructive feedback | 54.5 | 72.7* | 9.1 | 0.0 | 63.6 | 63.6 | 63.6 | 36.6 | 0.0 | 36.6 | 4 |

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------|--------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|----------|----------|
| Helps develop coping strategies | 72.7* | 72.7* | 9.1 | 18.2 | 9.1 | 45.4 | 27.3 | 27.3 | 9.1 | 18.2 | 8 |
| Empowers me | 81.2* | 63.6 | 54.5 | 72.7 | 63.6 | 54.5 | 36.6 | 27.3 | 9.1 | 18.2 | 2 |
| RANK ORDER | 1 | 1 | 6 | 7 | 4 | 3 | 5 | 9 | 10 | 8 | N=11 |

* The asterisk denotes the activity which produces that type of gain for the highest number of respondents.

This data shows that, unlike the national survey results, the most likely means for EPs to be supported in recognising personal issues within the job framework was through appraisal and management supervision. EPs within the service also felt that Appraisal was most likely to help them face issues they might otherwise choose not to recognise. This was consistent with the national survey, as was the view that informal peer discussion was most likely to reduce stress. Informal discussion was also identified by EPs within the service as empowering. EPs in the national survey had identified training as the most empowering of the activities. Training was identified in both the national and current surveys to be the most likely activity to encourage personal learning. There was a difference, however in the activities thought most likely to help EPs feel valued and respected. EPs in the current survey identified informal peer discussion as most likely to fulfil this role, rather than supervision, as identified in the national survey. EPs within this service saw peer group supervision as the activity most likely to provide them with constructive feedback and to help them develop coping strategies, rather than formal consultation, as identified in the national survey. It should be noted, however, that peer group supervision was not an option in the original survey.

Interestingly, EPs in the current survey identified the types of gain that they receive most often are encouragement of personal learning and being empowered. Being empowered was the type of gain least often reported by EPs in the national survey. Respondents in the current study identified developing coping strategies as the type of gain they receive least often.

Finally, EPs were asked to describe any other gains that they felt they benefited from as a result of taking part in the listed supportive activities. One respondent felt that informal discussion, peer supervision and internal training resulted in giving them a sense of belonging. Another respondent felt that team meetings promoted team cohesion.

INTEGRATION OF THEORY, RESEARCH AND PRACTICE - DISCUSSION AND EVALUATION OF PRACTICE IN RELATION TO ISSUES RAISED IN LITERATURE REVIEW

In the current study, the issue of the multiple functions of supervision (see Nolan 1999, Talley 1995 and Hawkins and Shohet 2003) was addressed by separating out different types of supervision in the questionnaire. Unlike the 1993 survey, therefore, the current survey asked for respondents to consider managerial supervision, clinical supervision and peer group supervision separately. The reason for adopting this approach was that all three types of supervision are available to EPs within this service, separately. For example, an EP may access clinical supervision in addition to managerial supervision, possibly carried out by a different person. The separation of the different functions of supervision was suggested by Nolan (1999). The consequences of treating the different types of supervision separately are that the results obtained could not be so readily related to the previous survey results. The results were pertinent to this EP service, however, and it has been possible to draw from the research some specific areas for improvement.

In this service, in contrast to the national survey, EPs experience minimal variation in terms of the amount of time protected for supervision and the value attached to it, as supported by the supervision policy and the time allocation system. It was therefore important to focus, for the purposes of this study, on the value individual EPs placed on the different supportive activities they had access to, and what they felt they gained from them. While there is likely to be less variation in EPs experiences in comparison to the national study, there may well be differences in the style and methods employed by supervisors. There is no requirement within the service that supervisors have had training in supervision, or that supervisors conform to one favoured model of supervision. It is more likely that supervisors within this service adopt a model of supervision as a consequence of the supervision they have received and according to the approach that is most relevant to the situation. The models of supervision employed would be an interesting subject for further investigation.

The consistency of the supervision policy and practice goes some way to addressing the arguments put forward by Jennings (1995) and Lunt (1993) about the importance of ensuring that EPs have access to high quality supervision throughout their careers. Lunt (1993) argued that the status of the profession is reflected in the extent to which new members of the profession are valued and thus in the status of supervision. If this is the case then it could be assumed the EPs within this particular service are highly valued. This is consistent with the results of the survey, finding that EPs within this service frequently felt empowered and encouraged (see Table 3b). This valuing is true for new members of the profession, as it is for more experienced EPs. In many ways the experience of newly qualified EPs is a particularly important indicator (see Lunt and Sayeed 1995). Three of the respondents in this survey were newly qualified EPs in the first year of professional practice. Their responses were not analysed separately due to the small numbers of

respondents involved and the need for anonymity of responses. Newly qualified EPs within this service have access to management supervision weekly during the first term and fortnightly after that for the first year of professional practice, as required by the BPS for chartered status. Access to other forms of supportive activity (e.g. peer group supervision) is in addition to this.

