

An Appreciative Inquiry of the facilitative factors within an Early Years setting that promote the development of wellbeing in children.

Clare Ann Antczak; BSc (Hons), PGCE.

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

October 2020

Contents

List of Tables 10
List of Figures 12
Abstract 13
Acknowledgements 14
Glossary of terms 15
Chapter 1 Introduction 16
1.1. Background and Rationale for this Research 16
1.2. Personal and professional interest in research area 17
1.3 Aims 18
1.4 Overview of thesis structure 18
Chapter 2 Literature Review 20
2.1 Background of research area 20
2.2. Wellbeing 21
2.2.1. Systemic approaches to wellbeing 23
2.2.2 Intervention in the Early Years 24
2.3 Promoting wellbeing 27
2.3.1 Resiliency 27
2.3.2 Attachment 30
2.3.3 Community 35
2.3.4 Current government policy and initiatives 37
2.3.5 Parental Engagement 37
2.4 Systematic Research Synthesis 38
2.4.1 Introduction to systematic research synthesis 38
2.4.2 Background to research synthesis 38
2.4.3. Qualitative Research Synthesis 39
2.4.4. Review Question 39
2.5 Synthesis Design 40
2.5.1 Search strategy 40
2.5.2 Exploratory searches 40
2.5.3. Systematic Database Searches 40
2.5.4. Inclusion Criteria 40
2.5.4.1 Rational for inclusion/exclusion criteria 41
2.6. Study selection 43
2.6.1. Included studies summary 44

2.6.1.1 Setting and sample 44
2.6.1.2 Topic relevant to current review 45
2.6.1.3 Methodology/Data collection 45
2.6.1.4 Publication 45
2.7. Analysis and Synthesis Procedure 45
2.7.1. Appraisal of findings 50
2.7.2. Analyse 50
2.7.3. Synthesis 50
2.7.4. Second order themes 51
2.7.4.1 Relationships and Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED) 51
2.7.4.2 Structures and systems 52
2.7.4.3 A unique child 53
2.7.5 Interpreting findings 54
2.7.6. Summary 56
2.7.7. Links to theory 56
2.8. Plausibility 57
2.8.1 Limitations of research synthesis 57
2.9 Rationale for the current study 58
2.9.1 Summary of the current literature 58
2.9.2. Objectives of the study 58
2.9.3. Research Questions 59
Chapter 3 Methodology 60
3.1 Introduction to Methodology 60
3.2 Methodological orientation 60
3.2.1 Overview 60
3.2.2 Paradigms of research 60
3.2.2.1 Post-Positivism 61
3.2.2.2 Pragmatism 61
3.2.2.3 Constructivism 61
3.2.2.4 Transformative 61
3.2.3 Epistemology within the current study 62
3.2.4 Ontology 63
3.2.5 Methodology within the transformative paradigm 63
3.3 Current Research Design 63

3.3.1 Action Research 63
3.3.2 Appreciative Inquiry 64
3.3.3 Phases of Appreciative Inquiry 65
3.3.3.1 Principles of AI 66
3.3.4 Other considered approaches 67
3.3.5 Rationale for AI in current research study 68
3.3.6 Use of Appreciative Inquiry in current study 69
3.3.7 Current research 69
3.3.8 Research Participants and Setting 70
3.3.8.1 Sampling/participants 70
3.3.8.2 Inclusion criteria 70
3.3.8.3 Participant recruitment procedure 70
3.3.9 Context in Action Research 71
3.3.9.1 Research Setting Context 71
3.3.9.2 Participant Details 72
3.3.9.3 Stakeholder engagement/practical considerations 72
3.4 Procedure 73
3.4.1 AI cycle within the current research 73
3.4.2 Discovery Phase 75
3.4.2.1 Semi-structured interviews 75
3.4.2.2 Focus group 76
3.4.2.3 Data Collection 76
3.4.2.4 Researcher as facilitator 76
3.4.2.5 Conclusion of Discovery Phase 77
3.4.3 Dream Phase 77
3.4.3.1 Miracle question 78
3.4.3.2 Aspiration statement 78
3.4.4 Design Phase 79
3.4.5 Integrated Design phase 79
3.4.6 Beginning-Destiny Phase 80
3.5 Procedure of Evaluation of AI in the current research 80
3.5.1 Process Evaluation 80
3.5.2 Coding used by Bushe & Kassam (2005) 81

3.5.3 Data Collection for Process Evaluation....82
3.5.4 Data Analysis for Process Evaluation....85
3.5.5 Reflections....85
3.5.6 Research questions and data sources....86
3.6 Analysis Procedure....87
3.6.1 Two Staged Data Analysis Approach....87
3.6.2 Co-construction with participants....87
3.6.3 Individual data analysis for Doctoral Qualification....88
3.6.4 Rationale for Thematic Analysis....88
3.6.5 Limitations of Thematic Analysis....89
3.6.6 Audit trail for each stage of the AI process....90
3.7 Evaluation of Research Quality in the current research....91
3.7.1 Reliability and validity....91
3.7.2 Triangulation....91
3.7.3 Positionality....92
3.7.4 Phronesis....92
3.8 Ethical Considerations....93
3.8.1 Informed consent....93
3.8.2 Confidentiality and anonymity....93
3.8.3 Right to withdraw....94
3.8.4 Data storage....94
3.8.5 Offsetting possible detrimental effects of research....94
3.8.6 Debrief....94
3.9. Critique of methodology....94
3.9.1 Summary of methodology....95
Chapter 4 Findings....96
4.1 Chapter Overview....96
4.1.1 Co-Constructed findings during AI process....96
4.2 Dream Phase....98
4.2.1 EY practitioner Dreams....98
4.2.2 Parent Dreams....99
4.2.3 Aspiration Statement....100
4.3 Design....100
4.4 Integrated Design Phase....101

4.4.1 Outcomes of Integrated Design....102
4.4.2 Action Planning and Outcomes....104
4.5 Discovery Phase: EY practitioner views....104
4.5.1 Relationships....106
4.5.1.1 Attachment and Emotional Containment....106
4.5.1.2 Staff-Parent Relationships....107
4.5.2 Team Identity....107
4.5.2.1 Vocation....107
4.5.2.2 Values....108
4.5.2.3 Team....108
4.5.3 Child-centred....109
4.5.3.1 Unique Child....109
4.5.3.2 Flourish....109
4.5.3.3 Value Wellbeing Core....110
4.5.4 Structures and Systems....110
4.5.4.1 Community Links....110
4.5.4.2 Environment....111
4.5.4.3 Ethos....111
4.5.4.4 Boundaries and Expectations....112
4.6 Discovery Phase: Parent views....113
4.6.1 Relationships....115
4.6.1.1 Positive interactions....115
4.6.1.2 Collaboration....115
4.6.1.3 Parent Voice....115
4.6.2 Structures and Systems....116
4.6.2.1 School Building....116
4.6.2.2 Funding....116
4.6.2.3 Ethos....116
4.6.2.4 Staff Knowledge....117
4.6.2.5 Expansive Curriculum....117
4.6.2.6 Extra Curricula....118
4.7. Themes and Definitions....118
4.8 Findings summary....120
4.9.Process Evaluation....120

4.9.1 Transformational Dimension 121
4.9.2 Knowledge-Process Dimension 123
4.9.3 Generative Metaphor Dimension 124
4.9.4 Figure-Ground Dimension 126
4.9.5 Improvisation-Implementation Dimension 129
4.9.6 Concluding comments 132
4.9.7 Reflections 132
4.9.7.1 Reflections on the 'Discovery' phase 132
4.9.7.2 Reflections on the 'Dream' phase 133
4.9.7.3 Reflections on the 'Design' phase 134
4.9.7.4 Summary of key emotions evoked during AI phases 135
4.9.7.5 Reflections on the 'Integrated Design' session 135
4.9.7.6 Reflections on the overall process of AI 136
4.9.7.8 Summary 140
Chapter 5 Discussion 141
5.1 Introduction to chapter 141
5.2. Summary of Findings in the Current Research 141
5.2.1. Overarching Theme: Relationships 141
5.2.2 Theme Interpretation and Links to Existing Research 142
5.2.3 Overarching Theme: Structures & Systems 142
5.2.4 Theme Interpretation and Links to Existing Research 144
5.2.5 Individual Group Themes 145
5.2.6 EY practitioners Overarching Theme: Child-Centred 145
5.2.7 Theme Interpretation and Links to Existing Research 146
5.2.8 EY practitioners Overarching Theme: Team Identity 146
5.2.9 Theme Interpretation and Links to Existing Research 146
5.3 Theoretical interpretations of Findings 146
5.3.1 Bronfenbrenner's Bioecological model 146
5.3.2 Attachment Theory 148
5.3.3 Carl Rogers Unconditional Positive Regard 149
5.3.4 Team learning 149
5.3.5 Grassroots model of flourishing 150
5.4 Evaluation of AI being transformative in the current research 151
5.4.1 Positivity versus generativity 151

5.4.2 AI and the constructionist principle 152
5.4.3. AI and systemic change 153
5.4.4. AI and pre and post identity groups 153
5.5. Participants' reflections of Appreciative Inquiry 154
5.5.1 AI and empowerment 155
5.6. Strengths and Limitations of the current research 155
5.6.1 Evaluation of methodology 156
5.6.1.1 Evaluation of setting 156
5.6.1.2 Evaluation of data-gathering 156
5.6.1.3 Evaluation of Appreciative Inquiry Methodology 157
5.6.1.4 Evaluation of Rigour, Quality and Phronesis 158
5.6.1.5 Evaluation of analysis 159
5.6.1.6 Evaluation of research aims and original contribution 159
5.7 Implications of current research 160
5.7.1 Implications for Early Years Settings 160
5.7.2 Implications for LAs and policy-makers 161
5.7.3 Implications for future research 162
5.7.4 Implications for EP practice 163
5.8. My reflections on the research process 167
5.9. Conclusions 167
Chapter 6 References 169
Chapter 7 Appendices 182
Appendix A: Systematic Search Details 182
Appendix B: Selection of studies excluded from final review selection 183
Appendix C: Guidance materials for using the CASP checklist (CASP, 2018) 184
Appendix D: Outcomes from CASP (2018) checklist applied to qualitative synthesis 187
Appendix E: Qualitative Research Synthesis Themes Table 188
Appendix F: School Recruitment Email 198
Appendix G: Parent Recruitment Flyer 199
Appendix H: GDPR: Research participant privacy notice 200
Appendix I: Semi-structured interview guide 201
Appendix J: Interview Summary Sheet 202
Appendix K: AI presentation for staff 203
Appendix L: AI handout given to all participants 204

Appendix M: Question Grid Guiding Focus Group Discussion & Semi-Structured Interview based on Pahil (2019) 205
Appendix N: Audit trail for thematic analysis 209
Appendix O: Audit trail for process evaluation 216
Appendix P: Audit trail for Reflections 221
Appendix Q: Ethics Approval 224
Appendix R: Participant Information Sheets/Consent Forms 225
Appendix S: Debrief 231

List of Tables

Table 2.1: Definition of Flourishing by Pahil (2019); (2019a) 23
Table 2.2: Prime and Specific areas of learning in the EYFS (DfE, 2013) 25
Table 2.3: Key protective and risk factors to resilience. Adapted from DfE (2018b) 28
Table 2.4: Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria for literature search 41
Table 2.5: Summary of included studies in current Qualitative Research Synthesis adapted from Looney (2018). 47
Table 2.6: Applications of strategies to establish trustworthiness 57
Table 3.1: Inclusion Criteria for participant selection in both groups 70
Table 3.2: Phase of Appreciative Inquiry and related research activity 74
Table 3.3: Process Evaluation for current Appreciative Inquiry 81
Table 3.4 Question Grid Guiding Focus Group Discussion & Semi-Structured Interview 83
Table 3.5: Research questions and data sources 86
Table 3.6: Stages of thematic Analysis process for this research (adapted from Braun and Clarke, 2006) 89
Table 3.7 Audit trail for each stage of analysis 90
Table 4.1: Refined Provocative Propositions 103
Table 4.2: Findings Table for Sub-theme of Attachment and Emotional Containment 106
Table 4.3: Findings Table for Sub-theme of Staff-Parent Relationships 107
Table 4.4: Findings Table for Sub-theme of Vocation 107
Table 4.5: Findings Table for Sub-theme of Values 108
Table 4.6: Findings Table for Sub-theme of Team 109
Table 4.7: Findings Table for Sub-theme of Unique Child 109
Table 4.8: Findings Table for Sub-theme of Flourish 110
Table 4.9: Findings Table for Sub-theme of Value Wellbeing Core 110
Table 4.10: Findings Table for Sub-theme of Community Links 111
Table 4.11: Findings Table for Sub-theme of Environment 111
Table 4.12: Findings Table for Sub-theme of Ethos 111
Table 4.13: Findings Table for Sub-theme of Boundaries and Expectations 112
Table 4.14: Findings Table for Sub-theme of Positive Interactions 115
Table 4.15: Findings Table for Sub-theme of Collaboration 115
Table 4.16: Findings Table for Sub-theme of Parent Voice 116

Table 4.17: Findings Table for Sub-theme of School Building 116
Table 4.18: Findings Table for Sub-theme of Funding 116
Table 4.19: Findings Table for Sub-theme of Ethos 116
Table 4.20: Findings Table for Sub-theme of Staff Knowledge 117
Table 4.21: Findings Table for Sub-theme of Expansive Curriculum 117
Table 4.22: Findings Table for Sub-theme of Extra Curricula 118
Table 4.23: Overarching Themes and Definitions 118
Table 4.24: Sub-themes and Definitions 119
Table 4.25: Process Evaluation summary of evidence for transformational change 121
Table 4.26: EY practitioners emotions evoked during Appreciative Inquiry phases 135
Table 4.27: Parent emotions evoked during Appreciative Inquiry phases 135
Table 5.1: Themes from this AI in relation to the GMoF 150

List of Figures

Figure 2.1: Building a resilient generation: four building blocks 29
Figure 2.2: Bronfenbrenner's Bioecological model of development (Adapted from Hayes, O'Toole and Halpenny (2017) 36
Figure 2.3: Study selection flow diagram for current Qualitative Research Synthesis 44
Figure 2.4: Rating schedule to assess for rigour of study findings. Adapted from Major and Savin-Baden (2010) 50
Figure 2.5: Themes from Qualitative Research Synthesis 55
Figure 3.1: Appreciative Inquiry "4-D" Cycle, (adapted from Pahil, 2019). 65
Figure 3.2: AI cycle used in this research 73
Figure 3.3: Information from EY practitioners summary sheets 78
Figure 4.1: Discovery Phase: EY practitioner's Positive Core 97
Figure 4.2: Discovery Phase: Parent's Positive Core 97
Figure 4.3: Dream graphic for EY practitioners 99
Figure 4.4: Dream graphic for parents 100
Figure 4.5: Draft Provocative Propositions for EY practitioners 101
Figure 4.6: Draft Provocative Propositions for Parents 101
Figure 4.7: 'Story So Far' Poster 102
Figure 4.8: Overarching themes of EY practitioner views of facilitative factors which promote wellbeing 104
Figure 4.9: Thematic map for EY practitioners 105
Figure 4.10: Overarching themes of parent views of facilitative factors which promote wellbeing 113
Figure 4.11: Thematic map of parent views of the facilitative factors that promote wellbeing in children 114
Figure 4.12: Venn diagram of positive core 120
Figure 5.1: Themes from the study mapped onto Bronfenbrenner's bioecological model 147
Figure 5.2: A multi-level continuum approach to promoting community cohesion, adapted from Jackson Taft, Woods and Ford (2020) 165

Abstract

Working to promote the wellbeing of children is currently a key area of development for the UK government (DoH and DfE, 2017). Whilst the views of teachers of primary and secondary aged children are documented in relation to children's wellbeing, this remains an under-researched area for Early Years (EY) Practitioners (Bertagno, 2016). Emphasis on promoting wellbeing in young children is beginning to grow with the first statistics for 'mental disorders' for preschool children being published in 2018 (NHS Digital, 2018).

This research presents an Appreciative Inquiry (AI) exploring the facilitative factors a single EY setting use to promote children's wellbeing as viewed by EY practitioners and parents. AI is an approach for organisational renewal, originally developed by Cooperrider and Srivastva (1987). The research took place in a Foundation Stage unit of a school with a cross-section of six EY practitioners who work in the setting and four parents who have children attending the setting. A process evaluation (Bushe and Kassam, 2005) was used to evaluate if the AI had been transformative in the educational setting. Participants' reflections about the AI process were also formally explored to aid this.

Thematic Analysis (TA) (Braun and Clarke 2006) detailed two overarching themes that are facilitative factors within the EY setting. These being *Relationships* and *Structures and Systems*. TA also detailed two additional overarching themes from EY practitioners', these being *Team Identity* and *Child-centred*.

The AI process appeared transformative in the educational setting according to the process evaluation criteria outlined by Bushe and Kassam (2005). Reflections from both groups highlighted the transformative nature of AI and also implications around the positivity principle of AI.

Implications for professional EP practice along with implications for EY practitioners are discussed in relation to further promoting young children's wellbeing.

Acknowledgements

I feel honoured to be writing this, nearing completion of training on the three-year Doctorate in Applied Educational Psychology programme. It has been an incredible journey and I would like to express my thanks to the following people for supporting me throughout this:

To the staff and parents who took part in this research, I thank you for your time and engagement in this research study. It was a pleasure to undertake this research with you all.

To my fellow TEPs in cohort 12 for their company along this rollercoaster adventure, I feel lucky to have shared this experience with you. I will be forever grateful for the insightful peer supervision and tea-briefs along the way!

To the tutor team on the Doctoral training programme, I offer my thanks for your support starting back at the interview day and continuing throughout these three years.

To my tutor, Dr Sarah Atkinson, thank you for your guidance and support during my research journey.

To my colleagues at my EPS throughout my journey, starting as an assistant EP through to being on the Doctoral programme. In particular my thanks goes to my supervisors and their support during the Doctoral .

To my family and friends, thank you for your love, positivity and support throughout this journey.

Lastly I would like to thank my Mum for reminding me that there is light at the end of the tunnel and to express my gratitude for the endless amounts of proof reading she has done for me over the last three years.

Glossary of terms

AI – Appreciative Inquiry

AR – Action Research

EP – Educational Psychologist

EPS – Educational Psychology Service

EY - Early Years

EYFS – Early Years Foundation Stage

LA – Local Authority

OFSTED - Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills

SEN – Special Educational Needs

SENCo – Special Educational Needs Coordinator

TA – Thematic Analysis

TEP – Trainee Educational Psychologist

Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1. Background and Rationale for this Research

This research was undertaken as part of professional training for the Doctorate in Applied Educational Psychology at the University of Nottingham in my role as a Trainee Educational Psychologist.

Bertagno (2016) employed Grounded Theory to explore contexts and mechanisms that facilitate and/or hinder the promotion of emotional well-being in pre-school settings by gathering the views of EY practitioners, as research around their views is currently limited. Facilitative factors were highlighted, including good working relationships with colleagues and other professionals. Barriers that were perceived to hinder EY practitioner practice were difficulties engaging with parents, pressures of meeting targets along with an increasing workload and time constraints. A lack of parental engagement with schools has been identified as detrimental to supporting children's emotional needs (Conelly et al., 2008). Therefore, a suggestion for future research based on Bertagno (2016) was to further explore emotional wellbeing, investigating how it is promoted and furthering a greater understanding by gaining parents' views for effective engagement.

Shannon and Posada (2007) explored the role of the Educational Psychologist (EP) in EY settings and concluded that the role of the EP can move from individual case work to organisational and strategic work. Soni (2010) commented further that community and organisational psychology can offer potential to the EP working in EY settings. More recently, Douglas-Osborn (2017) used action research to explore the role of the EP in EY settings, concluding that there is a need for the further expansion of the EP role in EY settings, including a holistic and intensive approach to supporting practitioners, parents/carers and children.

At a systems level, EPs are well placed for engaging with organisations and enhancing organisational change (Bertagno, 2016) but are still largely involved with individual casework (Boyle and Lauchlan, 2009). One-way EPs can work in a systemic way is using Appreciative Inquiry (AI), which is an approach for organisational renewal, originally developed by Cooperrider and Srivastva (1987). AI is based on the idea that every system possesses a hidden and 'positive core' of strengths, which when

highlighted provide energy for organisational transformation (Bushe & Kassam, 2005; Ludema and Fry, 2008). The use of AI in EY settings is not cited widely in the literature, but some examples are emerging. For example, Oakes (2010) used AI to explore how EPs can support EY children and their families for her doctoral thesis. The findings were positive, with EY Inclusion Consultants who took part sharing that the AI had led them to work using more of a strengths-based model rather than a deficit one (Oakes, 2010).

An AI has been carried out by Morris and Atkinson (2018) to explore how EPs can promote the mental health of the post-16 population. Part of their rationale is that EPs are well placed to support with the promotion of positive mental health and wellbeing for all young people. This is supported more recently by Krause, Blackwell and Claridge (2020) who demonstrated that EPs can help to build capacity in schools to support the wellbeing of children and young people.

There are a growing number of AI studies being published in education (Bushe, 2010; Lewis, 2015; Waters and White, 2015). This research hopes to demonstrate the value of AI to a wider audience and to highlight it as an approach in promoting wellbeing in children through organisational work with the adults around them.