All forms of support available to EPs should be incorporated by service managers into a coherent system that ensures quality of service delivery (see Leyden and Kuk 1993). Miller and Watts (1990) argue that this should incorporate the service's professional development policy. Such a system should balance the needs of the service with the needs of the individuals within it (see Wilson 1994). The diversity of the needs to be addressed require a range of responses. Service needs will include both management and clinical needs (Lunt and Sayeed 1995). Individual needs will include the need to feel valued as well as the need to manage stress. The service and individual needs are not distinct but mutually dependent. Weaknesses in this system will have an effect on the individuals within the service as well as the quality of service delivery. A high quality system of supervision is therefore essential.

It is in the interests of individuals within a service as well as service managers to continually look to improve the systems that support the delivery of the service. Good quality supervision is essential in order to ensure high quality service delivery. Services should carry out an audit of the supervision already occurring within the service in order to identify where needs are being met and where the weaknesses are in order to improve, as suggested by Nolan (1999). The current study serves as an audit of the supervision arrangements operating in one particular EP service. This small-scale research has highlighted a number of ways in which systems could be improved.

Recommendations

From the results discussed above, the following recommendations can be made to improve supervision within this particular EP service.

1. Generally the picture is positive. EPs value the supportive activities available to them, including supervision. It is therefore important that this range of supportive activities is maintained.
2. The most highly valued is informal peer discussion. This suggests that there should be frequent opportunities for this to occur naturally. Factors to encourage this might include, maintaining an open plan office environment, encouraging EPs to come into the office frequently, ensuring that there are opportunities for joint work, and encouraging frequent opportunities for informal interaction and socialising.
3. Another highly valued activity is managerial oversight, in contrast to the views of EPs in the national survey. This suggests that opportunities should be made for managers to observe EPs and engage in joint work

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Database Search Information

Databases used: Psychinfo
ERIC

Key words used: Models of supervision and educational psychology

Appendix I

Table 1a: Percentages and numbers of respondents rating each value in response to the question, 'How important is this activity for you?'

| Activity | No Value | Limited Value | Some Value | Quite Valuable | Extremely Valuable |
|-------------------------|----------|---------------|------------|----------------|--------------------|
| InformalPeer Discussion | 0.0 | 4.3 | 11.1 | 27.4 | 57.3 |
| Training | 0.0 | 1.8 | 17.9 | 30.4 | 50.0 |
| Appraisal | 2.2 | 13.0 | 21.7 | 41.3 | 21.7 |
| Supervision | 2.0 | 12.2 | 20.4 | 32.7 | 32.7 |
| Formal Consultation | 0.0 | 6.1 | 13.4 | 39.0 | 41.5 |
| Team Meeting | 0.9 | 17.1 | 14.5 | 36.8 | 30.8 |
| Managerial Oversight | 9.8 | 36.6 | 19.5 | 22.0 | 12.2 |

Table 1b: Percentages and numbers of respondents rating each value in response to the question, 'How important is this activity for you?'

| Activity | No Value | Limited Value | Some Value | Quite Valuable | Extremely Valuable |
|--------------------------|----------|---------------|------------|----------------|--------------------|
| Informal Peer Discussion | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 16.7 | 83.3 |
| Peer Supervision | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 58.3 | 41.7 |
| Internal Training | 0.0 | 0.0 | 9.1 | 27.3 | 63.6 |
| External Training | 0.0 | 0.0 | 9.1 | 72.7 | 18.2 |
| Appraisal | 0.0 | 20.0 | 10.0 | 50.0 | 20.0 |
| Managerial Supervision | 0.0 | 8.3 | 16.7 | 41.7 | 33.3 |
| Clinical Supervision | 0.0 | 0.0 | 11.1 | 44.4 | 44.4 |
| Formal Consultation | 0.0 | 0.0 | 16.7 | 41.7 | 41.7 |
| Team Meetings | 0.0 | 0.0 | 8.3 | 66.7 | 25.0 |
| Managerial Oversight | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 33.3 | 66.7 |

Appendix II

Table 2a: Comparison of the mean value given to and rank order of support activities

| Supportive Activity | Mean Value | Rank Order |
|----------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Informal Peer Discussion | 4.4 | 1 |
| Training | 4.2 | 2 |
| Formal Consultation | 4.1 | 3 |
| Team Meetings | 3.8 | 4 |
| Supervision | 3.7 | 5 |
| Appraisal | 3.3 | 6 |
| Managerial Oversight | 2.8 | 7 |

Table 2b: Comparison of the mean value given to and rank order of support activities

| Supportive Activity | Mean Value | Rank Order | Comparison Rank Order |
|----------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------------------------|
| Informal peer discussion | 4.8 | 1 | 1 |
| Managerial oversight | 4.7 | 2 | 6 |
| Internal training | 4.5 | 3 | 2 |
| Peer supervision | 4.4 | 4 | |
| Clinical supervision | 4.3 | 5 | |
| Team meetings | 4.2 | 6 | 4 |
| External training | 4.1 | 7 | 2 |
| Managerial supervision | 4.0 | 8 | 5 |
| Formal consultation | 3.8 | 9 | 3 |
| Appraisal | 3.7 | 10 | 5 |

Appendix III

Table 3a: Percentages of respondents experiencing each support activity who marked each description of what they gain from the activity

| ACTIVITY | | | | | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|---------------------|--------------|----------------------|------------|
| TYPE OF GAIN | Informal peer discussion | Training | Appraisal | Supervision | Formal consultation | Team Meeting | Managerial oversight | RANK ORDER |
| Recognises personal issues within job framework | 56.4* | 24.8 | 50.9 | 46.9 | 27.4 | 33.3 | 27.3 | 3 |
| Helps me face issues I might otherwise choose not to acknowledge | 35.0 | 35.1 | 51.9* | 40.8 | 27.4 | 36.8 | 38.6 | 5 |
| Reduces stress | 80.3* | 13.2 | 21.2 | 36.7 | 36.9 | 34.2 | 11.4 | 6 |
| Encourages personal learning | 61.5 | 89.5* | 36.5 | 44.9 | 65.5 | 39.3 | 32.6 | 2 |
| Helps me feel valued and respected | 43.6 | 16.7 | 42.3 | 46.9* | 19.0 | 34.2 | 18.6 | 7 |
| Gives constructive feedback | 60.7 | 21.9 | 63.5 | 59.2 | 70.2* | 48.7 | 53.5 | 1 |
| Helps develop coping strategies | 52.1 | 36.8 | 23.1 | 34.7 | 54.8* | 36.8 | 27.9 | 4 |
| Empowers me | 29.1 | 43.9* | 26.9 | 34.7 | 34.5 | 27.4 | 9.3 | 8 |
| RANK ORDER | 1 | 6 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 5 | 7 | |

Table 3b: Percentages of respondents experiencing each support activity who marked each description of what they gain from the activity

| ACTIVITY | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|--------------|------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|---------------|----------------------|------------|
| TYPE OF GAIN | Peer discussion | Peer supervision | Internal Training | External Training | Appraisal | Management Supervision | Clinical Supervision | Formal consultation | Team Meetings | Managerial oversight | RANK ORDER |
| Recognises personal issues | 63.6 | 45.4 | 18.2 | 18.2 | 72.7* | 72.7* | 36.4 | 9.1 | 18.2 | 27.3 | 5 |
| Helps me face issues | 27.3 | 63.6 | 36.6 | 18.2 | 72.7* | 54.5 | 45.4 | 18.2 | 18.2 | 54.5 | 3 |
| Reduces stress | 90.1* | 72.7 | 18.2 | 9.1 | 9.1 | 63.6 | 36.6 | 18.2 | 36.6 | 9.1 | 6 |
| Encourages personal learning | 54.5 | 63.6 | 90.1* | 90.1* | 45.4 | 36.6 | 36.6 | 45.4 | 18.2 | 36.6 | 1 |
| Helps me feel valued | 81.2* | 72.7 | 18.2 | 9.1 | 45.4 | 54.5 | 18.2 | 9.1 | 27.3 | 18.2 | 7 |
| Gives constructive feedback | 54.5 | 72.7* | 9.1 | 0.0 | 63.6 | 63.6 | 63.6 | 36.6 | 0.0 | 36.6 | 4 |
| Helps develop coping strategies | 72.7* | 72.7* | 9.1 | 18.2 | 9.1 | 45.4 | 27.3 | 27.3 | 9.1 | 18.2 | 8 |
| Empowers me | 81.2* | 63.6 | 54.5 | 72.7 | 63.6 | 54.5 | 36.6 | 27.3 | 9.1 | 18.2 | 2 |
| RANK ORDER | 1 | 1 | 6 | 7 | 4 | 3 | 5 | 9 | 10 | 8 | N=1 1 |

Appendix IV

Questionnaire

Informal peer discussion – includes chats over coffee or lunch and other informal conversations in the office, over the phone or face-to-face

Peer (group) supervision – includes scheduled peer supervision sessions (usually on Wednesday afternoons)