1.2. Personal and professional interest in research area

The choice of research area developed from my interest in EY education, having previous experience as an EY Teacher. The voices of EY practitioners are often unheard in research, with research focusing more on the views of teachers in primary and secondary school settings (Bertagno, 2016). EY settings are likely to have higher daily contact with parents than in older classes and this is therefore a great opportunity to gain parents' views of their child's wellbeing from an early age.

During my professional training programme, I have enjoyed learning about how EPs can work at a systems level to make a greater difference and bring about change for all children. I aspire to work more strategically with educational settings to facilitate both systemic and organisational change and in turn to improve outcomes for all children. Similarly, my professional colleagues have argued that EPs should be promoting positive development outcomes for all children (Baxter and Frederickson, 2005; Cameron, 2006; MacKay, 2011).

1.3 Aims

This research sought to explore the facilitative factors that promote children's wellbeing within an Early Years (EY) setting through Appreciative Inquiry (AI). The ultimate goal of the AI was to transform practice in the focus setting. Specifically, the research sought to explore the facilitative factors that promote children's wellbeing within an Early EY setting.

Through the undertaking of the AI the researcher sought in particular to engage parents; gathering their views and supporting collaboration between EY practitioners and parents in order to promote pupil wellbeing.

1.4 Overview of thesis structure

- **Chapter 2 (Literature review)**

The Literature Review explores existing research regarding wellbeing in young children and consider both the facilitators and barriers in promoting this.

A Qualitative Research Synthesis (Major and Savin-Baden, 2010) of the literature is presented which explores parents and EY practitioners' views of factors which facilitate wellbeing in young children. The rationale and research questions for the current research are summarised.

- **Chapter 3 (Methodology)**

The Methodology Chapter explores my epistemological stance, as well as the aims, rationale for AI, other considered approaches, the procedure and analysis followed in the current research and ethical considerations.

- **Chapter 4 (Findings)**

The Findings Chapter presents both the analyses and interpretation of the data gathered through EY practitioners and parent groups.

- **Chapter 5 (Discussion)**

The Discussion Chapter summarises the main findings of the research and considers these in relation to the research reviewed within the Literature Review. Strengths and limitations of the research are discussed in relation to the research quality criteria for

qualitative designs and original contribution of the research is presented. The implications for EPs professional practice and future research are considered. The main findings of the research are summarised and concluding comments are given.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

This chapter will introduce the area of wellbeing within an educational context. Factors that promote and hinder wellbeing will be explored with consideration to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). There will be a focus on stakeholder views in relation to wellbeing including staff and parental views. Following this, a Qualitative Research Synthesis (Savin-Baden and Major, 2010) is presented to explore the existing research about the factors which facilitate wellbeing for children in the EYFS. As part of the research synthesis, an analysis, synthesis and interpretation of the reviewed studies is included. The chapter concludes with a rationale for the current research along with Research Questions.

2.1 Background of research area

The promotion of mental health and wellbeing has been a longstanding political imperative in the UK (Durbin, 2009) and in turn there has been an increased focus on promoting wellbeing for children in schools (Wilding and Claridge, 2016). For example, the government recently released a Green paper on the topic of children and young people and their mental health and how best to support them (DoH and DfE, 2017). In the UK, 1 in 18 (5.5%) preschool children (aged two to four years old) have been identified with at least one mental disorder and this rises to around 1 in 10 (9.5%) for five to ten-year olds (NHS Digital, 2018). The disorders referred to in this data are categorised into four broad types, these being: emotional, behavioural, hyperactivity and other less common (e.g. Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC) or eating disorders).

These figures for preschool children are experimental statistics and England's first estimates of disorder prevalence in two to four-year olds, based on a national, random sample (NHS Digital, 2018). The fact that these are the first figures for children in this age range highlight the lack of published research on mental health and wellbeing in young children thus far. This is in line with UNICEF (2013) who state that there is a lack of data around children's wellbeing in the earliest months and years of their life. This may be because it can be hard to reliably ascertain the voice of the young child due to methodological problems. For example, a young child might not understand the term 'wellbeing' or have the necessary linguistic and metacognitive skills to communicate their perspective on this to others (Mashford-Scott, Church and Taylor, 2012). However, there are participatory methods available whereby young children

can be actively involved, for example the Mosaic Approach (MA) (Clark and Moss, 2001). Difficulties could also arise as it is difficult to measure wellbeing in the absence of an agreed upon definition (Mashford-Scott, Church and Taylor 2012).

The figures highlight the importance of early intervention, with Early Years (EY) settings playing a crucial role in this. Early intervention was the “cornerstone” of the government initiative ‘Every Child Matters’ (DFES, 2003) and is noted in the most recent Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice (DfE, 2015) which states the importance of early identification and early intervention of children and young people’s social, emotional and mental health needs. Failing to intervene early can have a huge impact on adulthood. Research suggests that adults who experience four or more adversities in childhood are four times more likely to have low levels of mental wellbeing and life satisfaction (Mehta et al., 2013).

Recently there has been increased coverage of wellbeing in young children as the Duchess of Cambridge is working to highlight the importance of social, emotional and mental health for children in their EY (The Royal Family, 2020). The aim of the work is to support young children with their mental health and emotional resilience and hopes to create foundations into adulthood (The Royal Family, 2020). The Duchess has released the “5 Big Questions” Survey, the aim of which is to “build the healthiest generation in history by giving every child the best start in life” (5 Big Questions, 2020).

2.2. Wellbeing

The terms wellbeing and mental health are often used interchangeably in the literature. For example, the World Health Organization (WHO) defines mental health “as a state of well-being in which every individual realizes his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community” (WHO, 2014).

The term ‘mental health’ can focus on problems rather than trying to promote mental health (Soni, 2007). Frederickson, Dunsmuir and Baxter (2009) argue that many professionals in education are reluctant to use the term ‘mental health’ due to the stigma associated with mental illness.

A quick search on research databases using the terms “early childhood” and “mental health” produce a results list with arguably negative connotations of mental health. For

example, results of studies included words in their titles such as ‘disorders’, ‘stressors’ and ‘trauma’. This search highlights how the term is still largely associated with deficits rather than the presence of positive marker characteristics (Cowen, 1991).

On the other hand, the term “wellbeing” can be ill-defined, abstract, multi-dimensional and socially and culturally constructed (Barblett and Maloney, 2010). However, it is always universally accepted as being positive (Cowen, 1991; Spratt, 2015). The malleability of its meaning creates opportunities for professionals to work together from different areas (e.g. education and health). However, there is also the possibility that a lack of clarity over its definition could result in confusion.

From a philosophical perspective, with origins in Ancient Greek, the term wellbeing has notions of ‘Eudaimonia’, that is, how one achieves happiness through living a good life, or ‘flourishing’ (Seligman, 2011). This research acknowledges the conceptualisation of wellbeing derived from doctoral positive psychology research that took place in a primary school in my placement Local Authority Educational Psychology Service (Pahil, 2019). The initial research question of this doctoral research was ‘what are the characteristics/dimensions of flourishing children according to parents, children and staff of one school?’ The resultant model known as the ‘Grassroots Model of Flourishing’ (GMoF) was introduced at a local SEND Inclusion Conference, with 45 schools in attendance (Pahil, 2019; 2019a).

It is known as the GMoF for several reasons. Firstly, the model is fundamentally rooted in the perspectives of key stakeholders of a school; a total of 52 participants were involved (28 staff; 14 parents; and 10 children). Secondly, typically a ground level approach to building up an advocacy campaign is known as grassroots; staff participants produced a set of core entitlements which they proposed are necessary for children to flourish (Nussbaum, 2011; McLellan & Steward, 2015). These are the right to be safe, healthy, supported, engaged, challenged and listened to. Thirdly, the acronym ‘grass’ represents the core dimensions of flourishing that arose out of the data analyses: ‘g’ stands for growing character; ‘r’ for regulation of emotions; ‘a’ for autonomy; ‘s’ for sense of belonging including connectedness; and ‘s’ for strengths/ competence development Pahil (2019; 2019a). Table 2.1 contains definitions for each strand of the ‘grass’ component.

Table 2.1: Definition of flourishing by Pahil (2019); (2019a)

Flourishing Dimension	**A child who is flourishing…**
Growing character	has unique traits, is developing good character/character traits, and/or aspires of making a difference;
Regulation of emotions	manages their own emotions well;
Autonomy	engages in self-motivated action (underpinned by their own goals and/or views);
Sense of belonging	has a sense of belonging and close attachments to others;
Strengths/Competence	participates in activities that are motivating or energizing to them; and/or can do something successfully (through perseverance).

This research is influenced by the local context where the GMoF is being rolled out to all schools within the LA, therefore for the purpose of this research a definition of wellbeing will be used which is in line with the definition (and key characteristics) of flourishing children in Table 2.1.

2.2.1. Systemic approaches to wellbeing

Weare (2015) conducted a systematic literature review titled "What works in promoting social and emotional wellbeing and responding to mental health problems in schools?". This review provided several recommendations which can be used from preschool upwards to support emotional wellbeing in schools, including adopting a whole school approach with targeted interventions. Settings should start with a positive and universal focus on wellbeing, emphasising children's strengths and capacities. In turn this should be reflected in the school ethos. This is echoed in the recent government publication "Future in Mind" which recommends that schools should develop whole school approaches to promote wellbeing (DoH, 2015).

UNICEF created the Rights Respecting Schools award in 2004 (UNICEF, 2009), this supports schools to embed children's rights in the ethos and culture which is conducive with Weare's (2015) recommendations. The award puts the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child at the core of school practice to improve wellbeing and thereby help all children and young people to fulfil their potential. This award is aimed at all schools in the UK and this includes EY settings. There are four

key areas of impact of a Rights Respecting School: wellbeing, participation, relationships and self-esteem.

Perhaps an area often overlooked when considering the need for promoting social and emotional wellbeing is also to ensure the promotion of the wellbeing of staff too. A report published by OFSTED in July 2019 states that teaching staff in Britain are reporting the highest rates of work-related stress, depression and anxiety (OFSTED, 2019). It has been argued that we cannot expect staff to promote wellbeing in children if they themselves are experiencing poor levels of wellbeing, including high stress levels (Weare, 2015).

2.2.2 Intervention in the Early Years

EY settings practice is informed by the Statutory Framework for the EYFS (DfE, 2018). The term 'EY settings' here covers maintained schools; non-maintained schools; all providers on the EY Register; and all providers registered with an EY childminder agency. This is in line with the statutory framework for the EYFS whose framework covers all the above EY providers (DfE, 2018).

There are four principles which shape practice in the EY. One of these is "Every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured" (DfE, 2018, p.6).

In EY settings, practitioners can use the non-statutory EY outcomes guidance as a tool to assess the extent to which a child is developing at expected levels for their age (DfE, 2013). This includes learning across seven areas with three of these being prime areas which are fundamental, work together, and move through to support development in all other areas (Table 2.2). One of the prime areas is Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED) (DfE 2018).

Table 2.2: Prime and Specific areas of learning in the EYFS (DfE, 2013)

Area of Learning and Development	Aspect
Prime Areas	
Personal, Social and Emotional Development	Making relationships
	Self-confidence and self-awareness
	Managing feelings and behaviour
Physical Development	Moving and handling
	Health and self-care
Communication and Language	Listening and attention
	Understanding
	Speaking
Specific areas	
Literacy	Reading
	Writing
Mathematics	Numbers
	Shape, space and measure
Understanding the World	People and communities
	The world
	Technology
Expressive Arts and Design	Exploring and using media and materials
	Being imaginative

At the time of writing a new set of Early Learning Goals (ELG) were piloted, with 24 schools across the country trialling the revised ELGs (DfE, 2018a). The prime area of PSED had revised goals of: 'self-regulation', 'managing self' and 'building relationships', which replaces the current ones of 'making relationships', 'self-confidence and self-awareness' and 'managing feelings and behaviour' (DfE, 2018a). The pilot evaluation found that the teachers who took part viewed the revised ELG's positively, finding them clearer than the previous ELGs (Education Endowment Foundation, 2019). The revised EYFS framework is due to be introduced on a statutory basis from September 2021 (DfE, 2019).

The promotion and monitoring of children's wellbeing in the early years is being taken seriously, this is demonstrated through OFSTED inspections and the requirement of inspectors to comment on the contribution of the EY provision to children's wellbeing

(OFSTED, 2015). This can include evaluating whether children are forming appropriate bonds and secure emotional attachments with their carers (OFSTED, 2015). Children in EY settings are assessed at two points; the two-year-old check and at the end of their time in the EYFS. This is known as the EYFS profile and happens in the final term of the year in which the child turns 5. The profile can help identify any additional needs for support (DfE, 2015).

It should be noted that whilst EY practitioners are expected to support the development of wellbeing in the children they work with, there is little research on EY practitioners views on children's wellbeing in the literature (Bertagno, 2016). This is not the case for primary and secondary school staff (Mashford-Scott, Church and Taylor, 2012).

There is evidence to show the importance of young children's preschool experiences from the Effective Preschool and Primary Education Project (EPPE) (Sylva, Meluish, Sammons, Siraj-Blatchford & Taggart, 2004). This project was a longitudinal study of development for children aged between three to seven years old. Findings indicate that preschool experience, compared to none, enhances all-round development in children and this was particularly the case for disadvantaged children. They also found that staff with higher qualifications had a greater impact on the quality of the environment and also led to more progress being made by children. For example, it is helpful if staff have training on behaviour so that they know if a child's behaviour may be due to an unmet mental health need (Weare, 2015). EY settings who view academic and social development as equally important and complimentary in nature saw children making better all-round progress compared with settings where this was not the case.

Later evidence from the Tickell review (2011) supported the EPPE findings (Sylva et al., 2004) and in an opening statement states, "A child's future choices, attainment, wellbeing, happiness and resilience are profoundly affected by the quality of the guidance, love and care they receive during these first years" (Tickell, 2011, p.2). Tickell (2011) went further to say that the prime area in the EYFS of Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED) has a great impact on later wellbeing, learning, achievement, and economic circumstances.

2.3 Promoting wellbeing

Key facilitators to young children's wellbeing will now be discussed in more detail whilst acknowledging associated barriers with these.

2.3.1 Resiliency

Resilience can be defined as "the ability to cope and thrive despite facing setbacks in life" (Mentally Healthy Schools, 2019). Resilience is described by the New Economics Foundation (NEF) (2009) as being a part of wellbeing. Resilience is an important factor when we are exploring wellbeing in the EYFS as "the EYs are a time of rapid brain development and 'plasticity', where successful support and intervention can result in life-long positive impacts" (Kolb, 2009, p.651).

As promoting children's wellbeing and mental health are currently key priorities for the government, it follows that there are several government initiatives and reports to support with the implementation of this. For example, The Mental Health of Children and Young People in England (Public Health England, 2016) and Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools (DfE, 2018b). Both reports pick up on the importance of promoting resilience in children. The guidance states that schools have a key role to play in aiding children to be resilient which in turn supports positive mental health and wellbeing (DfE, 2018b). There are several both protective and risk factors to resilience and these can be viewed in Table 2.3.

Table 2.3: Key protective and risk factors to resilience. Adapted from DfE (2018b)

Risk Factors	Protective Factors
Child	
× **Genetic influence**	✓ Secure attachment experience
× **Low IQ and learning disabilities**	✓ Good communication skills
× **Specific developmental delay**	✓ Having a belief in control
× **Communication difficulties**	✓ A positive attitude
× **Difficult temperament**	✓ Experiences of success and achievement
× **Physical illness**	
× **Academic failure**	✓ Capacity to reflect
× **Low self-esteem**	
Family	
× **Family disharmony, or break up**	✓ Family harmony and stability
× **Inconsistent discipline style**	✓ Supportive parenting
× **Parent/s with mental illness or substance abuse**	✓ Strong family values
	✓ Affection
× **Physical, sexual, neglect or emotional abuse**	✓ Clear, consistent discipline
	✓ Support for education
× **Parental criminality or alcoholism**	
× **Death and loss**	
School	
× **Bullying**	✓ Positive school climate that enhances belonging and connectedness
× **Discrimination**	
× **Breakdown in or lack of positive friendships**	✓ Clear policies on behaviour and bullying
	✓ 'Open door' policy for children to raise problems
× **Deviant peer influences**	
× **Peer pressure**	✓ A whole-school approach to promoting good mental health
× **Poor pupil to teacher relationships**	
Community	
× **Socio-economic disadvantage**	✓ Wider supportive network
× **Homelessness**	✓ Good housing
× **Disaster, accidents, war or other overwhelming events**	✓ High standard of living
	✓ Opportunities for valued social roles
× **Discrimination**	✓ Range of sport/leisure activities
× **Other significant life events**	
× **Lack of access to support services**	

Children and adults with high resilience resources are half as likely to have a diagnosable mental health condition (Hughes et al. 2018). Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) substantially increase the risk of poor mental health (Frith, 2016). Often, children who experience an ACE are often exposed to more than one, e.g. violence in the home is highly correlated with physical maltreatment and psychological

abuse (Burstow, Newbigging, Tew & Costello, 2018). Causes of mental health problems can often be traced to adversity in childhood, this can have a lifelong impact on wellbeing. The recent report by the Mental Health Policy Commission, 'Investing in a resilient generation', outlines four building blocks for building a resilient generation (Burstow, Newbigging, Tew & Costello, 2018). These can be seen in Figure 2.1.



Figure 2.1: Building a resilient generation: four building blocks

The report highlights that whilst there is a focus on improving access to treatment and support for children and young people, there must also be a shift in our focus 'upstream', that is maximising children and young people's resilience and minimising risks to their mental health. In line with this, recent research by Bethell, Jones, Gombojav, Linkenbach and Sege (2019) found that proactive promotion of Positive Childhood Experiences (PCEs) for children may reduce the risk for adult depression and poor mental health. Examples of PCEs for children include being able to talk to their family about their feelings, feeling supported by friends and feeling safe and protected by an adult in their home.

It is interesting to note that although being resilient was already a feature in the principles of EY practice guidance, it is now mentioned more explicitly within the ELG in the new pilot version (DfE, 2018a). It features under the ELG of 'self-regulation'; namely, a positive sense of self and being resilient and persevering in the face of a challenge (DfE, 2018a).

It is important that schools are aware of the protective factors that help children to develop resilience when faced with problems and challenges (DfE, 2018b). Rutter states that "the promotion of resilience does not lie in avoidance of stress, but rather

in encountering stress… in a way that allows self-confidence and social competence to increase through mastery and appropriate responsibility" (Rutter, 1985, p.608).

One-way schools promote resilience is using the Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA) programme (Krause, Blackwell & Claridge, 2020). This has been shown to be effective in promoting resilience from the viewpoints of Head Teachers, ELSA's and pupils (Hill et al, 2013).

2.3.2 Attachment

Attachment interactions are advocated in UK policy in the Early Years (DfE, 2018). UK settings follow what is known as the key person approach. That is, in EY settings, each child must be assigned a key person as this is thought to offer a settled relationship for the child and to build a relationship with the child's parents (DfE, 2018).

The principles of attachment theory can help practitioners to see the importance of relationships in EY settings, and the connection to children's PSED and wellbeing. Tickell (2011) states that the quality and security of a young child's attachments can impact on their wellbeing, either positively or negatively and this refers to relational experiences both at home and at EY settings (Evangelou, 2009, p.76). Secure attachment can support resilience and act as a defence against vulnerability. Therefore, when young children are entering education, the relationship they form with their keyworker is crucial as they can be viewed as a secondary attachment figure. Secondary attachment figures are defined by Bowlby (2007) as the few special people in a child's life whom they develop a close attachment to, tending to be someone their primary attachment figure knows well and who they see often, such as a grandparent or a childminder. Bowlby (2007) reported that having three or more secondary carers has the potential to increase a child's resilience and promote their wellbeing.

Bowlby is seen as the father of attachment theory (Geddes, 2006). He showed the importance of infants having an attachment with a consistent parent figure, giving them a "safe base" from which they can explore and develop the capacity for secure relationships with others (Bowlby, 1969). The original work of attachment theory by Bowlby emphasised the need for children to have unbroken attachments with their mothers as otherwise it could lead to psychopathology later in life (Slater, 2007).

To explore early attachment experiences further, it is pertinent to consider the work of Ainsworth who created the Strange Situation (Siegel & Payne Bryson, 2020). This is a procedure to explore infant's early attachment behaviour and their exploratory behaviour in the context of both high and low stress (Siegel & Payne Bryson, 2020). The procedure involves a mother and her infant (around one year old) taking part in a series of ever-increasing stressful experiences. It offers the observer the chance to see how the child responds to their mother, both as a base for exploration and as a source of comfort when the stress level increases (Siegel & Payne Bryson, 2020). It is reported that infants typically explore more of the room when their mother is present, which is in line with the theory of the mother being a safe base for the child to explore from (Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters & Wall, 1978). The reunion between the mother and her infant after a period of brief separation (less than five minutes) provided the most interesting observations in the Strange Situation. Most responses reflected a secure attachment, that is the mother was able to recognise and understand her infant's distress and reassure them accordingly upon her return (Siegel & Payne Bryson, 2020). The other responses that were observed demonstrated an insecure response; the mothers were not sensitive to their infant's distress and therefore the infant would appear uncertain when their mother returned.

Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters & Wall (1978) identified four attachment styles, these being: secure and insecure avoidant, insecure resistant/ambivalent and insecure disorganised (Siegel & Payne Bryson, 2020). Children's attachment styles can have a direct link to their behaviour both in EY settings and classrooms. For example, securely attached children have more positive interactions socially and are more co-operative. Whereas, children with an insecure attachment are more dependent on adults and are less popular with peers (Siegel & Payne Bryson, 2020).

It was felt that traditional attachment theory, including that of Bowlby, pathologised mothers and such criticism lead to modifications of attachment theory including promoting a wider understanding and definition of attachment figures (Rose, McGuire-Sniekus, Gilbert and McInnes, 2019). Further critique of attachment theory involves it being criticised as being a deficit model, not recognising that children with an insecure attachment can go on to have meaningful relationships with others (Webber, 2017).

In recent years, attachment theory has shifted from Bowlby's work based on behaviourism and expanded to include a theory of regulation, drawing on neurobiological research (Schore & Schore, 2008). Fonagy and Target (2005, p. 334) state, "if the attachment relationship is indeed a major organizer of brain development, as many have accepted and suggested (e.g., Schore, 2003), then the determinants of attachment relationships are important far beyond the provision of a fundamental sense of safety or security (Bowlby 1988)." Attachment is seen as helping to shape the regulatory and survival functions of the brain (Schore & Schore, 2008). Here we will look into the work of two contemporary and influential researchers in the field of attachment and neuroscience, Stephen Porges and Dan Siegel.

Porges developed polyvagal theory and proposes that the vagal system is central to social and emotional regulation, stating that "polyvagal theory is the preamble to attachment", (Porges, 2017, p.72). Polyvagal theory emphasises the part relationships play in moderating arousal via the vagus nerve.

Before we explore polyvagal more in depth, it's important to explain some key ideas behind it. A relationship between the mother (or alternative primary caregiver) and young infant helps to mediate the dyadic regulation of emotion, whereby the mother co-regulates the infants Central Nervous System (CNS) and Autonomic Nervous System (ANS). The experience of a responsive dyadic relationship builds attachment into the nervous system and leads to internal regulation in the child (Schore, 1994). Emotions are regulated by others to start with, then the infant becomes self-regulated as they develop due to neurophysiological development. Through attunement, misattunement and reattunement, the infant achieves a "psychological birth", thus becoming a person (Mahler et al., 1975). Essentially, this is saying that attachment relationships shape the building of neural circuity and this guides how we learn, respond to stress and form attachments with others.

Van der Kolk, (2015) details the two branches of the ANS as follows: the Sympathetic Nervous System (SNS) which acts as the accelerator, and the parasympathetic (PNS) which acts as the break. The vagus nerve is part of the PNS which helps to calm organs after a flight or fight response. Next we consider neuroception. This is the process by which we are continually scanning the environment for threats to our survival, which engages the polyvagal system (Porges, 2011). Polyvagal theory

focuses on safety, which is manifested in the social engagement system, that enables attachment to occur. Prosody, positive facial expressions and welcoming gestures trigger through neuroception and feelings of safety emerge when the social engagement system is activated (Porges, 2011).

Porges (2017) posits that feeling safe is not solely concerned with the absence of threat, but also the presence of safety cues which are noticeable to the nervous system. If no threats or challenges are present, then the vagus nerve works to support digestion, growth and social communication (Cozolino, 2017). When a challenge occurs, the vagus nerve moves toward responding and this can include activating the fight or flight mechanism. If the social engagement system fails to activate repeatedly, for example if we are not able to turn to trusted others, then the flight or fight mechanism is triggered. Treisman (2017) states that if the secure caregiver is absent and the child is exposed to adversity (such as violence or neglect) then they are likely to experience frequent flight, fight and freeze responses, as they do not have coping strategies available to them. The engagement system and the vagus' ability to regulate affect seem to depend on the quality of the attachment relationships experienced in infancy (Cozolino, 2017).

Vagal tone refers to the vagal nerves ability to regulate the heart and other organs (Porges, Doussard-Roosevelt, Lourdes Portales & Greenspan, 1996). Vagal tone promotes both physiological homeostasis when faced with challenge and it helps to act as a brake to regulate cardiac output. Inadequate development of vagal tone can impact psychosocial and cognitive development. For example, poor vagal tone correlates with irritability, behaviour problems and emotional dysregulation (Cozolino, 2017). Porges, Doussard-Roosevelt, Lourdes Portales & Greenspan (1996) used a theoretical model to show that young infants with a disorganised attachment style (characterised by disorganised, disorientated or chaotic behaviour) have difficulties in regulating their vagal brake (decreasing their vagal tone) during social tasks. This negatively impacted their social interaction skills and led to significantly more behavioural problems for these children at preschool age.

Siegel's work is based on research in interpersonal neurobiology, neuroplasticity and attachment science (Siegel & Payne Bryson, 2011). Siegel explains that parents who show up as a reliable presence in their child's lives can impact and mould the physical

structure of the brain. This in turn influences how the child's brains works. He supports this with the use of the phrase "neurons that fire together wire together" (Siegel and Payne Bryson, 2020, p.8), i.e. neurons are constantly connecting and separating based on experiences. For example, in times of trouble, if the parent consistently shows up, the child will see the world as a place which understands them and which they can meaningfully interact due to their past experiences. The neurobiological consequence of the 4 S's (feeling safe, seen, soothed and secure, all of which are important for developing healthy and empowering relationships) promoted by Siegel is an integrated brain, whereby the nervous system becomes resilient and does not stay in periods of extended stress (Siegel & Payne Bryson, 2020).

Siegel & Payne Bryson (2011) help us to understand the role the brain plays in attachment. The brain can be thought of in two parts, the left brain which is logical, literal and linguistic and the right brain, which is holistic, non-verbal and associated with emotions. To live balanced lives and form meaningful relationships, it is crucial that both sides work together as a whole brain, valuing both logic and emotions (Siegel & Payne Bryson, 2011). Attachment experiences are shown to be crucial in the development of structural right brain-based systems which are involved in emotion and self-regulation (Schore & Schore, 2008). Children who engage in challenging behaviours are seeking opportunity, from prospective caregivers to have their emotional dysregulation soothed through behavioural communication (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002).

One group of children who may present with challenging behaviours are those with a disorganised attachment style. This type of attachment style results when parents are severely unattuned, when parents are frightening or are frightened themselves (Siegel & Payne Bryson, 2020). This experience of being afraid of a parent(s) can lead the child to grow up into an adult who struggles to regulate their emotions. These children grow up struggling with appropriate strategies to navigate the world. When children are faced with a terrifying parent it activates two simultaneous brain states as they want to turn to their parent for comfort, but the terrifying parent is the source of worry for the child, so the child wants to flee and turn to the parent at the same time (Siegel & Payne Bryson, 2020).

In terms of how it affects a child neurodevelopmentally, we start by looking to the brain stem which responds to danger by getting the child to move away from the source of terror. However, the limbic system, where attachment systems function, encourage the child to head towards the parent. Thus resulting in internal conflict. This fragmentation in coping styles for the child causes dissociation and severe and emotional and behavioural dysregulation meaning that the relationships become challenging for them (Siegel & Payne Bryson, 2020). Fortunately this is amenable to treatment with intervention but left untreated it can persist into how these children parent their own children in the future.

Some of the child-based strategies that Siegel advocates to promote the whole brain child include connection before correction, name it to tame it, the hand model of the brain and making implicit memories explicit (Siegel & Payne Bryson, 2020). If we take the first strategy, 'connection before correction', this is about supporting the child through their emotional experience, to support them in learning to express their feelings in a more adaptive manner before correcting them on behavioural limits later if needed.

It is important for EY practitioners to understand the key tenets of attachment theory; this can help them to respond to children who are experiencing complex difficulties and this understanding contributes to the wellbeing of all pupils (Geddes, 2006).
Siegel and Payne Bryson (2020) advocate that parents and others such as those who work with children must be aware of their own attachment-based beliefs and expectations, this helps them to be self-aware and to achieve parental presence. Siegel says that "history is not destiny", meaning that a parent may not have experienced secure attachment themselves growing up, but that if they are self-aware of their history and how they were parented this can in turn help them achieve parental presence and form secure attachments with their children.

2.3.3 Community

"It takes a village to raise a child" is a well-known African Proverb which can be seen as the underlying essence of Bronfenbrenner's social ecological model. This model depicts how a child's interactions with the environment, including their local community, can influence how they develop and grow (Bronfenbrenner and Morris,

2006). Bronfenbrenner's model displays the nested systems that represent the influences on a child's wellbeing (Hayes, O'Toole and Halpenny, 2017).

Bronfenbrenner (1979) gives the following descriptions for the model:

- Microsystem refers to the environment that the individual directly interacts with.
- Mesosystem refers to the interactions between these systems.
- Exosystem, the processes occurring between two or more systems, one of which the child is not directly involved with, but which impacts (or is impacted by) a context within the child's microsystem.
- Macrosystem, relates to the cultural belief systems, values and ideology which impact on the above systems.
- Chronosystem, this is a later addition to the model, which captures change or consistency over time in the child's environment (Hayes, O'Toole & Halpenny, 2017).

The model is usually displayed in concentric circles, a version of this can be seen in Figure 2.2.

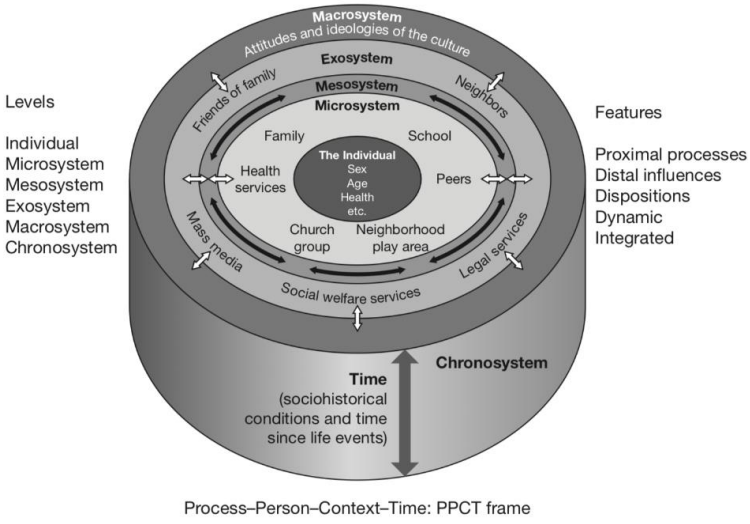


Figure 2.2: Bronfenbrenner's Bioecological model of development (Adapted from Hayes, O'Toole and Halpenny (2017)

The model recognises the dynamic and bidirectional relationships between people and their context. It has been highly influential in education, including EY education. For example, the New Zealand Ministry of Education referred to it in the development and implementation of their EY curriculum, Te Whāriki (Ministry of Education, 1996).

Bronfenbrenner highlights through his model, the contexts that children are not directly involved in that impact on children's wellbeing, this is known as the exosystem. For example, the exosystem can influence the wellbeing of the adult's in the child's life. This could refer to the workplace stress of an EY practitioner, this potentially impacts the quality of interactions between that adult and the children they work with (Hayes, O'Toole and Halpenny, 2017).

2.3.4 Current government policy and initiatives

The Free Early Education Entitlement offers 15 hours of early education for 38 weeks each year to all three and four-year-old children and the most disadvantaged two-year olds (DfE, 2018c). From September 2017 there has been an additional rollout of 30 hours free childcare, again for families who meet eligibility criteria (DfE, 2018c). There has been a mass intake of parents taking up the free childcare with numbers of children in a 30 hours place in June 2019 estimated to be around 378,000 (DfE, 2018c). An evaluation of the impact of this on families reported that 86% of parents who enrolled their child for the 30 hours free childcare a week report that their child was better prepared for school (DfE, 2018c).

This initiative potentially means more children may be experiencing separation from their caregivers at an earlier age. Therefore, Page (2008; 2010 & 2011) states that children in paid childcare need 'professional love'. Page (2011) found that whilst some parents want caregivers to love their children, others do not use the term 'love' explicitly and instead referred to the term 'emotional attachment'. These findings need to be interpreted with caution as they refer to a limited size sample, this being the views of six mothers. They took part in open ended interviews and completed timelines detailing further biographical information.

2.3.5 Parental Engagement

It is important to note that the EYFS statutory guidance highlights that good parenting and high-quality learning together provide a solid foundation to make the most of the child's abilities and talents (DfE, 2018).

A report by the Education Endowment Foundation found that there is moderate evidence related to parental engagement programmes in the early years (Education Endowment Foundation, 2019a). Research shows that there is an association

between parental engagement and their child's academic success, but more high-quality evaluations are needed of programmes that have tried to increase parental involvement and in turn their child's learning (Education Endowment Foundation, 2019a).

There are many government initiatives available which seek to improve children's mental health by involving parents. For example, Future in Mind (DoH, 2015) is a report with recommendations from a taskforce co-chaired by NHS England and the Department of Health with aspirations for what they wanted to achieve by the year 2020. This includes improving access for parents to evidence-based programmes of intervention and support to strengthen attachment between parent and child, avoid early trauma, build resilience and improve behaviour.

Weare (2015) also recommends that promoting social and emotional wellbeing means involving parents, carers and families as part of this. Ways to involve parents can include helping develop parenting skills which in turn will help reinforce consistent messages to the child given by both home and school (Weare, 2015).

2.4 Systematic Research Synthesis

2.4.1 Introduction to systematic research synthesis

In order to discover and explore those studies that gathered views from the professionals working in the EY settings and parents of children who attend these settings about the factors that they perceive to support the promotion of wellbeing in young children, I performed a systematic search and review of the literature.

2.4.2 Background to research synthesis

Traditionally the choice for synthesis in research has leaned towards a quantitative meta-analysis, (Bearman and Dawson, 2013). Despite Noblit and Hare's (1988) work on meta-ethnography, there is still a large focus on statistical meta-analysis to synthesise findings in research (Gough, Thomas and Oliver, 2012). However, with the increase of qualitative research in the past few decades, such as in early intervention and early childhood education (Erwin, Brotherson and Summers, 2011), there is also the need to synthesise this in the most appropriate way.

2.4.3. Qualitative Research Synthesis

Qualitative research synthesis is an approach that uses qualitative methods to analyse, synthesise and interpret results from qualitative studies.

Qualitative research is rising in recent years in popularity, particularly in the field of education (Major and Savin-Baden, 2010). It originates from meta-ethnography by Noblit and Hare (1988) and allows for the linking of concepts across studies. There are critics to the approach, particularly as the subjective process may result in different readers extracting different themes from the data (Bearman and Dawson, 2013). Furthermore, it is has been criticised for its potential to bias, particularly when only one reader is involved (Bearman and Dawson, 2013).

There are ways to address limitations of the approach, including triangulation of the judgements made when interpreting themes as well as transparency in the approach that involves detailing the synthesis process. There are authors who outline the process for a qualitative research synthesis such as Major and Savin-Baden (2010) and Sandelowski and Barroso (2007), which can help contribute to the transparency of the approach taken.

Over the years, many terms have been used to review, analyse and synthesise qualitative research (e.g. meta-ethnography, meta-synthesis and qualitative synthesis). Major and Savin-Baden (2010) chose to use the term qualitative research synthesis as it is the most inclusive of these. In light of this, 'qualitative research synthesis' will be used in this synthesis.

Qualitative research synthesis can help educators develop cumulative knowledge and in turn advance evidence-based policies and practices (Davies, 2000). In the subsequent chapter, Appreciative Inquiry (AI), the methodology for this research will be discussed. AI is an approach to organisational change, and it is therefore helpful to note that the qualitative research synthesis also has utility in relation to organisational theory and change (Major and Savin-Baden, 2010).

2.4.4. Review Question

The review question for this qualitative research synthesis is as follows:

What does existing research conclude about the factors which facilitate children's wellbeing in early years settings?

2.5 Synthesis Design

2.5.1 Search strategy

A detailed search of the literature was carried out between 02.06.19 and the 05.07.19 to discover the existing research base for the current review question, the aim being to locate the most relevant studies for consideration (See Appendix A).

2.5.2 Exploratory searches

Initial searches were conducted using search engines (Google and Google Scholar) and the university library database (NuSearch) using the following terms: early years; wellbeing. This guided the development and choice of terms for use in the systematic database search.

2.5.3. Systematic Database Searches

Three databases were utilised in this literature search, these being ERIC (EBSCO), PsychInfo (OVID) and Web of Science. Searches of the "grey" literature using EThOS was also utilised and chosen because it fits the context of the current review, which is studies that have been carried out in the UK.

The databases were searched using several terms relating to both early years education and wellbeing. Synonyms and different terms were also employed to broaden the search. For example the term "wellbeing" was interchanged with "well being" and "well-being" to ensure that all relevant literature were found. The search strategy and terms searched are outlined in Appendix A.

Bibliographic software was used to manage and organise the saved journal articles from these results; Mendeley software was chosen for this purpose.

Hand-searches of the reference lists of relevant literature were also conducted to ensure the most relevant studies to this review were located.

2.5.4. Inclusion Criteria

The inclusion criteria used when carrying out the literature search are shown in Table 2.4.

Table 2.4: Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria for literature search

Feature	Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria
Country	UK studies	Studies in countries outside of the UK
Sample	Early years practitioners Views (teachers or support staff of children in the EYFS) Parent views (of children aged 0-5 years old) Views of other educational professionals who work with children of the intended age range in educational settings	Parent views (of children aged 6 years old or over) Class Teacher views (of children aged over 6 years old)
Setting	School or educational settings Day educational provision	Non-educational provision Residential provision
Study focus	Contains element of positive factors to facilitate wellbeing in young children	Sole focus on barriers or deficits to facilitating wellbeing in young children
Research design	Qualitative design	Quantitative design only
Data presentation	Thick descriptions (quotations)	Unsupported descriptions
Publication	Peer reviewed journals Grey literature (Theses/dissertations)	Other publications (e.g. magazines, books, book reviews)

2.5.4.1 Rational for inclusion/exclusion criteria

2.5.4.1.1 Country

There are numerous studies which exist in literature outside of the UK which are relevant to the review question, however I am aware that education systems can vary between countries and therefore may not be comparable to the UK context. Therefore, only studies that took place within the UK were included in this review.

2.5.4.1.2 Participant Sample and Setting

The views of EY practitioners, other professionals who work with children in EY settings and parents/carers of children of EYFS age (0-5 years old) were sought for

the current review. Children's views were not considered for the review due to the complications that can arise with seeking the voice of the young child (i.e. reliable methods of data collection) and because the voice of the child is not being explored in the current research.

As mentioned earlier, there is little to no research on the views of EY practitioners and their views on children's wellbeing in the literature (Mashford-Scott, Church and Taylor, 2012). As there is a focus on early intervention and promotion of children's wellbeing in EY settings (DfE, 2015), I think it is important to gather the views of practitioners who work in those settings.

Previous research including (Bertagno,2016; Conelly et al., 2008 and Ford & Nikapota, 2000) has highlighted that a lack of parental engagement with schools can act as a barrier to promoting children's wellbeing and therefore I sought to seek the views of parents in this area where the focus is on facilitating wellbeing in their children.

2.5.4.1.3 Study focus

This review is seeking to discover the facilitative factors of wellbeing for children aged 0-5 years old and therefore only studies that focus on those factors which facilitate wellbeing in young children are sought for this review. Studies that focus solely on the barriers or deficits to young children's wellbeing were excluded as they did not meet the purpose of this review.

2.5.4.1.4 Research design

This review is concerned with the lived experiences of people and therefore only studies that contain at least some element of qualitative design are included in this review.

2.5.4.1.5 Data presentation

Major and Savin-Baden (2010) give guidance for qualitative research syntheses which state that studies should include thick descriptions and quotations. Only studies which include examples of original data were included in the review.

2.5.4.1.6 Publication

Peer reviewed articles are included, and I took the decision to include grey literature in this review. Major and Savin-Baden (2010) argue that there is a need to include

grey literature such as unpublished theses because they will often contain the rich, thick descriptions that can often be lacking in published articles.

2.6. Study selection

A total of 674 journal articles were identified through the databases. Titles and abstracts were examined against the inclusion criteria, 659 were removed as they were not related to the wellbeing in young children and most did not take part in the UK. This left 15 studies which were read throughout, a further 13 were excluded after inclusion/exclusion criteria were applied. This left two remaining studies. A hand search of the references from these searches was undertaken as well as exploring references from relevant literature in the topic area. Alongside this, EthOs was utilised to search for theses. This generated four more studies. Therefore, a total of six studies were found for the review. Of the remaining six studies, two were reporting findings from the same set of data (Robson, Brogaard-Clausen and Hargreaves, 2017; Brogaard-Clausen and Robson, 2019). When these two studies were combined, this resulted in five remaining studies to be reviewed. This process is outlined in Figure 2.3 below. Details of excluded studies can be found in Appendix B.