Internal Training – includes training arranged by and for the EP team, termly team development days, and within-service training and CPD sessions (usually on Wednesday afternoons)

External Training - includes training opportunities, courses, and conferences, arranged externally to the EP team and open to others as well as EP team members (e.g. Sandbanks)

Appraisal – includes the formal appraisal process to review work quality

Supervision – includes meetings with supervisor or line manager for the purpose of examining one's own work and issues arising from it

Clinical supervision – includes meetings with clinical supervisor for the purpose of discussing issues arising from counselling of therapeutic interventions

Formal consultation – includes situations when advice and guidance is sought about some aspect of one's work, with someone with particular expertise

Team meetings – includes weekly team meetings (Wednesday)

Managerial oversight – includes situations when your manager explicitly looks at the work you are doing to ensure that standards are maintained

(expanded from those categories used in the 1991 DECP survey and listed in Pomerantz and Lunt 1993)

The above are activities designed to support and promote learning and good practice for EPs

Please rate each on the following scale:

- 1 – do not agree
- 2 – partly agree
- 3 – neither agree nor disagree
- 4 – largely agree
- 5 – agree fully

Julia Katherine

DEdPsy

University College London

**Doctoral Programme for Practising
Educational Psychologists
(DEdPsy)**

Professional Practice Assignment

Title: Stress: Is studying for a part-time professional development
doctorate in educational psychology stressful?

Name: Julia Katherine

Assignment: 4

Core Curriculum: Interpersonal Effectiveness:
Key Theories (2.1.2)

Date submitted: June 2007

This process of assessment was referred to be Lazarus and Folkman (1984) as 'cognitive appraisal'. There are two stages to cognitive appraisal: primary and secondary. Primary appraisal is where the individual assesses what 'threat' the situation presents to their physical or psychological well-being. This assessment will be made based on our previous experiences, whether the situation is expected to have positive or negative outcomes, the amount of harm or loss that the individual has already suffered or is expecting to suffer, and the opportunities available for challenge and personal growth through the experience. Secondary appraisal is where the individual assesses the resources they have available to them for coping with the potentially stressful situation. These resources include their own physical and psychological resources, previous experiences, and the social support of others (Sarafino 2006). With the exception of emergency or life-threatening situations in which there is insufficient time to carry out a cognitive appraisal of the situation, a situation is only likely to be perceived as stressful if, following the two stages of cognitive appraisal, there is believed to be a discrepancy between the demands and resources. If there is not believed to be this discrepancy, the same potentially stressful situation can actually result in no experience of stress for the individual.

This current paper examines the perception of stress by individuals in a very specific situation: studying for a doctoral qualification in educational psychology while also engaged in full time employment. It can undoubtedly be concluded that this set of circumstances could be experienced as more or less stressful by different individuals depending on their cognitive appraisal of the situation. There are also, however, some particular factors that could be expected to cause stress, given these circumstances and what we know about the causes of stress in general.

Causes of stress

There are many factors that researchers have argued contribute to a situation being appraised as stressful. Bartlett (1998) categorises the factors into personality or internal factors and environmental or external factors. Cassidy (1999) describes contributory factors in terms of cognitive style. James (2001) described the main contributory factors as major life events, change, and loss of control. Mirowsky and Ross (2003) add to this list alienation, commitment and challenge. Sarafino (2006) developed these concepts further and added coherence and resilience as additional factors. Some of the main factors that contribute to situations being appraised as stressful are described below.

While Bartlett (1998) categorises most factors as internal and very few as external or environmental, life events would definitely fall in to this category. Major negative life events such as divorce or death of a loved one have long been considered to result in the experience of stress (e.g. see Holmes and Rahe 1967). More recent research has, however, focused on more subtle and cumulative contributors to the experience of stress.

Change is often experienced as stressful. This could include major life transitions (e.g. starting school, becoming a parent, retiring, or even starting out on a new course of study such as doctoral studies), as well as more minor transitions. Even potentially positive changes can be experienced as stressful (e.g. see Bridges 1996 and Marris 1986). The explanation for this comes from Bowlby's theory of attachment (see Bowlby 1967 and Bowlby 1973). Bowlby argued that a basic human urge is to keep things the same, to keep things familiar, so even positive change can be experienced as stressful. Change can also lead to a reduction in factors which might be considered to be protective or have a stress-reducing impact. For example a house move might be stressful in itself and might reduce the proximity of a person's circle of friends whom they might usually call on for support at stressful times.

Loss of control over a situation, and role confusion, can contribute to the appraisal of a situation as stressful (e.g. see Syme 1989). This can include the insecurity of being unclear about what is expected of us in a given role or context, or having contemporaneous competing demands made of us. This concept can be traced back to Seligman's work on 'learned helplessness' (Seligman 1975) and Abramson and Seligman's work on 'attributional style' (Abramson et al 1978). Cassidy (1999) describes this concept in terms of cognitive style. He argues that humans have a basic need to feel in control of their environment in order to feel safe and competent. Perceiving a situation as within one's own internal 'locus of control' is therefore going to be less stressful than perceiving a situation as external to one's own locus of control.

'Whether we believe that the impetus for control lies in an innate need for competence, a survival instinct, the drive to seek pleasure and avoid pain, or the drive for self-actualization, it seems that a good case can be made for some sort of initial biological drive. However, the sense of control (or lack of control) develops through the individual's experience of the interaction with the external world. These interactions are reworked into internal representations which incorporate as a central aspect different levels of perceived control' (Cassidy 1999, page 110).

Cassidy develops his argument further by discussing optimistic, pessimistic and problem-solving cognitive styles, which also influence whether a situation is appraised as stressful. This work would suggest that embarking on doctoral studies should not be experienced as stressful if it is within the individual's own control and was their choice to do so.

Alienation and lack of social support make it more likely that an individual will experience a situation as stressful. It is argued by Mirowsky and Ross (2003) that the greater social support an individual has, the less their need to feel in control of a situation. Mirowsky and Ross (2003) also describe high levels of commitment as reducing the experience of stress. Commitment in this sense is referred to as intrinsic motivation and strength of purpose i.e. a person shows commitment if they are engaging in an activity of their own volition (not just for

the money). This is also related to the concept of 'challenge'. Events are less likely to be experienced as stressful if the individual perceives the circumstances as opportunities for personal growth and development. Again, this suggests that studying for a doctorate should not cause too much stress as it provides potential for personal challenge and growth, however it also highlights the importance of ensuring that an individual has sufficient social and emotional support to appraise this challenge as an opportunity for growth and does not become overwhelmed and feel unable to rise to the challenge.

The argument about internal factors that act as psychosocial modifiers of stress was further developed by Sarafino (2006) who combined the concepts of coherence and resilience, based on original work on individual 'hardiness' (Kobasa 1979). Coherence refers to seeing the world as meaningful, and seeing series of events as fitting together and making sense. A person's resilience incorporates their self-esteem, as well as their feelings of personal control and optimism. Clearly a 'hardy' personality is more likely to be able to cope successfully with potentially stressful situations, whatever the specific stressors that they face.

Many of these potential causes of stress are likely to be evident in the situation of studying for a doctorate while working, that is being considered in the current paper, including change, lack of control, and role confusion. The research, however, points to the importance of ensuring that an individual has the social support that will enable them to cope with these potential stressors as well as enhanced self-esteem, coherence and resilience. It may be that some of these protective factors are more likely to be in evidence in particular circumstances and therefore certain groups are more or less likely to experience studying while working as stressful.

Factors specific to particular groups

Many researchers have focused on the particular factors that are likely to affect one particular group and the impact on this group of the resulting experience of stress. Some of this research may be helpful in understanding the likely factors affecting the group being considered in the current paper. The specific groups that have been studied for this purpose include: Men, women, managers, individuals operating within organizations, health professionals, teachers, students and applied psychologists.

Burke and Nelson (2001) identified a specific stressor that applies to men as role confusion. This, they argue, has arisen as a result of changes in society that have resulted in men taking on more responsibilities that were previously considered to be 'feminine' (e.g. child care) as well as men finding it more difficult to fulfil their traditional 'masculine' responsibilities (e.g. being the provider). James (2001) also considered stressors specific to men, including changes in the traditional male role in society, as well as stressors specific to men returning to

education (e.g. changes in employment status, reduced financial security etc). These factors, however, are less relevant to the current situation which would not leave a man who has chosen to study for a doctorate any worse off financially.

Langan-Fox (2001) considered stressors specific to women including multiple roles, which, she argued is an increasing issue for women in modern society. She reported that, '*multiple roles include those of wife, mother and worker. Increasingly, married women are working through the child-caring years*' (Langan-Fox 2001, page 179). Related to this issue of role conflict, Lanagan-Fox considered some other relevant stressors and discussed the evidence for their increasing impact on women,

'The major stresses for women in multiple roles included lack of time, child-related problems and maternal guilt. The adverse health effects of competing time demands and role conflict associated with multiple role include the presence of stress-related illnesses traditionally associated with men' (Langan-Fox 2001, page 180).