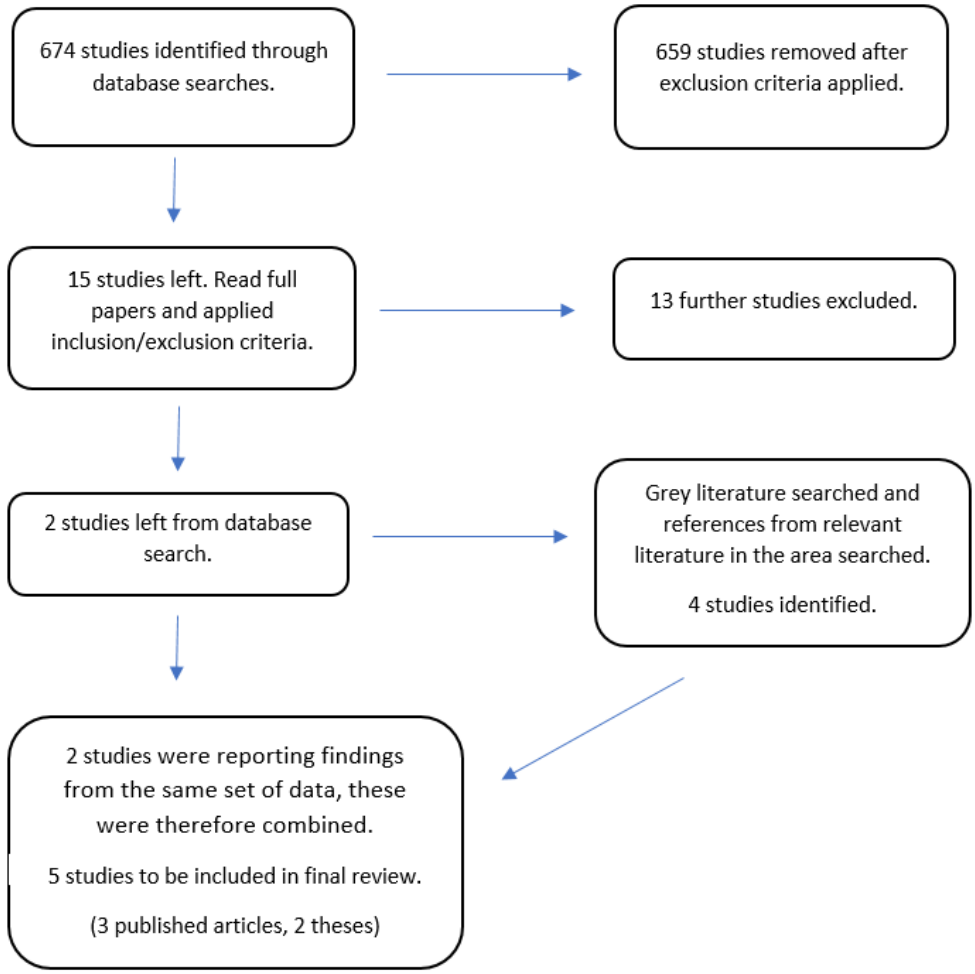


Figure 2.3: Study selection flow diagram for current Qualitative Research Synthesis

2.6.1. Included studies summary

A total of five studies met the inclusion criteria for this review. An overview of the characteristics of the included studies is presented below.

2.6.1.1 Setting and sample

All the studies included sought to gather the views of EY practitioners (including EY teachers and early childhood professionals), (Bertagno, 2016; Aubrey and Ward, 2013; Robson, Brogaard-Clausen and Hargreaves, 2017; Mooney, Boddy, Statham and Warwick, 2008; Roberts, 2007). Studies where parents' views were sought, were parents or carers of children up to five years old (Robson, Brogaard-Clausen and Hargreaves, 2017; Brogaard-Clausen and Robson, 2019; Roberts, 2007). In two studies a wider range of professional views were included, these being from the field

of health, research and regional coordinators for the National Healthy Schools Programme (NHSP), (Mooney et al., 2008; Roberts 2007).

2.6.1.2 Topic relevant to current review

All the studies sought to find the factors that promote wellbeing in young children. Two of the studies also explored the barriers that exist in promoting wellbeing (Bertagno, 2016; Aubrey and Ward, 2013).

2.6.1.3 Methodology/Data collection

A range of qualitative research methods were used across the studies. Surveys (both online and in person) were the most frequent use of data collection across the studies. Some studies used surveys alone (Robson, Brogaard-Clausen and Hargreaves, 2017), others used it either as their primary method (Aubrey and Ward, 2013) or as part of a mixed-method design, using interviews and focus groups alongside the survey (Mooney et al., 2008; Roberts, 2007). One study did not use a survey, its sole collection method was semi-structured interviews (Bertagno, 2016).

2.6.1.4 Publication

Three of the included studies were in peer-reviewed journal articles (Aubrey and Ward, 2013; Robson, Brogaard-Clausen and Hargreaves, 2017; Mooney et al., 2008) and the remaining two were found in the grey literature.

2.7. Analysis and Synthesis Procedure

Noblit and Hare (1988) say that it is important to situate the studies within the synthesis, to facilitate the comparison of them so that themes can be formed in that most represent the data within them. One-way Noblit and Hare (1988) suggest that this can be done is through reciprocal translational analysis. This involves the researcher identifying key themes and deciding how to translate them into each other (Major and Savin-Baden, 2010). This approach was deemed the most appropriate for this review as it captures the concepts between studies in a way that helps us to describe the area under consideration. The approach identifies key themes in the studies, then translates these into the context of each other study, it may then distil these translations into higher order interpretations.

It is important with a qualitative research synthesis to have examples of thick quotations/descriptions from the primary data set (Major and Savin-Baden, 2010). There is debate about the richness versus the manageability of the data set. For a synthesis a small number of studies would be recommended, such as two to four (Noblit and Hare, 1988). However, Major and Savin-Baden (2010) suggest six to 10 studies as being optimal for sufficient yet manageable data.

Major and Savin-Baden (2010) also suggest the use of a table to present the summary of information from the studies. This can be seen in Table 2.5 below.

Table 2.5: Summary of included studies in current Qualitative Research Synthesis adapted from Looney (2018).

Author/Year/ Country/Publication	Sample/Setting	Topic (Relevant to review question)	Methodology	Data Collection	Main themes/concepts identified by authors	Quality/rigour
Bertagno (2016) England Thesis	7 Early years practitioners in 4 different pre-school settings.	The contexts and mechanisms which facilitate or hinder the effective promotion of children's emotional wellbeing in pre-school settings, according to the views of early years practitioners.	Grounded Theory	Semi-structured interviews.	• Balancing internal and external factors • Integrating personal and professional aspects • Engaging with parents • Providing containment • Feeling contained • Working as a team • Managing the demands of systems.	Unequivocal
Aubrey and Ward (2013) England Journal article	46 participants (states that majority are Early Years teachers but does not specify exact amount) working in settings attached to	Views of practitioners on early children's Personal, Social and Emotional Development and the strategies they used when difficulties	Mixed Methods Interviews themed using Grounded Theory.	Surveys Individual interviews	• Setting of expectations • Modelling social behaviour • Praise • Awareness of culturally specific factors • Relationships with • parents/carers.	Unequivocal

	primary schools.	were identified.				
Robson, Brogaard-Clausen and Hargreaves (2017) England Journal article Brogaard-Clausen and Robson (2019) England Journal article	155 parent/carers and 285 early childhood professionals	Parents and Practitioners understanding of the term well-being in young children. How parents/carers and practitioners understand young children's friendships for their wellbeing.	Mixed Methods	Online survey	• Importance of fun and laughter • Feeling good about oneself • Feeling listened to • Good family relationships • Time and space to play • Opportunities to express thoughts and feelings • Parents emphasised "love", practitioners emphasised "listening to" • Practitioners cite importance of relationship with parents/carers • Importance of play • Close relationships/friendships	Unequivocal
Mooney, Boddy, Statham and Warwick (2008) England Journal article	26 key informants in the early years and health fields, regional coordinators for the National Healthy Schools	Understand opportunities and difficulties to developing health-promotion work in early years settings.	Multi-methodological design/unclear	Interviews Survey Case study	• Building on Early Years curriculum frameworks • Developing partnerships between health and early years professionals • Engaging parents and practitioners • National and local resourcing to facilitate	Unequivocal

	Programme (NHSP) and Foundation Stage regional advisers, a survey of 145 local Healthy Schools Programme coordinators (75% response rate) and 6 case studies of early years settings.				development of health promoting work in the early years sector.	
Roberts (2007) England Thesis	100 mothers of children up to the age of 5 years old, 9 families (more data not given), practitioners, managers and researchers (number not stated	The development of resilient wellbeing from birth to three	Mixed Methods	Survey Case study Focus groups	• Companionable learning or 'diagogy' • Companionable play • Agency • Belonging and boundaries • Communication • Physical world	Unequivocal

2.7.1. Appraisal of findings

Major and Savin-Baden (2010) suggest using a rating schedule to assess the rigour of findings from a study in a synthesis. The Critical Appraisal Skills Programme for Qualitative Research Checklist (CASP, 2018) was selected for this purpose. The guidance materials for the checklist can be found in Appendix C. Outcomes from the checklist (Appendix D), show ratings on a 0-2 scale which I converted into the rating schedule from Major and Savin-Baden (2010) (Figure 2.4). For example I gave a score of 0 for unsupported, 1 for credible and 2 for unequivocal. The outcomes of applying the checklist can be seen in the final column of Table 2.5.

Unequivocal	Findings supported with clear and compelling evidence
Credible	Findings that are plausible given the weight of evidence
Unsupported	Findings that are suggested but not supported by data

Figure 2.4: Rating schedule to assess for rigour of study findings. Adapted from Major and Savin-Baden (2010)

2.7.2. Analyse

This stage of analysis provides more than an overview of themes that emerge from a study. It analyses relationships between the studies and is about listing and organising the themes to relate them to one another (Schofield, 1990).

The first stage is to develop first order themes and codes, based on data extracts and quotations from studies. Major & Savin-Baden (2010) advise using basic qualitative coding to develop categories out of concepts and themes that are evident in the data. Once codes are identified, they are examined together to locate themes across the studies. It is also important to keep themes that only occur once. The first order themes for this synthesis based on data extracts and quotations can be seen in Appendix E.

2.7.3. Synthesis

This is a process of combining themes and categories across the studies to create a new perspective. These are known as second order themes and can be seen in Appendix E.

2.7.4. Second order themes

The second order themes will be explored further now.

2.7.4.1 Relationships and Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED)

Originally these were two separate themes, but it became apparent through further thought that they are two intertwined themes, neither can exist without the other. This theme was the most prominent throughout all the included studies and their findings. There were several elements to this theme, including teacher-parent and teacher-child relationships, friendships in young children and the PSED elements that underpin these.

2.7.4.1.1 Teacher-child relationships

Two of the studies emphasised the key person approach to developing a child's wellbeing (Robson, Brogaard-Clausen and Hargreaves, 2017; Bertagno, 2016). This can help a child's wellbeing by providing emotional containment and helping meet their individual needs (Bertagno, 2016). Underpinning these relationships is the notion of attachment (Robson, Brogaard-Clausen and Hargreaves, 2017) and talk of a companionable relationship, where an adult's relationship with a young child builds over time (Roberts, 2007).

Both EY practitioners and parents value the relationship between the practitioners and children as a way of promoting the child's wellbeing. Interestingly there is a difference between how parents and EY practitioners talk about this relationship. For practitioners they see the importance of the child "being listened" to, whereas the parents talk about this in terms of "being loved" and "feeling loved" (Robson, Brogaard-Clausen and Hargreaves, 2017). It appears from the findings that both groups mean the same by this but use different terminology to describe it.

2.7.4.1.2 Teacher-parent relationships

Most of the studies talk explicitly about the importance of engaging parents to promote the child's wellbeing (Mooney et al, 2008; Bertagno, 2016; Robson, Brogaard-Clausen and Hargreaves, 2017). Ways to increase parental engagement include allowing this relationship to develop over time, using strategies such as leaflets, questionnaires, taster sessions and one-off events (Mooney et al., 2008). It can also include home visits and support with pre-school transitions (Bertagno, 2016).

2.7.4.1.3. Friendships

One of the studies talks about the importance of friendships both in terms of having friends and having different circles of friends (Robson, Brogaard-Clausen and Hargreaves, 2017). In this study friendships were valued more by practitioners than parents as a way to promote child wellbeing. This is perhaps because parents value aspects such as play more highly (Robson, Brogaard-Clausen and Hargreaves, 2017) without realising how friendships are linked to this. Other studies noted social skills and communication as important for wellbeing, (Aubrey and Ward, 2013; Mooney et al., 2008; Roberts, 2007) these are skills that underpin friendships forming (Brogaard-Clausen & Robson, 2019). Aubrey and Ward (2013) noted that more able children can be used to model socially appropriate behaviour including turn taking and negotiation. Friendship skills can be taught through sharing games, circle time, modelling and teaching consistent expectations (Aubrey and Ward, 2013).

2.7.4.1.4 Working as part of a team

The studies discussed the importance of working as a team (Bertagno, 2016) as well as working collaboratively with other professionals, including EPs (Mooney et al., 2008; Bertagno, 2016). Within their own EY setting, professionals view support from management and working as a team and sharing concerns with colleagues can support their own wellbeing too (Bertagno, 2016).

2.7.4.2 Structures and systems

This theme covers the wide range of factors that facilitate a child's wellbeing including the structures, systems and cultural factors that form part of the learning environment.

2.7.4.2.1 Structures

Wellbeing was thought to be most promoted where staff had a good understanding of the importance of childhood (Robson, Brogaard-Clausen and Hargreaves, 2017) and held responsibility in their role for children's wellbeing (Bertagno, 2016). This can be enhanced by opportunities for further staff training to support both regionally and nationally (Mooney et al., 2008; Bertagno, 2016).

The importance of having the time (Mooney et al., 2008; Bertagno, 2016), resources (Mooney et al., 2008) and funding (Robson, Brogaard-Clausen and Hargreaves, 2017; Mooney et al, 2008) are also seen as crucial aspects in promoting children's wellbeing.

Resources can include suitable outside space for children to access physical activity as this is linked to children having a sense of agency as their motor control improves (Roberts, 2007).

2.7.4.2.2 Systems

A couple of the studies quoted that is was important to have a curriculum underpinning their work which allowed them to suitably promote a child's wellbeing rather than it being a pinned-on afterthought (Mooney et al., 2008; Bertagno, 2016); that is it should be a whole setting approach and be part of the ethos (Mooney at al., 2008; Bertagno, 2016). For example, the PSED part of the Development Matters document (Early Education, 2012) can be used by EY practitioners to assess developmental norms in this area and plan interventions accordingly (Bertagno, 2016). It was felt that all staff should have a shared responsibility for promoting wellbeing (Mooney et al, 2008).

The importance of children having boundaries, (Robson, Brogaard-Clausen and Hargreaves, 2017; Bertagno, 2016; Roberts, 2007) knowing what is expected of them (Aubrey and Ward, 2013; Bertagno, 2016) and overall consistency underpinned by a whole setting approach (Robson, Brogaard-Clausen and Hargreaves, 2017, Mooney et al., 2008; Bertagno, 2016) was felt to be invaluable when promoting wellbeing. Promotion of praise was also viewed as a positive way to promote wellbeing (Aubrey and Ward, 2013).

2.7.4.2.3 Cultural factors

Three of the studies noted the impact a child's religion and culture can have on their wellbeing and presentation of this (Robson, Brogaard-Clausen and Hargreaves, 2017; Aubrey and Ward, 2013; Mooney et al., 2008). Important considerations for EY practitioners were to respect both the child's and their parents' cultural background (Mooney at al., 2008). This is also hinted at in a study that noted the importance of adapting practice to support the individual child's needs (Bertagno, 2016).

2.7.4.3 A unique child

This theme reflects the importance of the individual child and notions such as feeling listened to and have a sense of agency.

2.7.4.3.1 Listening

This includes listening to children (Robson, Brogaard-Clausen and Hargreaves, 2017; Bertagno, 2016) and “getting down to the child’s level.” There should also be opportunities for shared dialogue between the adult and the child to help children understand both rewards and sanctions and the necessary reflection space for this to occur (Mooney et al., 2008).

2.7.4.3.2 Agency

This is about the children being able to make choices and decisions to have an impact on their world. Children should have a voice and be consulted and involved in decision making as well as being respected (Robson, Brogaard-Clausen and Hargreaves, 2017). Agency can be developed in different ways, one way is through free-flow play and the choices this gives to children (Roberts, 2007).

2.7.5 Interpreting findings

This stage involves seeking revelations, developing third order interpretations and allowing movement. The interpretations relating to this review are contained with Appendix E.

An illustration of the overarching themes, sub-themes and third order interpretations from this Qualitative Research Synthesis can be seen in Figure 2.5.

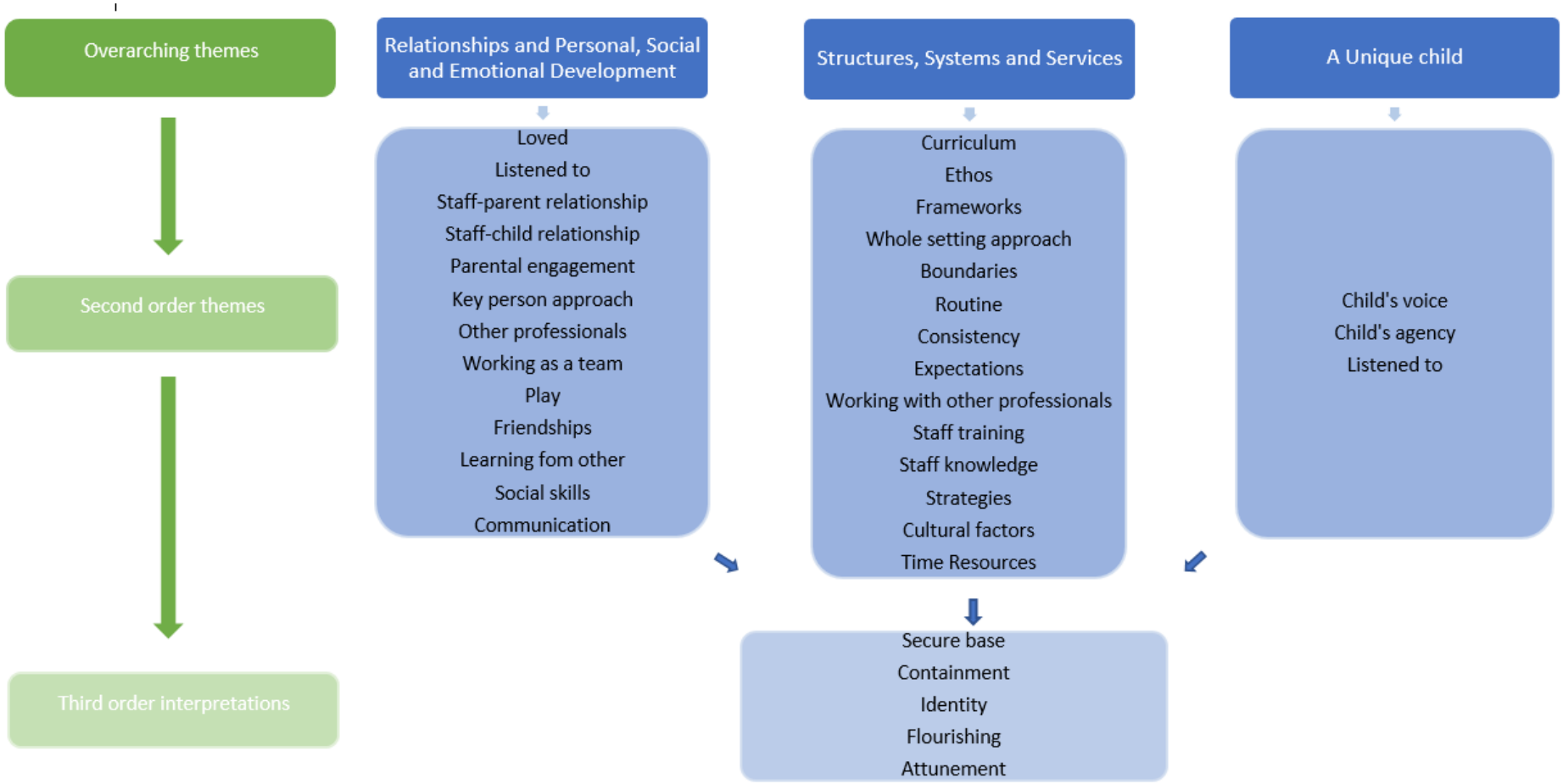


Figure 2.5: Themes from Qualitative Research Synthesis

2.7.6. Summary

Relationships and PSED was the most widely cited facilitator of wellbeing for children aged 0-5 years old in included studies. There is a network of relationships involved in a child's wellbeing, ranging from their relationships with others to the adults around them and how they relate to others. The systems and structures underpin how the EY settings are run and therefore can impact on the relationships that occur within these complex systems, from the child to the wider community. The unique child is at the heart of this system and it is therefore important that settings have strategies in place to ensure they listen to young children and in doing so give them a sense of agency.

2.7.7. Links to theory

Similar to other qualitative research syntheses, it was important to relate the findings back to existing theory and the insights it has to offer, which is a form of conceptual framing (Major and Savin-Baden, 2010).