Toyry (2004) also reported stressors specific to women including stress caused by having to combine work and family, and stress caused by having to make compromises between work and family as well as stress caused by physical exhaustion. Also see Batterson (2004). These potential stressors are only increased by the added role of 'student' that a woman must take on while studying for a doctorate. This provides yet another conflict of time and interest that the woman has to juggle. It may therefore be argued that women in particular might find taking on doctoral studies stressful. This possibility should be considered by both course providers and service managers in ensuring that employees receive sufficient support whilst engaged in professional course of study such as for the doctoral qualification.

Angiolini (2003) considered stressors specific to managers, whom he referred to as: 'stressed out middle managers' and 'stressed out senior managers'. These specific stressors included financial pressures (e.g. pressure to 'balance the books') plus the need to keep information confidential. Angiolini also looked at the impact of these experiences of stress, noting,

'it is noticeable that there was a higher ration of middle managers that experienced burnout or suffered from heart conditions than the lecturing staff' (Angiolini 2003, page 44).

Taris et al (2006) also looked at stressors that are frequently associated with those in management positions, including high job demands and low perceptions of control, which was found to be associated with high stress and work-home interference. Also see Burke, R.J. (1988). It could therefore be argued that managers embarking on doctoral studies are likely to find the experience more stressful than those in less demanding jobs.

Some researchers have considered the stresses that are relevant to those in particular jobs or professions. For example Day (2003), Shahm (2004) Morrissette (2004), Bamber (2006) and Shahm et al (2006) considered stressors

approach, and setting up systems of social and emotional support. Clearly some of these strategies are the responsibility of the individual, while others could be facilitated by actions taken by course providers and managers. This is a key point that will be picked up later in considering the implications of the current paper. Further stress management approaches are considered in the work of Murphy (1988), Kompier and Levi (1994) and Terry and Jimmieson (2001). Organizational stress is also discussed by Burke and Nelson (2001) and Angiolini (2003).

INTEGRATION OF THEORY, RESEARCH AND PRACTICE

The implications of changes in the training route for EPs

My work situation is no longer unusual. Within the relatively small profession of educational psychology, there are many professionals who are engaged in part-time academic study, while working full or part-time. One of the main reasons for this is that the training for educational psychologists has changed. Rather than one-year of full-time study leading to a postgraduate masters degree in educational psychology, anyone wanting to join the profession now has to embark on a three-year programme of postgraduate study leading to a doctoral qualification in educational psychology. This has major implications for those practitioners already working in the field. While it is true that current practitioners are still qualified to do the job and should not feel that their qualifying route has been devalued, there is also a strong case for arguing that any EPs who are involved in the supervision or training of EPs entering the profession with a doctoral qualification, should themselves be educated to this level as well.

It has been possible for a number of years to study part-time for an applied doctorate in educational psychology, while working as an EP. It is likely that EPs engaged in such academic pursuits for a range of reasons including personal and professional development as well as career progression and having the opportunity to pursue particular areas of academic and professional interest. With the new, single, three-year, doctoral initial training route for EPs as of September 2006, however, inevitably comes an added motivation for those currently within the profession to 'top-up' their professional training to doctoral level, in particular if they are likely to be in a position to supervise EPs either during their training years or subsequently, for example as Senior EPs, managers or as associate or field tutors on EP training courses.

With this added incentive to complete doctoral studies, come added pressures. EPs within the profession currently may feel required to complete further training and academic study. They may feel at a potential disadvantage in terms of career progression if they are competing against colleagues who do have doctoral qualifications. There may be fears that there may develop a two-tier

profession, in which it is essential or at least advisable to have a doctorate in order to progress.

It is therefore even more important now than it ever has been to ensure that EPs have not only the opportunity but a realistic possibility of completing doctoral training, while managing the day to day stresses of the job. In addition, if EPs feel that there is some degree of expectation or requirement that they complete additional doctoral qualifications in order to maintain equity in the employment field, then it becomes the duty of service managers to ensure that this opportunity is available to and achievable by all. I would argue that completing a doctoral degree is qualitatively different to engaging in other forms of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) because of the rigour of study; the continuous nature of study over a period of several years; the need to complete substantial, time-consuming and original pieces of research; and the need to meet strict deadlines.

The likelihood of experiencing stress while studying for a doctoral qualification

Workers experience stress as a result of a variety of factors, as discussed previously, including coping with change, insecurity and unexpected events; coping with relationships and conflict; working long hours and time management; role ambiguity, role conflict and balancing the demands of home and work; coping with the culture of the organization and factors related to progression and career development (e.g. see Cartwright and Cooper 1994 and Cartwright and Cooper 1997).

It has been argued already in this paper that applied psychologists, such as EPs, are not a group that is generally considered to experience higher levels of stress than other similar groups of professionals, but have instead been generally found to have high levels of job satisfaction (e.g. see VanVoohis and Levinson 2006 and Worrell et al 2006). Where stressors have been reported they have included excessive workload, time constraints, and change, as well as stresses associated with management tasks such as administration, recruitment, retention and quality assurance (e.g. see Male and Jensen 1998, Male and Male 2003). When applied to EPs studying for a doctorate part-time on top of their usual work commitments, it can be seen that these three key stressors: workload, time constraints, and change are likely to intensify. In addition, any EP who has management responsibilities and is at the same time studying for a doctorate is likely to experience even greater pressure (e.g. see Male and Male 2003 and Taris et al 2006).

The experience of being a part-time student can bring stresses of its own. Those discussed already include stress as a result of financial concerns, stress related to academic work deadlines and to a perceived lack of social support (e.g. see Coneeley 2005, and Baird et al 2003).

Specific factors that contribute to a situation being appraised as stressful include change (e.g. see Bridges 1996 and Marris 1986), loss of control and role confusion (e.g. see Syme 1989 and Cassidy 1999), as well as alienation and lack of support (e.g. see Mirowsky and Ross 2003). For an EP studying for a doctorate in addition to their regular job, all of these factors could potentially apply, as discussed below.

EPs in this position experience changes in role in terms of becoming a student again and beginning a course of study. This experience is likely to be of more significance than for a shorter course of study as a cohort of doctoral students might come to know each other and work together over a period of five or six years. Even when the change is a positive one, it can still be experienced as stressful (Bridges 1996). Change can also result in a reduction in other factors that could potentially reduce feelings of being under stress, for example studying may result in an individual having less time available for leisure and relaxation, and less time available to draw on social support. In addition, if the student is self-funding, finances may be tight.

EPs studying for a doctorate part-time might feel a reduced sense of control over their time and workload as they are having to juggle and balance the deadlines and demands of both the academic course and their paid employment. Syme (1989) explained how this can be experienced as stressful. Having the additional role of 'student' added to already existing roles such as 'practitioner', 'spouse' and 'parent' could result in a degree of role confusion. It may not always be clear, for example, which of these roles should have their demands prioritised at any one time. An individual may have both work tasks and an assignment to complete by a given date, for example, resulting in working over a weekend and neglecting family commitments and responsibilities and leading to feelings of stress. Having to make the decision to prioritise the requirements of one of these roles to the detriment of others may lead to feelings of incompetence as the individual may feel that getting their assignment in on time, for example, has resulted in their being less than fully prepared for an important meeting or presentation at work or that spending time looking after a sick child, for example, has resulted in their not getting as good a mark for their assignment as they could have achieved otherwise. Cassidy (1999) explains that,

'The roots of perceived control lie in an innate competence need. The argument is that humans (and other animals) are born with a need to master their world in order to survive. Thus competent interactions are rewarding and lead to a sense of personal control' (Cassidy 1999, page 110).

Doctoral educational psychology students who also work full-time may have reduced social support due to lack of time to meet up with friends and peers (as mentioned previously) or may feel alienated from colleagues at work as they may be the only EP within their service or organisation that has embarked on doctoral

studies, or one of very few who have done so (e.g. see Mirowsky and Ross 2003).

Strategies that are likely to reduce the feelings of stress experienced by EPs studying for doctoral qualifications

It has already been explained that events are experienced as stressful if a situation is appraised as potentially stressful and beyond the resources available to the individual to cope. Cassidy (1999) has described some of the attributes that make it more likely that an individual will feel that a situation is within their capacity for coping. These include attributional style, locus of control, optimism, and motivation. Sarafino (2006) described the concepts of 'coherence', 'resilience' and 'hardiness' as potential psychosocial modifiers of stress. Other potential stress moderating variables that have been identified in the literature include social support, effective emotional expression and coping styles (e.g. see Nelson et al 2001).

There are some stress management strategies, however, that do not rely on the individual and their coping style. It is being argued here that the stress experienced by EPs undertaking doctoral research in addition to their regular paid employment is not just an issue for the EP as an individual, but is also an issue for their supervisor or line manager due to the external pressures that the new training route for EPs has put on EPs to complete doctoral training, explained above.

Implications for psychology service managers

It is being argued here that it is the responsibility of EP service managers to support their employees in the management of the inevitable stresses experienced as a direct consequence of EPs taking on doctoral studies in addition to their other roles and responsibilities. EP service managers should consider when developing their CPD policies, not just whether there is financial support available to EPs to undertake doctoral studies, but also whether there is available to them the type of emotional and practical support that make the possibility of embarking on a doctoral course of study truly open to all.