For young children it is important that they have a safe base and this links with attachment theory and the work of Bowlby (Geddes, 2006). This is especially important for young children who are separated from their caregivers daily in that they have an additional safe base in the form of a key person in their EY setting. This in turn will allow them to have the safe base from which they will feel comfortable to explore their surroundings (Geddes, 2006).

Another interpretation that can be taken from the current synthesis is the importance of children being listened to. This is reflective within a socio-constructivist model and the work of Vygotsky (Learning and Teaching Scotland, 2019). The Reggio Emilio approach to early child education (ECE) is influenced by Vygotsky. This approach would consider that a child has the right 'to realise and expand their potential', and that a child who 'listens, is listened to, a child with an enormous need to love and to be loved, a child who is valued….' (Spratt, 2015).

Lastly, Bronfenbrenner's social ecological model depicts how a child's interactions with the environment around them influences how they grow and develop (Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 2006). The synthesis demonstrates the importance of the systems and structures around the child as these can have a profound influence on their development and overall wellbeing.

2.8. Plausibility

It can be a challenge to ensure that studies in a qualitative research synthesis have plausible findings. When looking at ways to assess the validity of qualitative research, Lincoln and Guba's (1985) notions of credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability can be utilised. However, a qualitative synthesis is different to qualitative research and therefore caution must be used when applying this idea to a synthesis. Major and Savin-Baden (2010) offer a different set of strategies which can be used to assess a synthesis for trustworthiness and validity.

These can be seen in Table 2.6 which has been adapted from Looney (2018).

Table 2.6: Applications of strategies to establish trustworthiness

Strategy	**Application in current synthesis**
Conceptual framing	The synthesis was interpreted in relation to existing theory.
Dense description of context	This is provided for each study.
Dense description of findings	This is provided in Appendix E
Dense description of methods	This is provided for each study.
Experience over time	This review was not subject to a time limit, therefore was longitudinal in nature.
Researcher positionality statement	Utilisation of research diary.

2.8.1 Limitations of research synthesis

As with any form of individual research, care must be taken to interpret the findings from this synthesis as one reviewer took part in its creation and therefore triangulation of viewpoints was not possible. Although the number of studies included is in line with Major and Savin-Baden's (2010) guidance for an effective review, it remains a relatively small number of studies and therefore some may argue it is not possible to generate sufficient interpretation from this. Lastly, although I have attempted to be reflexive regarding my views, I will still be guided by my own biases and views throughout the synthesis.

2.9 Rationale for the current study

2.9.1 Summary of the current literature

The literature review explored wellbeing and more specifically the promotion of wellbeing in young children, ranging from psychological theories to current government policies and initiatives. Two key areas which were explored were attachment and parental engagement, both of which were also noted in the findings in the systematic literature review.

The systematic literature review for the current study was limited to five papers (only three of which were peer reviewed). Although each of the included papers did focus at least in part on the facilitative factors that promote wellbeing, this was not the overall aim for any of the papers. The small number of papers included demonstrates that this is an under researched area within the UK and highlights the unique contribution that this research could provide to existing literature.

The findings from the systematic literature review highlight relationships and PSED, structures, systems and services and a unique child as key themes in promoting wellbeing in young children. Interestingly although relationships was found to be a facilitator for promoting wellbeing, it can also be a barrier. For example, a lack of parental engagement with schools has been detrimental to supporting children's emotional needs (Conelly et al., 2008). This insight helped guide the current study by utilising the role of the EP with their psychological skills and knowledge to aid collaboration between educational settings and parents to enhance parental engagement.

2.9.2. Objectives of the study

The overarching objective of this study is to have a transformative impact in the setting through undertaking an AI. Specifically, the research sought to explore the facilitative factors that promote children's wellbeing within an Early EY setting.

Through undertaking AI the researcher sought in particular to engage parents; gathering their views and supporting collaboration between EY practitioners and parents in order to promote pupil wellbeing.

Whilst there are an increasing number of AI studies in education being published (Bushe, 2010; Lewis, 2015; Waters & White, 2015), to my knowledge this methodology has not previously been utilised to explore this area. Therefore, a unique contribution of the current study is in its use of an AI to explore the factors that facilitate wellbeing in an EY setting as viewed by EY practitioners and parents.

2.9.3. Research Questions

Thus, the research questions for the current study are:

1. What facilitative factors are perceived to promote wellbeing in children within an Early Years Foundation Stage setting in a school, according to the views of EY practitioners and parents?
2. Has the process of AI had a transformative impact on the Early Years Foundation Stage setting?

Chapter 3 Methodology

3.1 Introduction to Methodology

In this chapter I will give an overview and a rationale for the chosen methodology to address the current research's aims and questions. Details about the current study's epistemology, methodology, design and analysis will be shared. The use of Appreciative Inquiry will be explained. Following this, details will be given about the implementation of the AI and analysis procedures within the current research. The chapter concludes with an evaluation of the research quality, a critique of the methodology and a summary of the current methodology.

3.2 Methodological orientation

3.2.1 Overview

This research aims to discover the facilitative factors as identified by EY practitioners and parents that promote wellbeing in young children. The research will also explore how these facilitative factors can be developed within the current setting to further promote young children's wellbeing. The epistemological and ontological orientation of the research will now be considered to demonstrate the suitability of the chosen methodology for the current research aims.

3.2.2 Paradigms of research

Lincoln, Lynham and Guba (2011) suggested that in social sciences research an individual's paradigm is directed by the following assumptions:

- Ontology, the nature of reality
- Epistemology explores the origin, nature and limits of human knowledge and their relationship to the knower
- Methodology, how to attain knowledge and understanding.

Each paradigm determines the epistemological and methodological position of the research and so a researcher's paradigm guides the choices they make when researching (Mertens, 2015). Mertens (2015) describes four paradigms for informing educational and psychological research. These are post-positivist, pragmatic, constructivist and transformative. Mertens (2015) description of these paradigms will be explained below.

3.2.2.1 Post-Positivism

Positivism employs the use of the scientific method for experimentation and measurement of the observable, discovering general laws to describe constant relationships between variables (Mertens, 2015). Whilst empirical, objective data has its appeal, it has its limits when applied to the understanding of human behaviour. Within this paradigm, quantitative approaches are the dominant choice of methodology (Mertens, 2015).

3.2.2.2 Pragmatism

The pragmatic paradigm states that there is a single reality and that individuals each have their own unique interpretations of this (Mertens, 2015). There is an emphasis in this paradigm on the importance of common sense and practical thinking. The relationships within this research paradigm are determined by what the researcher sees as appropriate to the study. Pragmatism has a philosophical framework which aligns with mixed methods research and the method should be decided by the purpose of the research.

3.2.2.3 Constructivism

The principal belief in this paradigm is that reality is socially constructed. For example, disability is a socially constructed concept that can mean different things to different people (Mertens, 2015). This paradigm emphasises that research is a product of the values of the researcher and cannot be independent of this. Qualitative methodology dominates this paradigm, such as interviews and observations (Robson & McCartan, 2016).

3.2.2.4 Transformative

The constructivist paradigm has been criticised as needing to locate research within a social justice agenda. The transformative paradigm grew as a need to address limitations of traditional research paradigms, where groups have been subject to oppression and discrimination. Mertens (2015) had labelled this paradigm as ‘emancipatory’ in a previous edition of her book on research in education and psychology. However, she changed it to the transformative paradigm in subsequent

versions as she felt that the potential for change is with the community working alongside the researcher to achieve the goal of social transformation (Mertens, 2015). This paradigm places importance on the lives and experiences of groups that traditionally have been marginalized (e.g. minority groups). The transformative paradigm emerged out of research conducted amongst other paradigms which did not represent or misrepresented the lives of those who experience oppression.

> "Transformative researchers consciously and explicitly position themselves side by side with the less powerful in a joint effort to bring about social transformation" (Mertens, 2015, p.21).

There are four characteristics of the transformative paradigm that distinguish it from both the postpositivist and constructivist paradigms (Mertens, 2015):

1. It places central importance on the lives and experiences of the diverse groups that have been marginalized.
2. It analyses how and why inequities are reflected in asymmetric power relationships.
3. It examines how results of social inquiry are linked to political and social action.
4. It uses a transformative theory to develop the program theory, this is a set of beliefs about the way a program works or why a problem occurs.

3.2.3 Epistemology within the current study

This research is exploring the views of EY practitioners and parents who both have the potential to promote wellbeing in young children. The research seeks to discover the multiple, socially constructed realities of these groups from their own perspectives. Therefore a constructivist paradigm might be thought of as being the closest aligned paradigm to this research. However, the aims of this research are to promote positive systemic change for two groups who can be seen as marginalised and powerless by engaging them as active collaborators in the process.
Creswell, Plano Clark, Gutmann & Hanson (2003) explain that research conducted from a participatory position, is collaborative in nature. The advocacy position based on the principles of participatory research is compatible with the aims of this research. Therefore the transformative paradigm is viewed here as being the most suitable for this research.

3.2.4 Ontology

The transformative paradigm is similar to the constructivist paradigm in that they both recognise the multiple versions of reality. However, the transformative paradigm emphasises the importance of social, political, cultural, economic, ethnic, gender and disability lenses in constructions of reality, to avoid perpetuating oppressive social structures and policies (Mertens, 2015).

3.2.5 Methodology within the transformative paradigm

Mertens (2015) identifies three characteristics of the transformative paradigm which have methodological and ethical implications:

1. Traditionally silenced voices must be heard in the research process, formation of findings and recommendations.
2. Equitable resources must be ensured during the planning, implementation and reporting of research.
3. The results should be linked to social action, meaning the least powerful should be central to plans for action to empower them to change their lives.

Schneider et al. (2004) explained that transformative methodology focuses on methods that allow for personal and systemic transformation, as well as by using a cyclical model in the research process.

3.3 Current Research Design

3.3.1 Action Research

Lewin, a prominent social psychologist, is regarded as the founding father of organizational development, through his creation of ‘planned change’ (Burnes, 2012). An early model of change by Lewin (1951) described successful change as having a three-stage process:

1) Unfreezing - overcoming inertia; dismantling the existing "mind set"; by passing defence mechanisms.

2) Change occurs - a period of confusion and transition. We are aware that the old ways are being challenged but we do not have a clear picture as to what we are replacing them with yet.

3) Freezing - new mindset is crystallizing and comfort level are returning to previous levels.

Lewin believed that the most effective means for bringing about change in individuals is through group encounters (Lewin, 1946). He developed the term group dynamics: the way that groups and individuals act and react to changing circumstances and was interested in the relationship of psychological research to group dynamics (Lewin, 1946). This led onto Action Research and the cycle of plan, act, observe and reflect. Lewin (1946), described 'action research as a spiral of steps, each of which is composed of a circle of planning, action and fact-finding about the result of action (Lewin, 1946, p. 34-35)'

Action research (AR) involves learning in and through action and reflection (Reason and Bradbury, 2008). Lewin's work took place mostly in industrial and organisational contexts, but its relevance for use in educational contexts was soon realised.

3.3.2 Appreciative Inquiry

AI is a strengths-based approach to organisational change and focuses on finding positives rather than deficits, it was developed by Cooperrider and Srivastva (1987). AI can be viewed as a type of AR, with solution focused underpinnings (Brooks, 2015). AI has 4 phases:

1. Discovery
2. Dream
3. Design
4. Destiny

A 5th phase of 'Define' acts as a pre-phase to decide the topic for the AI (Brooks, 2015). This is because AI requires an affirmative topic before the inquiry can begin. The affirmative topic here is promoting wellbeing in young children. The Appreciative Inquiry cycle can be seen in Figure 3.1.

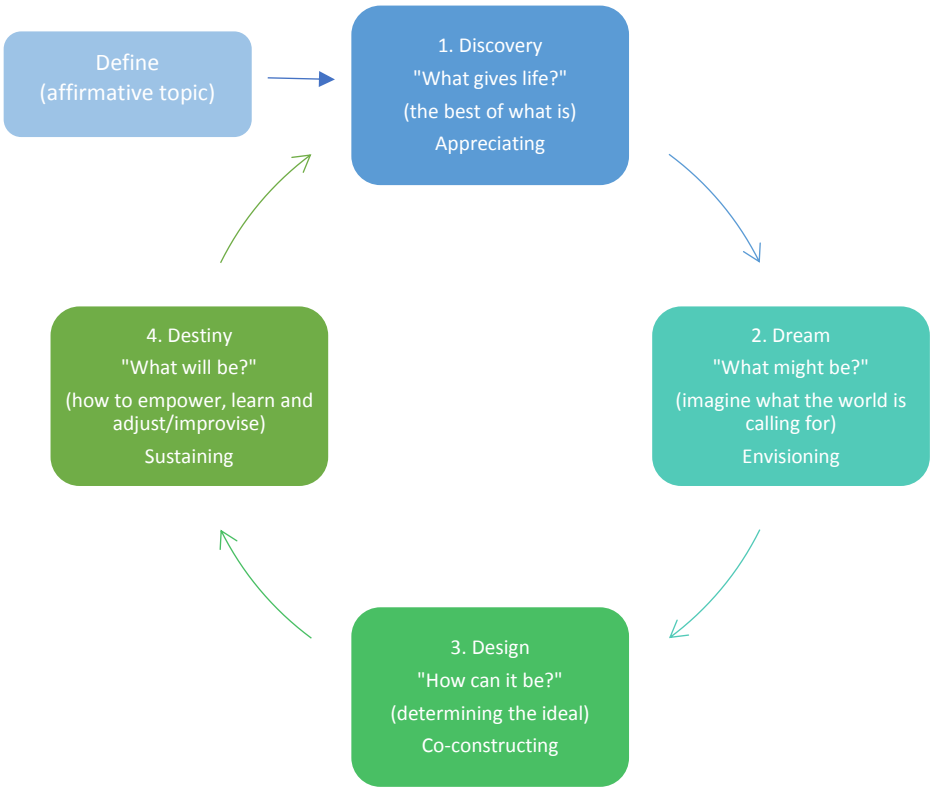


Figure 3.1: Appreciative Inquiry "4-D" Cycle (adapted from Pahil, 2019).

3.3.3 Phases of Appreciative Inquiry

The 'Discovery' phase seeks to identify the 'best of what is'. Questions asked in this phase are unconditionally positive and seek to inquire deeply into where the affirmative topic choice can help move the organisation in the direction it wants to go. The 'positive core' is identified in the 'Discovery' phase and is woven throughout. This is the idea that every system has a hidden 'positive core' or strengths, which when revealed, provides energy for organisational transformation (Ludema and Fry, 2008).

The 'Dream' phase expands people's sense of what is possible and is grounded in the organisation's history of strengths. It is generative as this phase seeks to expand the organisations potential (Cooperrider, Whitney and Stavros, 2008).

The 'Design' phase involves creating 'provocative propositions', these are statements that are written in the present tense as if they are already happening. These statements should be an integration of the ideals from the Discovery and Dream phases and in turn support the organisation to move towards positive action (Cooperrider, Whitney and Stavros, 2008).

The ‘Destiny’ phase sees the organisation delivering their visions and is an ongoing process within the organisation of individuals carrying out the actions which bring them to their organisational dream. This phase brings the organisation back full circle to the ‘Discovery’ phase.

3.3.3.1 Principles of AI

Cooperrider and Whitney (2001) proposed a set of principles of AI which help move the basis of AI from theory to practice. The principles state that it is the positive image that results in the positive actions and the organisation must focus on the positive to lead an inquiry. The five principles are as follows:

- the constructionist principle
- the principle of simultaneity
- the poetic principle
- the anticipatory principle
- the positive principle.

3.3.3.1.1 The constructionist principle

This principles states that social knowledge and organisational destiny are interwoven. AI theorists state that reality is socially constructed through the language that we use (Cooperrider and Srivastva, 1987). Constructionism emphasises the communal basis of knowledge, and the questions it poses helps us to increase the generative capacity of knowledge (Cooperrider and Whitney, 2005, p.50). A deficit-based vocabulary can inhibit the potential for growth. The emotional meaning of words can affect how people think and act (Cooperrider, Whitney and Stavros, 2008). This can be explained referring to the Pygmalion effect which helps us to understand the relationship between the positive image and positive action dynamic (Cooperrider, Whitney and Stavros, 2008).

3.3.3.1.2 The principle of simultaneity

Unlike other types of AR, AI posits that inquiry and change are not separate, therefore inquiry is intervention. “The seeds of change are the things people think and talk about, the things people discover and learn, and the things that inform dialogue and inspire images of the future. They are implicit in the very first questions asked” (Cooperrider and Whitney, 2008, p.50).

3.3.3.1.3 The poetic principle

It is useful for this principle to see organisations as an “open book”, an organisations story is constantly being co-authored by members of the organisation in the language they use (Cooperrider and Whitney, 2008).

3.3.3.1.4 The anticipatory principle

This principle states that our actions today are guided by our image of the future (Cooperrider and Whitney, 2005). The anticipatory principle can be thought of in relation to the possibility-centric versus a problem-centric approach to organisational change (Bushe, 2011). When looking at an organisation through a problem-centric process, it assumes that there are problems in the system which need fixing. Whereas the anticipatory principle utilises a possibility-centric process and focuses on positive possibilities which is more conducive for enabling change to occur (Bushe, 2011).

3.3.3.1.5 The positive principle

The positive principle states that “momentum for change requires large amounts of positive affect and social bonding, attitudes such as hope, inspiration and the sheer joy of creating with one another” (Cooperrider, Whitney and Stavros, 2008, p.10). Organisations can be viewed as human constructions which are responsive to positive thought and knowledge. Therefore, the more positive the questions are to guide the organisation through change, the longer lasting and effective the change will be (Cooperrider, Whitney and Stavros, 2008).

3.3.4 Other considered approaches

Grounded theory is a methodology that moves from data to theory so that new theories can emerge on a topic. It has origins in positivist epistemology but more recently versions have developed which are more congruent with social constructionism (Charmaz, 2006). Bertagno (2016) used grounded theory in their doctoral thesis to explore both the facilitators and barriers to promoting young children’s wellbeing. Although Grounded Theory has been used to explore the topic related to this research, I did not feel it aligned with my epistemological stance nor did it meet the aims of this research which was to focus on exploring facilitative factors, not barriers. AI also grew as method to make grounded theory more generative (Cooperrider, 1986), the importance of generativity will be explored in Section 5.3.1.

Action Research was also considered as AI is a form of Action Research. However, AR tends to focus on a problem, whereas AI focuses on what is working in the system and how this can be further developed. Cooperrider and Srivastva (1987) expand on this by saying that not only does traditional AR assume that there is a problem to solve in an organisation, but that the researcher can treat the people in the organisation as not only having problems, but that the people themselves are problems to be solved. Cooperrider and Srivastva (1987) feel this negative stance from the outset can reduce the overall potential for creating change and that instead of pursuing a problem to be solved, an organisation is a mystery to be embraced (Cooperrider and Whitney, 2005). AR is therefore incongruent with my daily practice as a TEP, whereby I am drawn to utilising positive psychology (See Section 3.7.3).

3.3.5 Rationale for AI in current research study

AI was chosen for several reasons which were relevant to the aims and purpose of this current research.

Schools can often be viewed as hierarchical systems where support staff and those who do not hold positions within the senior management team are not involved within the decision-making process. AI aims to empower everyone as co-contributors within their situation (Nicholson and Barnes, 2013) and this is important as a cross-section of staff took part in this research.

It was felt that AI would offer a positive basis for parents and EY practitioners to work collaboratively together. As there are known barriers to parental engagement in schools (Bertagno, 2016), this offered parents a safe way to engage with school staff and give an opportunity for their voices to be heard in a meaningful and constructive way.

Senge (1996) envisages learning organisations as those where “people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free and where people are continually learning how to learn together” (Senge, 1996, p.2). His learning organisational model is comprised of five components: personal mastery, mental models, building shared vision and team learning. The fifth component is systems thinking and runs through all parts of the model.

The component of team learning “is a process of aligning and developing the capacities of a team to create the results its members truly desire” (Senge, 1990, p.236). Team learning involves group interaction processes such as dialogue and discussion to create new shared learning and knowledge. When teams learn they become a microcosm for learning throughout the organisation. Skills that are learnt in that team can transfer to other teams and it can set the tone for further learning in the wider organisation (Senge, 1990). This research was set in an EY setting and therefore it was hoped that any team learning that occurred could support the wider school.

Lastly, “Inquiry is intervention” is a phrase often associated with AI (Cooperrider and Whitney, 2005) and is line with the aims of this research which are to promote positive change.

3.3.6 Use of Appreciative Inquiry in current study

This research proposes to use AI utilising qualitative methods. This design involves the implementation of two AIs in tandem and an extension of the design phase (adapted from Pahil, 2019).

In line with guidance by McNiff (2013), this research will also be written in the first person, using ‘I’ rather than ‘the researcher’. This is essential for research which is interpretative and where readers need to know who you are as well as your stance both metaphorically and literally (McNiff, 2016).

3.3.7 Current research

This research acknowledges and seeks to discover the multiple, socially constructed realities of both EY practitioners and parents of children who attend the setting from their own perspectives. AI is progressive in nature and temporal in design owing to its transformative aims (Cozens, 2014). AI was chosen as it is congruent with advocacy epistemology and emancipatory, transformative aims of the study.

3.3.8 Research Participants and Setting

3.3.8.1 Sampling/participants

Purposive sampling was used to identify participants for the current research and the inclusion criteria and recruitment procedure for this is outlined below.