Financial support in itself could be considered to potentially reduce the stress caused by this type of undertaking. The availability of financial support could reduce the individual's concerns about experiencing financial difficulties if self-funding. Such support could also reduce the individual's anxieties about committing to a course, and therefore to a financial responsibility, of this length (typically four to five years). In addition financial support made available by an employee could increase the individual's feelings of commitment to the course. Mirowsky and Ross (2003) described high levels of commitment as reducing the experience of stress. Commitment in this sense is referred to as intrinsic motivation and strength of purpose (i.e. a person shows commitment if they are

engaging in an activity of their own volition), as explained previously in this paper.

Other practical interventions that could be put in place by managers and are likely to reduce the experience of stress for EPs working towards applied doctorates include reduced workload and strategies for managing workload and time demands. In an ideal world service managers might reduce the workload of any EP engaged in doctoral research to enable them to carry out this research within work hours and in areas related to their regular work role and responsibilities. Given the current climate within the profession of a shortage of available qualified EPs, difficulties with recruitment, Local Authority pressures to make financial savings, and many EP services consequently being permanently under-staffed, this scenario would seem to be unlikely. Individuals could, however, be supported to forward plan their time in order to effectively manage both academic and work tasks and to co-ordinate deadlines for work and academic tasks so that they don't conflict. If managers were to see this as a shared activity and not solely the responsibility of the individual concerned it could reduce that individual's feelings of alienation and lack of support which, as we have already seen, can intensify feelings of stress (e.g. see Mirowsky and Ross 2003). Other strategies such as the use of flexible working hours could also help managers to support their employees in their time management.

We have considered already the use of CBT techniques, such as through transactional strategies, to reduce the appraisal of situations as stressful (see Ellis 1977, Lazarus and Folkman 1984, Cooper 1994, White 2000 and Day 2003). EP service managers could employ such strategies in terms of ensuring that doctoral studies are seen as a part of the job, rather than an add-on, or additional task, and that individuals' feelings about struggling to cope are understood to be a normal and inevitable consequence of taking on such studies.

Of most relevance to this argument, however, is the suggestion by Kavanagh et al (2003) that stress can be reduced, and job satisfaction enhanced, through regular, high quality supervision. An effective supervisory relationship has the potential to enable the individual to appropriately express such emotions as anxiety and guilt, which we know can enhance that individual's ability to cope (e.g. see Nelson et al 2001). Supervision can also serve to normalise such feelings, to reduce feelings of alienation and to increase the sense of social support for the individual. Social support could also be provided by encouraging that individual to link up with others in a similar situation.

Implications for future research

Given the current situation within the profession, that has been described, it is essential that further investigation takes place into the effects on EPs of undertaking additional, sustained study at doctoral level on top of existing work commitments. A repetition of the Male and Male (2003) study, focusing on EPs

undertaking doctoral research as a participant group would be one way of achieving this. Alternatively, focus groups similar to those conducted by Frederickson (2003) would enable the factors to be identified that facilitated the continuation and completion of doctoral study.

A further focus of research could be to use one of the existing measures of stress such as the Maslach Burnout Inventory (Maslach 1981), the Stress Assessment Inventory (Nowack 1990), or the Kanner et al (1981) measure of daily hassles and uplifts. This could be administered to a group of EPs on doctoral courses to give an indication of the scale of the problem. Finally, an evaluation could be conducted into the effectiveness of some of the strategies suggested in this paper for managing the inevitable stress caused by study of this type, such as emotional expression (Nelson 2001) or supervision (e.g. Kavanagh et al 2003).

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

Writing this paper has given me the opportunity to reflect on my own experiences of stress during the past few years as a result of taking on doctoral research while working full time. My feelings of being unable to cope were intensified at particular times during this period as a result of changes in my job or home circumstances and the consequent feelings of insecurity in coping with change, role ambiguity and guilt in balancing the competing demands of home and work, not to mention the more practical considerations of time and workload management as well as personal health and well-being.

I have considered the experience of stress in terms of the effects on the body, emotions and ability to cope. I have considered the potential causes of stress and specific factors that relate to the stresses experienced by particular groups. I have considered the extensive research that is available relating to the definition, quantification and management of stress, and tried to summarise these in a meaningful way. Finally I have considered the particular stresses that relate to the very particular situation I have found myself in over the past few years, working full time in a management role, having family commitments, while studying part-time for a doctorate in applied educational psychology. I have tried to integrate the personal aspects of my reflections with the published literature in order to argue that if we, as a profession, want EPs to pursue professional development doctorates, we need to provide the systems (in terms of management, practical, professional and personal support) to enable individuals to do so without putting their own emotional well-being at risk as a result of the inevitable stress that they are likely to experience.

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