3.3.8.2 Inclusion criteria

Based on the aims of the research, the research involved EY practitioners and parents of children in the same EY setting. It was important for members of the senior leadership team to be open to engaging in the research. Their participation was important as they are a key stakeholder and the involvement of senior school staff as stakeholders increases the likelihood of the outcomes of the Al being embraced and implemented (Bevington, 2015).

The inclusion criteria for participant selection is outlined in Table 3.2.

Table 3.1: Inclusion Criteria for participant selection in both groups

Participant Group	**Inclusion Criteria**	**Exclusion Criteria**
EY practitioners	Has worked in the EY setting for one year or more.	Has worked in the EY setting for less than one year.
Parents	Parent/carer who identifies as having parental responsibility for a child attending the EY setting.	Not a parent/carer of a child attending the EY setting.

3.3.8.3 Participant recruitment procedure

Discussion was initially held with the EY teachers' team in my placement LA to identify a potential EY setting for this research. Alongside this I contacted a school where I carry out traded work, to see if they would be interested in taking part. The school is familiar with the research process and has previously undertaken research projects of varying topics. I contacted the Headteacher at the school via email to explain the proposed research approach and objectives (Appendix F). The Headteacher emailed

an expression of interest in the research, following which a meeting was held at the school between myself and the Headteacher to discuss the research in more detail, including research aims, proposed procedure and participant inclusion criteria. Following agreement by the Headteacher for her school to participate in the research, it was arranged that I would attend a staff meeting in the following school term to meet with EY staff, outline the research and provide them with information sheets and consent forms (Appendix R). This also allowed me to answer any questions that potential participants had about the research.

It was not possible to recruit all staff from the EYFS, so a cross-section of staff was utilised.

Parents of children who attend the setting were also selected via purposive sampling. The inclusion criteria for parents taking part is that they have parental responsibility for at least one child attending the EY setting. To recruit parents, I created a flyer which was sent out to all parents of children in the EYFS (Appendix G). A copy of the GDPR: Research participant privacy notice was also given to all participants (Appendix H).

3.3.9 Context in Action Research

3.3.9.1 Research Setting Context

When carrying out AR, McNiff (2013) highlights that it is important for the researcher to be aware of social, economic political and historical contexts in which the research occurs. The current research took place in an EY setting within a two-form mainstream school located within the West Midlands of England.

The school's most recent Ofsted report outlines that the school population is larger than most primary schools and has a higher than national average level of students with English as an Additional Language and disadvantaged children (as measured through Pupil Premium).

The school building was rebuilt several years ago. Since the opening of the new school building, there has been a large turnover of staff including in senior management and a new Headteacher. It became apparent after an initial meeting between me and the Headteacher that the school had been through a turbulent few years, with parents opting to move their child to another school. Therefore, engagement of parents over this period has been difficult for the school to rebuild but this is improving. This could

have contributed to the higher than average number of pupils who join and leave the school during the school term time as reported in the most recent Ofsted report and has led to a somewhat transitory population in the school in previous years.

3.3.9.2 Participant Details

3.3.9.2.1 EY practitioners

A total of six EY practitioners participated in this research.

Initially there were five EY practitioners in the 'Discovery' phase, then another member of staff joined for the following sessions of 'Dream' and 'Design'. The SENCo and one EY practitioner went on to participate in the 'Integrated Design' phase and two EY practitioners took part in the 'Beginning-Destiny phase'. Staff held various roles within the setting, including EY Centre manager, teaching assistant and SENCo. This is in line with guidance by Cooperrider, Whitney and Stavros (2008) which states that participants should represent a microcosm of the organisation, allowing for a range of viewpoints to be heard.

3.3.9.2.2 Parent participants

Four parents took part in this research, all of whom were parents of students attending the EY setting.

Two of these parents participated in the 'Integrated Design' phase and the same two also took part in the 'Beginning-Destiny' phase.

3.3.9.3 Stakeholder engagement/practical considerations

Approval for this research has been received from the researcher's host Educational Psychology Service (EPS). As this research is being undertaken as part of completion of the Doctorate in Applied Educational Psychology at the University of Nottingham, the university is also seen as a stakeholder in the process.

For this research to be classed as AR, it was important for the school to have representatives that were stakeholders. This makes it more likely that actions from the AI will be implemented (Bevington, 2015). The theory of AI was explained to stakeholders at the onset as they need to understand the theory and principles of AI for it to be effective. The SENCo took part in this research in the EY practitioner group, the SENCo is EY trained and covers lessons in the EYFS at least once a week.

Parental engagement/involvement has been found to be one of the facilitative factors for promoting children's wellbeing in previous research (Bertagno, 2016). Therefore, in this research parents are also seen as key stakeholders.

3.4 Procedure

3.4.1 AI cycle within the current research

The 4-D cycle of AI was utilised in this research. This took the form of a nested design based on previous research by Pahil (2019). The EY practitioners and Parents took part in the Discovery, Dream and Design phases separately. Then a couple of representatives from each group took part in an integrated final design and 'Beginning-Destiny' phase. This process is illustrated in Figure 3.2.

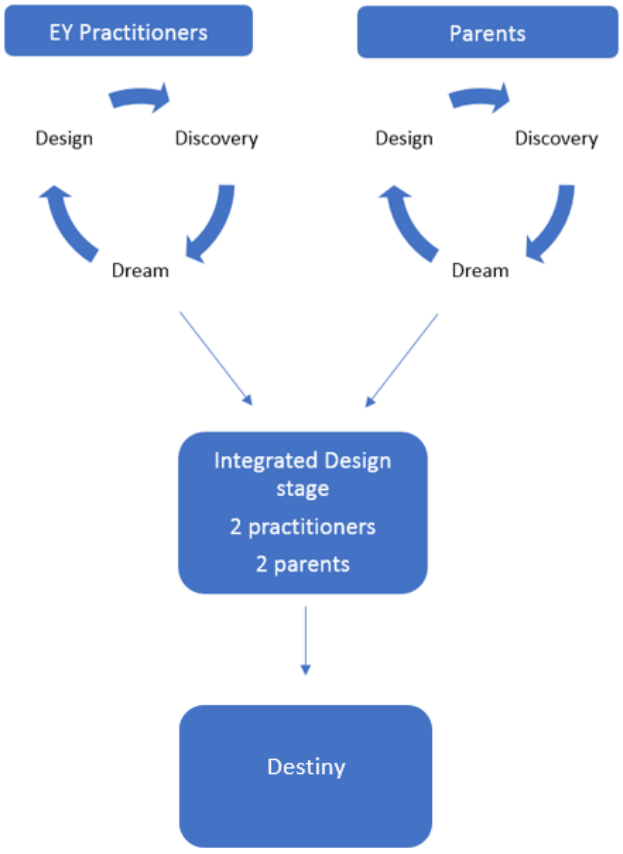


Figure 3.2: AI cycle used in this research

Each phase was facilitated by me, with an EP colleague present to note take participants responses (the EP colleague was from my placement EP service and had experience in delivering AI).

A description of each AI phase (timelines, content and the corresponding activity) can be seen in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2: Phase of Appreciative Inquiry and related research activity

Phase of AI	***Participants and activity***
Discovery **(including time for reflection points at end of session)**	**Early years practitioners** A set of questions to explore how staff view best practices of promoting wellbeing in the EYFS in a focus group.
	Parents A set of questions to explore how parents view best practices of promoting wellbeing in the EYFS in a focus group.
Dream **(including time for reflection points at end of session)**	**Early years practitioners** Appreciative group task visualising the "ideal" and "what could be".
	Parents Appreciative group task visualising the "ideal" and "what could be".
Design **(including time for reflection points at end of session)**	**Early years practitioners** Appreciative group task considering the steps to move towards the dream.
	Parents Appreciative group task considering the steps to move towards the dream.
Integrated Design Phase **(including time for reflection points at end of session)**	**2 Early years practitioners And 2 Parents** Collaborative group discussion considering the steps to move towards the dream. Selecting initial actions to carry out.
Beginning-Destiny Phase	**Volunteers from Early years practitioners and Parent group (focus group. Senior leadership participant (semi-structured interview)** Process Evaluation, exploring whether the AI has been transformative in the EYFS.
Destiny (post-research)	**Early years practitioners** Implementing action plan.
	Parents Implementing action plan.

An AI summit proposes full delivery of the AI 4-D process over at least a two-day period (Cooperrider, 2012). This was not possible for school staff due to teacher training days already being booked. However, the principles and process of AI could still be applied using a nested design frame (Pahil, 2019).

Full delivery of the cycle for EY practitioners required their participation for three one-hour sessions for the Discovery, Dream and Design phase and an additional one-hour session for the EY practitioner and SENCo who took part in the 'Integrated Design' phase. EY practitioners who took part in the process evaluation focus group were required to attend a further one-hour session. Additionally, the SENCo took part in a semi-structured interview with me for the process evaluation, which was a one-hour session.

The full delivery of the cycle for parent participants took the form of a mini AI summit, requiring a single three-hour session for the Discovery, Dream and Design phase and an additional one-hour session for the parents who took part in the 'Integrated Design' phase. Parent volunteers who took part in the process evaluation phase attended a further one-hour session.

At the end of each AI phase (Discovery, Dream, Design) I asked the participants for their reflections of the AI process, these were written up onto flipchart paper as a way of recording these.

3.4.2 Discovery Phase

The "Discovery" phase took the form of separate focus groups for the EY practitioners and parents with questions focusing on best practices on promoting wellbeing in the EYFS and in doing so help to identify the systems positive core. To ensure both groups felt safe and open to share their views, it was deemed appropriate to work with the groups separately.

3.4.2.1 Semi-structured interviews

The appreciative semi-structured interviews used in this research are based on guidance from Cooperrider, Whitney and Stavros (2008). This form of interview is the most widely used in small-scale social research because of advantages including freedom to follow up on points made that a structured interview does not allow for

(Thomas, 2016). A copy of the interview guide used for EY practitioners and parents can be seen in Appendix I. To enhance the reliability of the interviews, prior to the 'Discovery' phase they were shared with one EY practitioner and one parent, both of whom were not related to the research school or the research. A couple of words were changed in the questions in response to feedback given.

3.4.2.2 Focus group

A focus group was chosen as it can help bring participants together who share a common feature of their lives, to discuss the topic in question (Thomas, 2016). The researcher's role in a focus group is to facilitate discussion between the participants whilst remaining on the margins of the group (Thomas, 2016). As I facilitated the group discussion, it was deemed useful to audio record or have an observer available to take notes. In this research, an EP colleague of the researcher acted as an 'observer' to the AI sessions and took notes on the information shared by the participants on flip chart paper.

Therefore, a combination of focus groups and semi-structured interview were utilised in the 'Discovery' phase.

3.4.2.3 Data Collection

The staff focus group session took place in a training room after teaching hours. The parent group session took place in the same training room but occurred during a morning slot.

Notes were taken by my colleague throughout both these sessions on flipchart paper. Interview summary sheets (Appendix J), which are suggested in AI guidance to interpret and confirm meanings within interviews were also used to support the process of noting key ideas which emerged (Cooperrider, Whitney and Stavros, 2008). At the end of the session both groups were asked to create posters of their positive core using paper shapes provided (strengths on squares, values on rectangles and wishes on circles).

3.4.2.4 Researcher as facilitator

Carrying out focus groups requires careful and sensitive facilitation and management by the researcher to be aware of the group dynamics and avoid dominance by certain

individuals (Bloor, 2001). To support this there were two facilitators present, both myself and an EP colleague who had both undertaken an AI before. Collaborative ground rules were set with both groups at the beginning of the session and reiterated during subsequent sessions. Both groups highlighted the importance of not necessarily needing to always agree with another's viewpoint but being respectful and open to listening to a differing view.

Cooperrider, Whitney and Stavros' (2008) guidance on carrying out an AI was also followed. This included explaining the strength-based approach to those taking part (see Appendix K for presentation shared with school staff and Appendix L for a handout given to all participants). There were times, particularly during the parent 'Discovery' group where negative information and stories were shared by parents. I managed these occurrences by allowing the participants the space they needed to be able to share their stories and feel heard. If applicable, I reframed their narrative. Therefore, there were narratives that demonstrated a lack of an 'ideal', however these were further explored with the participant and helped to facilitate dialogue during the 'Dream' phase (Cooperrider, Whitney and Stavros, 2008).

3.4.2.5 Conclusion of Discovery Phase

In line with AI guidance, I sought to organise and make sense of the data gathered and identify themes identified by participants.

Information from the summary interview sheets and strengths and values were reflected to participants to ensure they had been heard and interpreted correctly, which is a form of member checking. The staff group were able to identify multiple strengths and values as part of their positive core. However, myself and my colleague felt that they had missed out on some of the rich data they had shared with us. Therefore, following the initial staff 'Discovery' session I read over the flipchart notes and added additional strengths and values to their poster where appropriate. These were checked with staff at the start of the 'Dream' session.

3.4.3 Dream Phase

The 'Dream' phase for both groups began with a recap of information shared within the 'Discovery' phase. This was followed by asking both groups to imagine and envision what might be.

As the EY practitioners initial AI phases occurred on separate occasions, I wrote up information from their summary sheets and presented this back to them on flipchart paper. This can be seen in Figure 3.3.

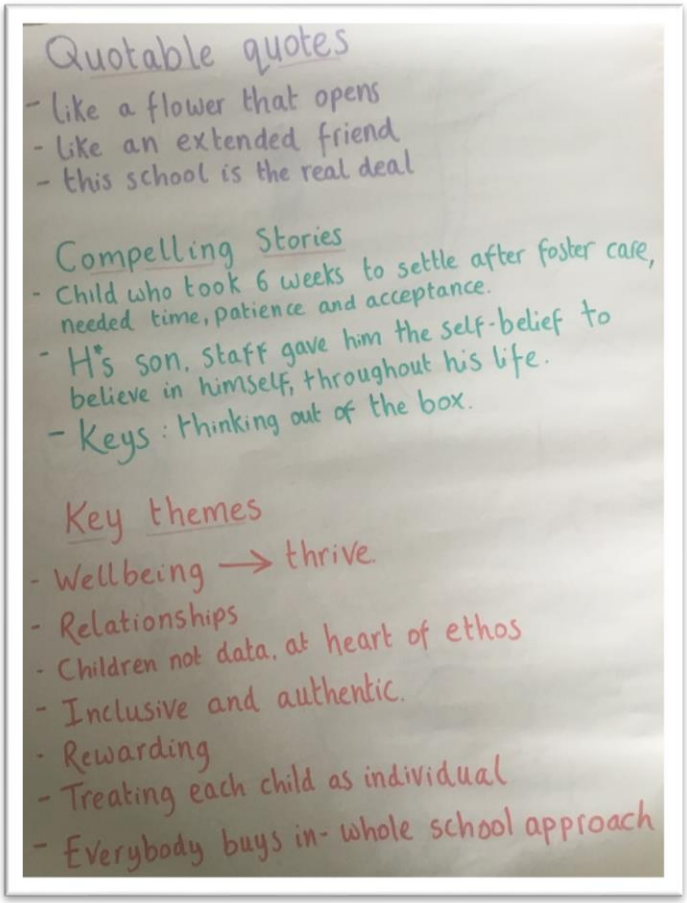


Figure 3.3: Information from EY practitioners summary sheets

3.4.3.1 Miracle question

Initially a miracle question was used - 'If a miracle occurred overnight and we came into tomorrow to find that wellbeing in the school is now exactly as we want it to be, how would we know? What would be different? What would you see? What would you hear? What would staff be doing? What would parents be doing? What would children be doing?' - to stimulate thinking in this phase and to narrow down their wishes. Both groups were then asked to share creatively these ideas on paper, both groups chose to graphic these ideas.

3.4.3.2 Aspiration statement

Both groups of participants were then asked to summarise the key factors into an aspiration statement (Cooperrider, Whitney and Stavros, 2008). To do this, I facilitated

a discussion with both groups about the common themes that appeared in the 'Dream' phase. Both groups then created their aspiration statement based on these themes. The same sentence starter was given to both groups, this was 'By the end of 2020, what we most aspire to is…'

3.4.4 Design Phase

In this phase, both groups were asked to create draft 'provocative propositions'. These are statements that describe the dreams as if they are already happening and working successfully. The statements were created based on guidance by (Cooperrider, Whitney and Stavros, 2008) and needed to be:

- desired, do *you* want it as a desired future?
- affirmative (is it positively framed, about what you want rather than what you don't want);
- stretching (challenge the status quo by expanding the realm of the possible);
- stated in the present tense (as if the proposition was already true and happening at the current time); and
- grounded in real-life examples of best of current practice (remembering the organisation's positive core).

Both groups were asked to feedback their provocative propositions, and these were noted down by the myself and my EP colleague on flipchart paper. I called them "draft" versions as they would finalise them in the 'Integrated Design' phase.

3.4.5 Integrated Design phase

This phase called for two volunteers from the EY practitioners' group and two from the parent group to attend an 'Integrated Design' phase session. The aim of this phase was to stimulate collaborative group discussion between members from both groups with the aim of working on a shared vision of the future together. This phase was felt to be an important addition in this research as previous research has highlighted not only the importance of parental engagement in their child's education, but that school staff can find that lack of parental engagement is a barrier to promoting children's wellbeing (Bertagno, 2016). Therefore, I saw the importance of getting both groups to

work together and have their voices heard in moving ideas forward to their preferred future.

In the 'Integrated Design' phase, a few initial actions alongside the draft action plan were agreed for the provocative propositions that arose from both groups. Due to systemic issues in the school, this highlighted to both groups the need to keep the goals short term and achievable. This is in line with Oynett (2009), who found that enabling a group to envision small steps to success is important as it offsets the risk of a sense of helplessness by participants.

3.4.6 Beginning-Destiny Phase

In this phase volunteers from the EY practitioners and Parent group took part in a focus group and the SENCo (who was the Senior Leadership participant) took part in a semi-structured interview with me. The purpose of this was to carry out a process evaluation, exploring whether the AI has been transformative in the EYFS (more details of this process can be seen in section 3.5.1).

3.5 Procedure of Evaluation of AI in the current research

3.5.1 Process Evaluation

AI has been criticised for the absence of continuous reflection accompanying the generated actions (Dewar, 2011). Therefore, at the 'Beginning-Destiny' phase, a process evaluation took place. A process evaluation was used rather than a product evaluation as AI is a process focused approach. Thus, it would be inappropriate to use a product evaluation which may focus on pre and post measures.

Bushe and Kassam (2005) conducted a meta-analysis into what makes an AI transformational. They classed a case as transformational if there were changes in the identity of a system and quality changes in the state of being in that system. They noted two key differences between those transformation cases and conventional organisational development cases. Firstly the transformational cases focused on changing how people think instead of what they do. Secondly there was a focus on supporting self-organizing change processes that flow from new ideas.

3.5.2 Coding used by Bushe & Kassam (2005)

Bushe & Kassam (2005) used the following codes to examine elements of the AI, these being the five evaluative process dimensions and can be seen in Table 3.3, adapted from Pahil, 2019 and Bushe and Kassam, 2005.

Table 3.3: Process Evaluation for current Appreciative Inquiry

Dimension	**Explanation**
Transformational or not	Does the case show evidence of a qualitative shift in the state of being or identity of the system, usually reflected in patterns or organization emerging after the appreciative inquiry that were clearly different from previous patterns? A case is not transformational when the changes described new processes, procedures, resources, plans, or methods that were applied without changing the basic nature of the system.
New knowledge or new processes	Did the AI lead to the collective creation of new knowledge that served as a new referential base, or was the AI primarily a means to garner consensus around a specific end?
Generative metaphor	These are symbols that hold a meaning that the group members agreed upon, whether that symbol was material, linguistic, or other. To be coded as generative metaphor, the symbol had to be persistent, one that evoked a unique shared meaning held by the system members and that contained within it new lenses and/or new possibilities for action.
Figure or ground (Based in Gestalt Psychology)	If the process surfaced some element of the organization for increased inspection, it was coded as Figure. If the process of inquiry was able to penetrate deep enough to change or create new background assumptions on which all the actions of an organization would be based, it was coded as Ground.
Improvisation or implementation	The AI is coded as an implementation when it focused on an end result that signified a termination to the process. An improvisation had many continuous, sometimes disparate changes that are all linked to a deeper fundamental change in how the organization is perceived. An improvisation led to tangible results that could be considered as side effects of some bigger intangible change, whereas in an implementation, a particular tangible result was the cap on the impact of the intervention.

3.5.3 Data Collection for Process Evaluation

A focus group with both parents and EY Professionals and a semi-structured interview with the SENCo was used to gather qualitative data. The questions for both groups was comprised of the following types of questions: a warm up question, reflective questions based on the AI 4-D cycle, evaluative questions based on Bushe & Kassam's (2005) process dimensions, a general reflection and closure.

Two rating scales were also used to elicit further detail on two of the questions.

The questions used in the focus group can be seen in Table 3.4.

An adapted version of this, used for the semi-structured interview can be seen in Appendix M. Both were similar in design, to elicit the full range of participant views on the AI process.

Both the interview and the focus group were audio-recorded for transcription and analysis purposes.

Table 3.4 Question Grid Guiding Focus Group Discussion & Semi-Structured Interview

Type of Question	**Questions**	**Prompts/ Information Provided**
Warm Up	What did you think and feel about the topic choice of wellbeing?	The 'Story So Far' Sheet (Figure 4.7)
Retrospective Reflective: Discovery	What did you think about the discovery phase (doing the appreciative interviews, analysing the interviews, making the poster, listening to the stories of 'peak experiences' and identifying the key success factors)?	
Retrospective Reflective: Dream	What did you think about the dream phase (imagining the best possible dream)?	
Retrospective Reflective: Design	What did you think about the design phase?	
Retrospective Reflective: Destiny	What do you think about the destiny phase, which involves you embedding the learning and making the agreed changes?	
Evaluative: Transformation	Let's examine the draft programme; have any of these components been tried before the start of this research? What's never been tried before? What had been tried? How transformative is this programme likely to be? What is your rating? Why have you given this rating?	Initial actions from AI. Rating 1 included definitions of transformative change and incremental change (Bushe, 2010) (Appendix M).
Evaluative: Metaphor	Did the appreciative inquiry generate a metaphor for you? If so, what is it? What does this metaphor mean for you?	
Evaluative: Knowledge	What, if any, knowledge have you acquired through the appreciative inquiry?	
Evaluative: Figure-Background	Looking back at the draft programme, what do you think about the actions that have been generated? What do you think about the scope of the programme? What is your rating?	Rating 2 (Appendix M)

	Why have you given this rating?	
Evaluative: Improvisation-Implementation	How do you think this programme is going to be actioned? Do you think you will be able to action components of the programme that you feel most passionate about independently? If not, why?	
Reflective: General	In what way(s), do you think the AI process could have been improved?	
Closure	If the school were to undertake a second AI cycle, what would you like to see as the central topic for change?	

3.5.4 Data Analysis for Process Evaluation

The interview recordings were transcribed and a deductive approach to analysis was taken, by grouping responses to Bushe & Kassam's (2005) process dimensions. I then reported the triangulated viewpoints from the participants.

3.5.5 Reflections

Formal exploration of participant experiences of the AI was also conducted as part of this research, as there is no reflective space within AI methods, unlike AR which it derives from.

Questions that were asked to guide the reflections at the end of each phase are as follows:
"What did you think and feel about the (Discovery, Dream, Design etc) phase?"
"What went well?"
"Even better if?"
"What emotions were evoked?"

Reflections were gathered and triangulated in three ways:

- From participants at the end of the 'Discovery', 'Dream', 'Design' phases which were written up onto flipchart paper.
- Data obtained from the audio recordings in the 'Beginning-Destiny' phase where it pertained to participant reflections on AI.
- Excerpts from my research diary.

3.5.6 Research questions and data sources

The research questions to be explored in this research, along with the corresponding data source used in each phase of AI is listed in Table 3.5.

Table 3.5: Research questions and data sources

Research Question	**Participant Group**	**Data source and AI phase**
What facilitative factors are perceived to promote wellbeing in children within an Early Years Foundation Stage setting in a school, according to the views of EY practitioners and parents?	EY practitioner Group	Focus group on best practices in the EYFS **(Discovery)**
	Parent Group	Focus group on best practices in the EYFS **(Discovery)**
Has the process of AI had a transformative impact on the Early Years Foundation Stage setting?	Participant volunteers from both parent and EY practitioner groups.	**(Beginning-Destiny phase)** Focus group where I asked participants process evaluation questions (audio recorded)
	Senior leadership participant.	**(Beginning-Destiny phase)** Semi-structured interview of process evaluation questions (audio recorded).
	All participants.	Participants were asked for their reflections on AI at the end of each phase (Discovery, Dream, Design phases). These were written up onto flipchart paper to record this. Excerpts were used from my research diary and data from the transformative audio recordings in the Beginning-Destiny phase were used where applicable.

3.6 Analysis Procedure

3.6.1 Two Staged Data Analysis Approach

This research generated a sizable amount of primary data, which included:

- Flipcharts
- AI summary sheets
- Participant reflections
- Interview transcripts
- My research diary.

It was important to present this rich data in a way that is accessible to the reader without losing any of its meaning. Therefore, data analysis for this research took place on two levels and is consistent with the approach used by Harris (2013). The first stage was the analysis that took place in situ with participants during the AI process. The second stage was undertaken after the completion of data collection and was with the sole purpose of writing the thesis.

3.6.2 Co-construction with participants

First, analysis was built into the AI process, through focus group sessions and the collaborative discussions this generated. Key themes that occurred during activities in the AI cycle were written up by myself and my colleague in the sessions on flipchart paper. The creation of these themes was done collaboratively and in situ with participants. For example, during the “Discovery” phase for EY practitioners, they were asked to share strengths and values that they hear throughout the session.

At the end of each session, participants were asked to identify salient themes. These themes were then shared in subsequent sessions as a form of member checking. Participants were invited to add to or edit the themes where needed. Themes that occur over this study were done so over time and makes this is a diachronic study. This means that the study shows how changes happened over time and can reveal why these changes have happened (Thomas, 2016).

3.6.3 Individual data analysis for Doctoral Qualification

In the second stage, data from the 'Discovery' phase was analysed further using a Thematic Analysis (TA) (Braun and Clarke, 2006; Clarke and Braun, 2017).

The process evaluation and participants reflections of the research were analysed by synthesizing the viewpoints of multiple perspectives and methods of triangulation.

3.6.4 Rationale for Thematic Analysis

TA was chosen due to its suitability for answering my initial research question, 'According to EY practitioners and parents, what are the facilitative factors that promote children's wellbeing within the Early Years Foundation Stage?' I was looking to develop a set of patterns across the data from both sets of participants.

TA is a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (known as themes) in the data (Braun and Clarke, 2006). TA (Braun & Clarke, 2006) was conducted on the transcribed flip chart and summary sheet data from the 'Discovery' phase to discover repeated patterns of meaning.

TA allows for theoretical flexibility as it is not allied to specific theoretical positions, unlike for example Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) and phenomenology.

TA is a useful method for participatory research and the results are accessible to the public (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Clarke and Braun (2017) state that TA can be useful to identify patterns within the data which pertain to 'experiential research', such as people's lived experiences, views and practices. This made the approach appropriate here as this is what was being explored.

The thematic data analysis was carried out on a semantic (or explicit) level (Braun and Clarke, 2006) which involved interpretation using the surface level of data as I wanted to stay true to and represent the views of the participants.

This analysis followed the six phases of TA as outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006), which is outlined in Table 3.6 below. Themes in the data were identified using a 'bottom up', inductive approach. Braun and Clarke (2006) state that an inductive approach is enhanced by not engaging with the literature in the early stages of your analysis. However, as I had already conducted the literature review prior to analysis, I recognise

that this may have influenced the codes that were identified during the analysis. An audit trail for this process is presented in Appendix N for RQ 1.

Table 3.6: Stages of thematic Analysis process for this research (adapted from Braun and Clarke, 2006)

Phase of TA	**Description of the process**
Familiarising yourself with the data	I was familiar with the data as participant analyses took place at the closing of the 'Discovery' phase. To further familiarise myself, I read over the flipchart paper and typed it up into a table format to view it clearly. I read over summary sheets which were completed at the end of the 'Discovery' session and typed this up.
Generating initial codes	I then coded my data manually, taking each line of transcription at a time. Some segments of text had multiple codes assigned to them to ensure that all aspects were included within my analysis
Searching for themes	I used a manual approach to identifying themes. Refined codes were written onto post-its and I collated them into themes
Reviewing themes	Themes were checked to ensure they related to the initial codes and the entire data set. From this initial draft thematic maps were created.
Defining and naming themes	Themes were named in this phase. I sought support from a colleague with the wording of the themes. Inter-rater checks were carried out whereby I presented a colleague with an anonymised section of the data set to compare her interpretation with mine.
Producing the report	Scholarly report of final themes with an analytic narrative; relation of analysis to RQs and literature.

3.6.5 Limitations of Thematic Analysis

Braun and Clarke (2006) have identified several limitations to TA, including the fact that as TA lacks a theoretical base, it potentially limits the interpretative power of it in terms of how to ground analytical claims. I will seek to address this through an analytic narrative and relation of analysis to relevant theory and literature in Chapters 4 and 5. I also followed the checklist of criteria for rigour in TA provided by Braun and Clarke (2006, p.96) to ensure quality in this current analysis.

3.6.6 Audit trail for each stage of the AI process

Table 3.7 explains how the analysis was undertaken at each stage of this AI, including linked appendices to illustrate this further.

Table 3.7 Audit trail for each stage of analysis

Stage in research process	Supporting commentary on analysis	Appendices/ supporting materials
4D cycle and co-construction with participants	• **Discovery phase:** participants responses recorded on flipchart paper and at end of session on interview summary sheets, to elicit the systems 'positive core', responses member checked by researcher and co-facilitator.	Photos can be found in Figure 4.1 and Figure 4.2
	• **Dream phase:** participants responses were recorded by their dream graphics. • Each group also created an aspiration statement.	Photos can be found in Figure 4.3 and Figure 4.4 Aspiration statements can be found I section 4.2.3.
	• **Design phase:** Each group created draft provocative propositions.	Draft provocative propositions can be found in Figure 4.5 and Figure 4.6.
	• **Integrated Design:** 'Story so far' sheet shared with group to summarise AI for both groups so far. • Refined provocative propositions were created following collaborative group discussion which I facilitated.	Table 4.1 and section 4.4.
Thematic Analysis For Facilitative Factors (RQ 1)	• Raw data gathered on flipchart paper and interview summary sheets • Data then transcribed and generated initial codes and refined codes • I used a manual approach to identify themes and subthemes. • Themes were checked to ensure they related to initial codes. • Identify themes and subthemes • Creation of thematic map • Themes were named and defined.	Audit trail for Thematic Analysis can be found in Appendix N
Process Evaluation (RQ 2)	• Raw data audio recorded during Beginning-Destiny phase. • Data then transcribed into word document and I used basic qualitative coding to further familiarise myself with the data. • Bushe & Kassam's (2005) coding framework (process dimensions) used to deductively group data, for example metaphor or no metaphor. • Triangulation of viewpoints and thick description (Thomas, 2016) used to demonstrate findings.	Audit trail for process evaluation can be found in Appendix O

Analysis for Reflections (RQ 2)	• Raw data gathered on flipchart paper at end of each phase (Discovery, Dream, Design), audio recordings from last question in Beginning-Destiny phase and my research diary excerpts. • Data was then transcribed to further familiarise myself with the data. • I then reported the data through thick description (Thomas, 2016) and triangulating views.	Audit trail for reflections can be found in Appendix P

3.7 Evaluation of Research Quality in the current research

3.7.1 Reliability and validity

As the research being undertaken is of a qualitative nature, the criteria used to assess reliability and validity in quantitative methods (generalisation, validity and replicability) are not relevant to interpretative research (Thomas, 2016). Instead we will explore how rigour and quality can be gained through the methods of triangulation and positionality (Thomas, 2016). Phronesis will also be applied as this research does not seek to achieve generalisability, in line with AI principles (Cooperrider and Srivastva, 1987).

3.7.2 Triangulation

Triangulation simply means that viewing from several points is better than viewing from one and helps to create confidence in the accuracy of findings (McNiff, 2016; Thomas, 2016). Thomas (2016, p.67) uses Foucault's 'polyhedron of intelligibility' to explain this further: "Foucault meant that we can only really understand something – it only becomes intelligible- by looking at it from different directions and using different methods." Two main forms of data triangulation were used in this research as defined by Denzin (1988) which are data and observer triangulation. Data triangulation occurs when there are multiple forms of data collection (focus groups, semi-structured interviews, research diary, flip chart sheets). Observer triangulation occurs when there is more than one observer in the research (Denzin, 1988). An EP colleague was present during the delivery of the AI sessions and so observer triangulation occurred. In this research the nested design element also allows for exploration of perspectives from EY practitioners, parents and me as the researcher this is in line with good practice guidance which states that it is imperative to have at least three sources to ensure accuracy and integrity (McNiff, 2016).

3.7.3 Positionality

In qualitative research, the researcher becomes immersed in the subject and the situation of their research, becoming an active, not passive agent in collecting information (Thomas, 2016). Therefore, it is essential that I employ positionality, recognising that I have an undeniable position and that this position affects the nature of the observations and interpretations that are made (Thomas, 2016). I am a Trainee Educational Psychologist (TEP) on placement for a local authority in the West Midlands of England. I am of British origin, female and in my early thirties.

My interest in my research area began around five years ago whilst working as a Teacher in an Early Years classroom. It was there that I began to feel dissatisfied with the limited amount of change I could make to a child's life for the better as a sole practitioner. For example, I was often faced with the challenge of supporting children's wellbeing but without the training or tools at my disposal to do so. I realised for change to occur I needed the support of outside professionals and collaboration with children's parents as well as support from senior management in the school to bring about these changes. This heightened my interest not only in training as an EP, but also in the way that I wanted to work as an EP. Whilst on the doctoral training programme, the input on working systemically and approaches we can use to support this type of work have further increased my desire to work in this way.

The doctoral training and experience on placement as a TEP have allowed me to further develop my individual practice, where I find myself increasingly drawn to aspects of positive psychology in my daily practice. For example, I have experience in carrying out solution focused brief therapy with children and young people, my consultations with parents and staff are solution focused in nature (such as exception finding, scaling). Whilst I use a range of approaches in my work, I am keen to further develop my skills in this area that I am naturally drawn to.

3.7.4 Phronesis

Lastly, I will consider the concept of phronesis, which originated with Aristotle (Thomas, 2016). Phronesis is about practical knowledge and is a model based on personal experience. In the current context, it denotes practical knowledge that can be obtained from research.

Schram states … “the social sciences are better equipped to produce a different kind of knowledge – phronesis, practical wisdom – that grows out of intimate familiarity with practice in contextualized settings. Local knowledges, even tacit knowledges, cannot be taught a priori and are grown from the bottom up. They emerge out of practice, forgoing the hubris of seeking claims to a decontextualized universal rationality stated in abstract terms of false precision” (Schram, 2012, p.17).

Cooperrider and Srivastva (1987) also refer to this under the normative dimension of AI, which is concerned with seeking practical knowledge (Pahil, 2019).

3.8 Ethical Considerations

The research was guided by the British Psychological Society’s (BPS) Code of Human Research Ethics (2018), the Division of Educational and Child Psychology’s (DECP) Professional Practice Guidelines (BPS, 2002) and the University of Nottingham Code of Research Conduct and Research Ethics (University of Nottingham, 2013). Ethical approval was received for the research in line with the University of Nottingham requirements in May 2019 (see Appendix Q).

Several ethical considerations were required for this research and how these were addressed can be seen below.

3.8.1 Informed consent

Following the hand out of information sheets (see Appendix R) informed and written consent was obtained from school staff and parents who chose to participate.

The information sheets contained the inclusion criteria to participate, this was to ensure informed consent.

At the start of the ‘Discovery’ phase, a brief presentation was given to all participants to share information about the purposes of the research along with information about AI so that they had a good understanding of the research (Appendix K). There was also the opportunity for participants to ask any questions they had about the research.

3.8.2 Confidentiality and anonymity

During participant recruitment, names of participants were not collected, and this is the same for the note taking and analysis processes too.

All participants were told that information would be stored confidentially unless any safeguarding concerns arose which I would need to report by following the local safeguarding protocols.

Information on the participants is stored electronically and password protected.

3.8.3 Right to withdraw

The right to withdraw without giving a reason was explained to all participants both in writing and verbally before the research commenced and at the start of each AI session. Reminders were also given that this would not affect future access to their EP service.

3.8.4 Data storage

Audio recorded data was recorded using a Local Authority iPad and mobile phone, two were used in case one failed to work. The digital audio files were securely stored on an encrypted external hard drive. The files will be deleted after seven years of the completion of this research, this is in line with the University of Nottingham guidelines.

Flipchart paper recordings are stored in a locked cabinet which only I have access to.

3.8.5 Offsetting possible detrimental effects of research

Timing and dates of the AI sessions was agreed with the school to minimise disruption to their timetables.

Both myself and my EP colleague are trained in active listening skills through doctoral training and professional experiences.

The AI sessions began with the creation of ground rules, particularly around the nature of information being shared (e.g. confidentiality and respecting each other's views).

3.8.6 Debrief

The facilitative factors that were discovered during the research were shared with EY practitioners and parents at the end of the research via a letter (See Appendix S).

3.9. Critique of methodology

AI is often critiqued for being overly positive and with the potential for suppression of negative viewpoints. However, the 'Dream' phase is often a reflection of the

frustrations felt and of barriers in the organisation pertaining to this (Bushe, 2011). Therefore, negative aspects of the organisation are often discussed during the AI process.

Further reflections on both the limitations and criticisms of the AI approach will be discussed in Chapter 5.

3.9.1 Summary of methodology

This chapter has explored in detail the chosen methodology of AI for this research along with my justifications of its use within the research. I hoped that an AI approach would help navigate the complex relationships that can be observed between school and parents and in turn provide systemic change and increased active promotion of wellbeing for young children in their lives.

Chapter 4 Findings

4.1 Chapter Overview

In this chapter, each phase of AI and the related outcomes will be presented.

Part 1 will explore the co-constructed findings that arose during the AI process (Sections 4.1.1. to 4.4.2) .

Part 2 will explore the findings in relation to the thesis write up and will answer the research questions as follows:

Research Question 1: What facilitative factors are perceived to promote wellbeing in children within an Early Years Foundation Stage setting in a school, according to the views of EY practitioners and parents?

Outcomes of the 'Discovery' phase are presented in Section 4.5-4.7. Each participant group will be considered in turn within overarching themes and subthemes which have been identified through thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006) of data obtained from flipchart notes and summary sheets of the 'Discovery' session.

Research Question 2: Has the process of AI had a transformative impact on the Early Years Foundation Stage setting?

Outcomes from the 'Beginning-Destiny' phase will be presented with data obtained from the transcribed audio recordings of a focus group and individual interview (Section 4.8). The data obtained is grouped according to the deductive criteria used by Bushe and Kassam (2005).

Outcomes of participant's reflections will also be presented from data obtained at the end the AI phases (Discover, Dream and Design) in section 4.9. Data obtained from the transcribed transformative audio recordings (Beginning-Destiny phase) along with excerpts from my research diary will also be presented where it relates to this research question. This data was analysed through triangulation of viewpoints.

4.1.1 Co-Constructed findings during AI process

At the end of the 'Discovery' Phase, each group was asked to identify themes that resonated with them throughout the session. This included identifying any strengths, values and wishes that stood out for them. Photos are included for both groups (Figure 4.1 EY practitioners, Figure 4.2 Parents) of their identified strengths (green squares), values (brown rectangles) and wishes (yellow circles).

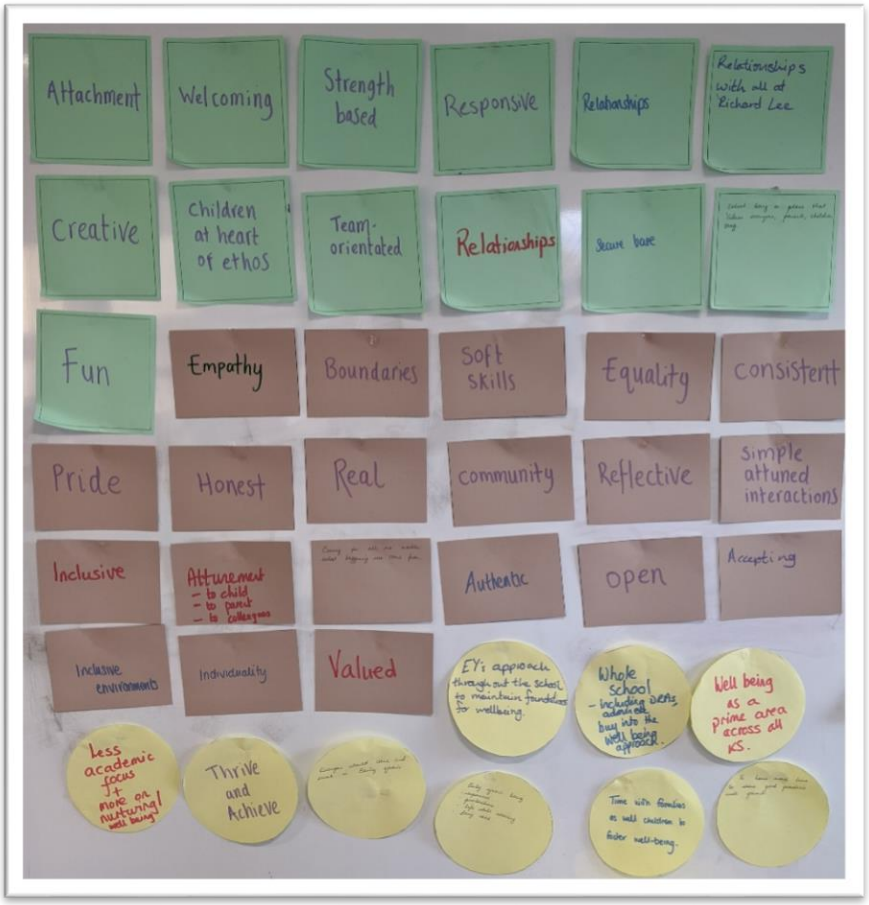


Figure 4.1: Discovery Phase: EY practitioner's Positive Core



Figure 4.2: Discovery Phase: Parent's Positive Core

4.2 Dream Phase

The ‘Dream’ phase started with a recap of ‘the best of what is’. The strengths, values and wishes from each group was presented as a way to member check with them. To aid this I also presented information from the summary sheets, including most memorable stories, quotes and themes. Each group was then asked to summarise their wishes down to a main one.

A miracle question was then asked to each group:
‘If a miracle occurred overnight and we came into tomorrow to find that wellbeing in the school is now exactly as we want it to be, how would we know? What would be different? What would you see? What would you hear? What would staff be doing? What would parents be doing? What would children be doing?’
Each group was asked to brainstorm their ideas and graphic these onto paper.

4.2.1 EY practitioner Dreams

A summary of EY practitioner dreams is presented below followed by their dream graphic in Figure 4.3:

- Relationships with all
- Equality
- Whole school approach with Early Years being the base
- Wellbeing of whole child, knowing about their family and environment
- Maintaining parental engagement throughout the school
- Authentic, real, sharing and caring approach to parents



Figure 4.3: Dream graphic for EY practitioners

4.2.2 Parent Dreams

A summary of parent dreams is presented below followed by their dream graphic in Figure 4.4.

- To have a wider playground
- Safe and secure access to school
- For more staff to be like the caretaker
- Easier access to classroom
- Same opening times for all children
- More staff
- Staff look happier and relaxed
- Parents smiling more
- Chance of community activities
- Parents to talk and socialise
- More opportunities for coffee mornings
- Photos of completed activities of children's work
- More opportunities to learn musical instruments
- School wardrobe 'pre-loved' items
- Class newsletters on what children are/will be doing
- School choir
- More play and playground games.

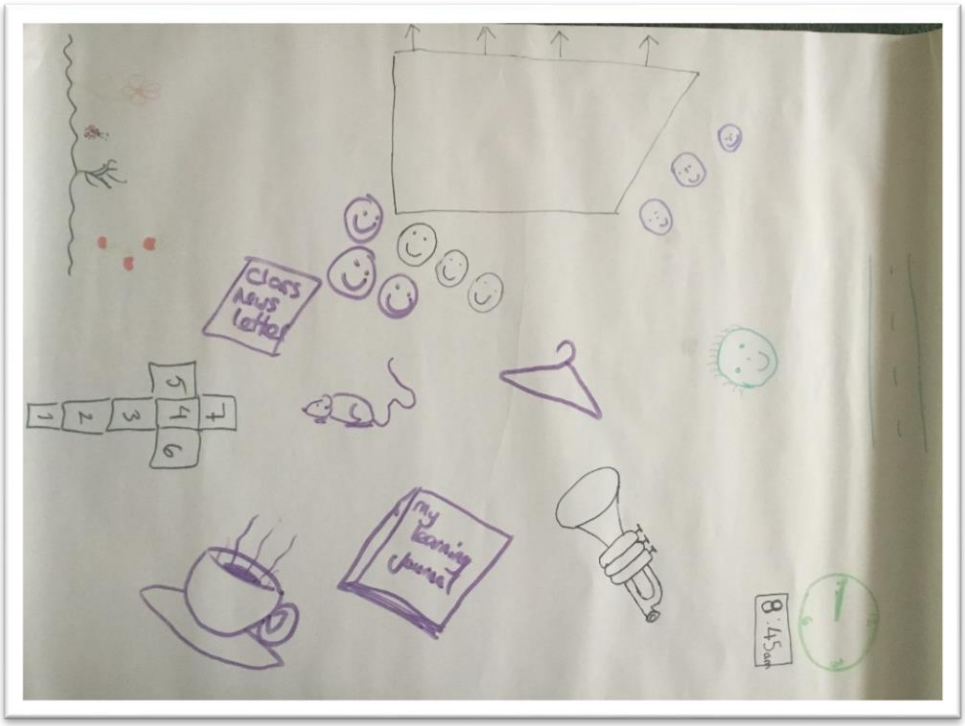


Figure 4.4: Dream graphic for parents

4.2.3 Aspiration Statement

The final step in the 'Dream' phase was for each group to create an aspiration statement. To aid this, they were both given the sentence starter "By the end of the year 2020, what we most aspire to is…"

EY practitioners summarised aspiration statement: By the end of the year 2020, what we most aspire to is "embed the early years child-centred approach as the core to wellbeing and learning throughout the school."

Parents summarised aspiration statement: By the end of the year 2020, what we most aspire to "a shared sense of community where there are happier staff and children thriving in a safe environment, open for the community throughout the year with a broader range of activities to support wellness."

4.3 Design

Both groups worked separately to create Draft Provocative Propositions which are summarised in the following, Figure 4.5 for EY practitioners and Figure 4.6 for parents.

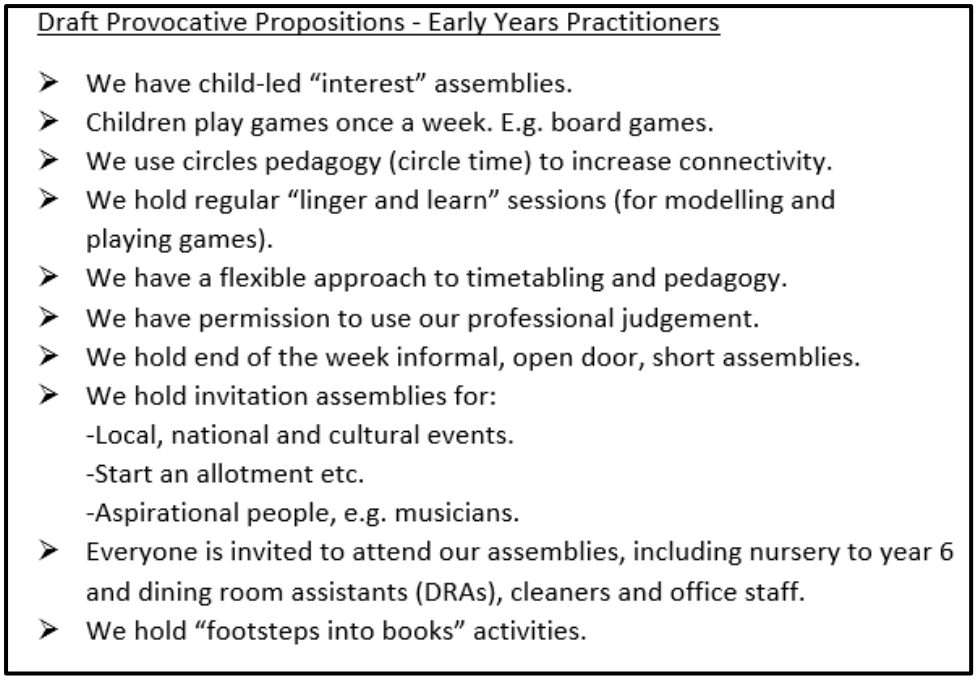


Figure 4.5: Draft Provocative Propositions for EY practitioners

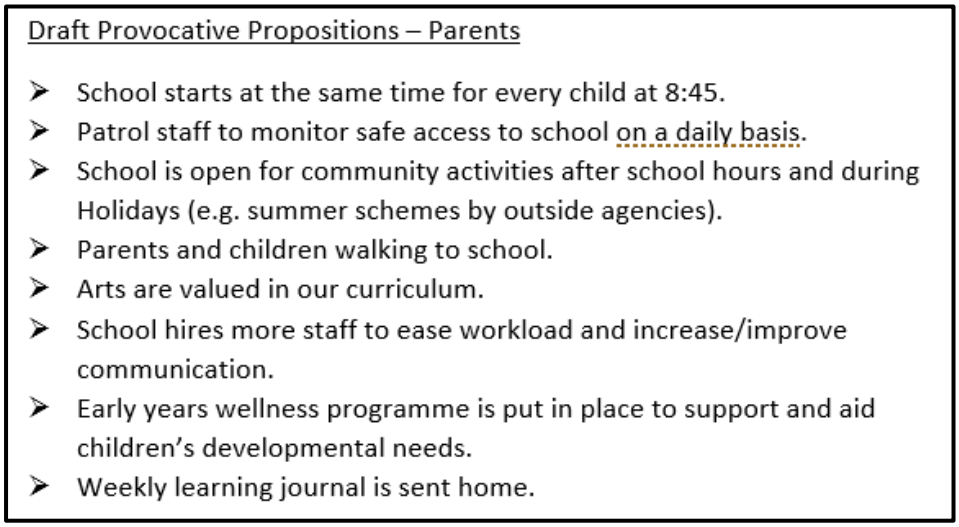


Figure 4.6: Draft Provocative Propositions for Parents

4.4 Integrated Design Phase

Two parents, one EY practitioner and the SENCo took part in this phase. I presented them with the 'Story So Far' sheet (Figure 4.7). This sheet summarised each phase of AI so far for both groups and thus allowed a sharing of both groups AI journey for the other to see. Whilst presenting the 'Story So Far' poster, I member checked with participants to ensure I had summarised the information correctly.

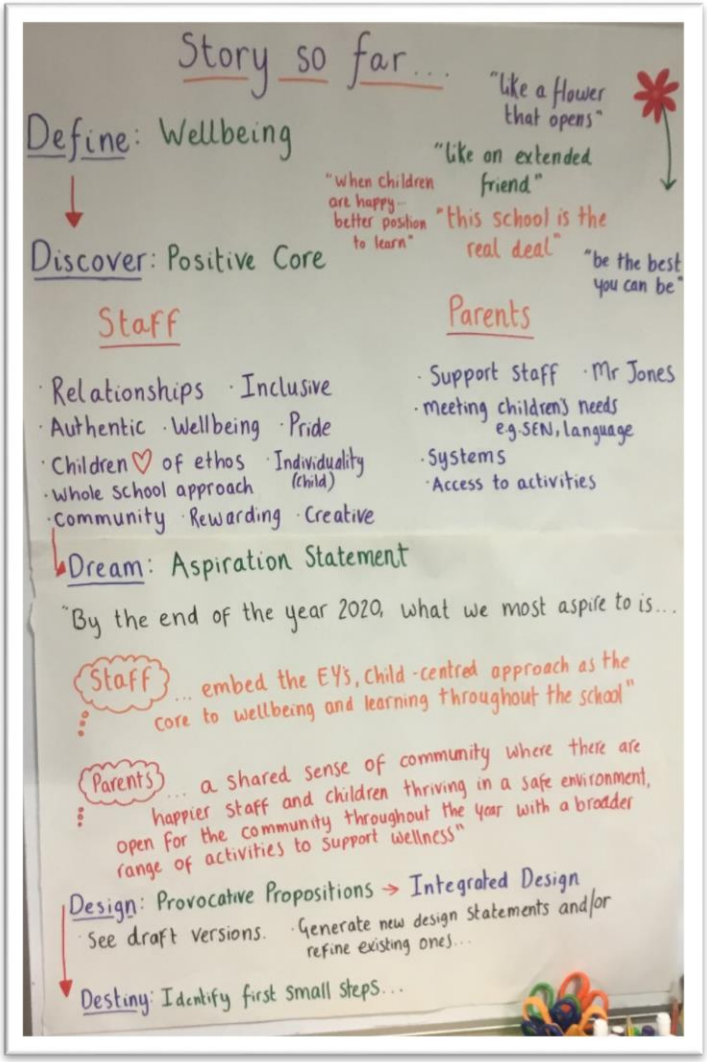


Figure 4.7: 'Story So Far' Poster

4.4.1 Outcomes of Integrated Design

Following this I facilitated a collaborative group discussion between two members from both groups with the aim of working on a shared vision of the future together. This allowed for the opportunity to revise and add new statements to the draft provocative propositions and retain the ones that they were happy with. The refined provocative propositions are presented in Table 4.1 below followed by agreed next steps.

Table 4.1: Refined Provocative Propositions

Retained statements	Revised Statements	New Statements
• School starts at the same time for every child at 8:45. • Patrol staff to monitor safe access to school daily • School is open for community activities after school hours and during holidays (e.g. summer schemes by outside agencies). • Parents and children walking to school. • School hires more staff to ease workload and increase/improve communication. • Weekly learning journal is sent home. • Early years wellness programme is put into place to support and aid children's developmental needs. • We have child-led interest assemblies. • Children play games once a week, e.g. board games. • We use circles pedagogy (circle time) to increase connectivity. • We have a flexible approach to timetabling and pedagogy. • We have permission to use our professional judgement. • We hold end of the week, informal, open door, short assemblies. • Everyone is invited to attend our assemblies, including nursery to year 6, DRA's, cleaners and office staff. • We hold invitation assemblies for: -local, national and cultural events. -start an allotment etc. -aspirational people, e.g. musicians	• Arts are valued in our curriculum, including music, drama and dance. • We value holistic approaches to learning including "footsteps to learning", story sacks and linger and learn sessions. • The [school name] Oasis space is a safe sanctuary for the wellness of all. • We hold regular coffee mornings for parents.	• The school shares Thrive information with parents.

4.4.2 Action Planning and Outcomes

At the end of the session, a draft action plan was created with agreed next steps:

- The school shares Thrive information with parents.
- We hold regular coffee mornings for parents.
- We hold child-led interest assemblies.

4.5 Discovery Phase: EY practitioner views

Research Question 1: What facilitative factors are perceived to promote wellbeing in children within an Early Years Foundation Stage setting in a school, according to the views of EY practitioners and parents?

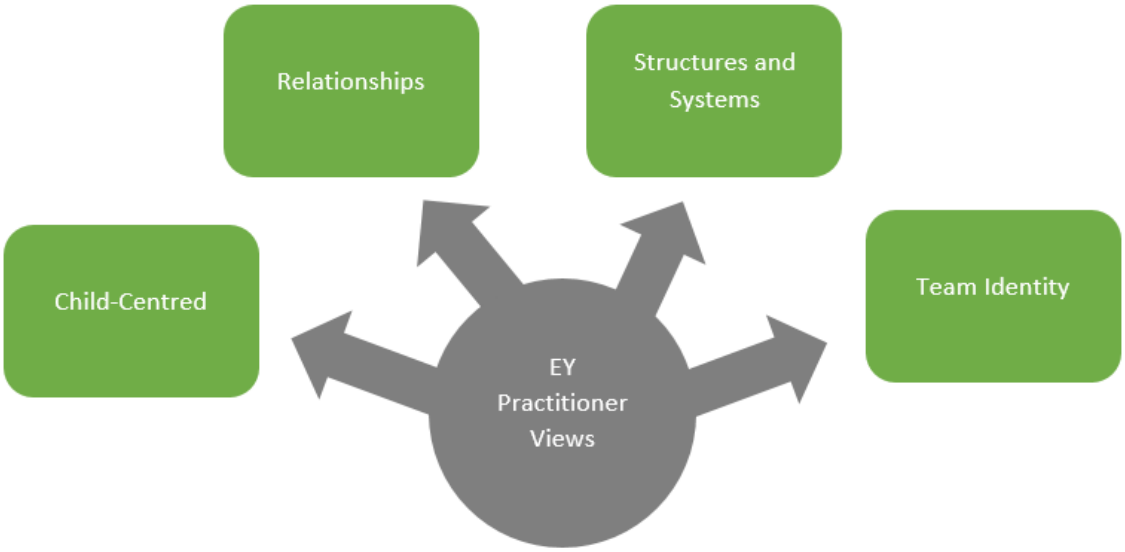


Figure 4.8: Overarching themes of EY practitioner views of facilitative factors which promote wellbeing



Figure 4.9: Thematic map for EY practitioners

Each theme and sub-theme will be explored in turn. Each sub-theme is presented in a table format with the refined code(s) for the theme as well as all the supporting extracts for that theme. Please see Appendix N for an example of notes taken on flipchart paper, an initial coding example and an example of refined codes for a theme.

4.5.1 Relationships

This theme was widely cited by the EY practitioners during their accounts in the 'Discovery' phase.

4.5.1.1 Attachment and Emotional Containment

EY practitioners described a number of elements related to attachment theory that are important for promoting wellbeing in children, including the importance of supporting children to believe in themselves.

Staff also appeared confident in their ability to support children through difficult times by the way they interact with them.

Table 4.2: Findings Table for Sub-theme of Attachment and Emotional Containment

Refined Code(s)	Supporting Extract
• **Relationships** • **Attachment** • **Containing** • **Attunement** • **Modelling emotions** • **Secure base** • **Attachment principles**	*Feeling secure, drawing on that secure base.* *(we are an) emotionally containing place, 'it's okay to be angry…'* One staff member recalled a 'peak experience' of working with a child …*six weeks of breaking her heart, rolled ball to her, looked up and used simple attuned interacting, makes you catch your breath.* *(child) went from wobbly to secure.* *Upset, distressed child crying said 'you know my mum'* *To just say 'hello' in the corridor* *A child went through a family break up and was upset. I looked at keys with him, gave him what he needed. …Be prepared to go out of the box, he's now happy at secondary school* *(child) angry, he needed to vent. I said if you want to hit you can, following that permission he would give me a hug, like a firework to a nice little boy.* *Relationships built on self-belief, "If miss X says I can do it, I can do it"* *When a Teacher helps a child believe in themselves and this stays with them throughout their lives.*

	Permission to be self accepting, 'oh it's okay to be like…'

4.5.1.2 Staff-Parent Relationships

EY practitioners described the importance of building relationships with the parents of the children they work with to promote wellbeing in children.

Table 4.3: Findings Table for Sub-theme of Staff-Parent Relationships

Refined Code(s)	Supporting Extract
• **Parent relationships**	*Building a secure, trusting relationship with parents and children.* *Children feel that their parents are welcomed, valued.* *Parents value what we do through modelling, 'linger and learn' sessions.* *Parent sent through thank you card for changes in him*

4.5.2 Team Identity

In this theme, EY practitioners spoke positively about their job role, with an emphasis on their team identity and the values they hold.

4.5.2.1 Vocation

EY practitioners spoke of their job role highly, viewing it more as a vocation than an everyday job role.

Table 4.4: Findings Table for Sub-theme of Vocation

Refined Code(s)	Supporting Extract
• **Vocation** • **Proud** • **Contributing to change**	*Aspiration to work here* *Rewarding job* *Making a difference* *I feel happy, responsive, creative, rested, fulfilled, completely fulfilled, a sense of purpose* *Our Teaching Assistant's go above and beyond, relying on goodwill instead* *Satisfying (seeing) changes in children, especially in early years, not data-driven, know that we made a difference*

4.5.2.2 Values

EY practitioners identified values which were core to their EY practitioner identity.

Table 4.5: Findings Table for Sub-theme of Values

Refined Code(s)	Supporting Extract
• **Strengths-based** • **Realistic** • **Equality** • **Honest** • **Inclusive** • **Open** • **Unique** • **Reflective practice** • **Value social, emotional side** • **Creative** • **Real**	*Not really that hierarchy* *Inclusive* *Authentic* *Accepting* *Value every child, even if we don't work with them, take time to say hello, smile.* *Valuing soft skills, social and emotional side* *Aspiration (of children) is the same irrespective of background* *We don't tick boxes like other schools* *We make ourselves open, consistent, honest, reassurance* *Reflective, standing back, looking at what's missing and then addressing it* *Drawing on people's strengths, "I know (colleague) would know what to do, (colleague) is the arty-crafty one, I'm going to learn from all strengths"* *Accept we are not good at everything* *Fun place, got to be 'mental', 'daft' to work here* *We are real, we are authentic.* *We are the real deal.*

4.5.2.3 Team

EY practitioners confidently referred to themselves as a team, viewing their team with pride.

Table 4.6: Findings Table for Sub-theme of Team

Refined Code(s)	Supporting Extract
• **Team oriented** • **Team**	*Parents can see that we are a real team* *Relationships, with team: well-oiled machine* *What you see is what you get in our team* *(we are) team-oriented* *Team approach* *Not data-driven, know that team made a difference*

4.5.3 Child-centred

4.5.3.1 Unique Child

Staff noted the importance of seeing each child as a unique individual.

Table 4.7: Findings Table for Sub-theme of Unique Child

Refined Code(s)	Supporting extract
• **Child-centred** • **Unique child**	*Treating each child as an individual* *Putting children first*

4.5.3.2 Flourish

Staff described with passion that they value being part of the journey that the children are on and being able to watch them grow into their potential.

Table 4.8: Findings Table for Sub-theme of Flourish

Refined Code(s)	Supporting extract
• **Flourish** • **Engaged** • **Imparting knowledge** • **Nurture** • **Growth** • **Progress over attainment**	*Watching children grow* *Children grow like flowers, open like a flower* *Thrive and achieve* *Thrive and then achieve, be the best you can be* *Children are like flowers that open and grow* *Like a flower that opens* *Ability to thrive* *Giving them (children) the tools, showing them the way forward, sometimes let them take the lead* *Look at progress not attainment* *Time and patience* *Children are engaged*

4.5.3.3 Value Wellbeing Core

Staff recognise the importance of meeting children's needs and building the foundation for their PSED before any academic learning can take place.

Table 4.9: Findings Table for Sub-theme of Value Wellbeing Core

Refined Code(s)	Supporting extract
• **Wellbeing**	*If they don't have wellbeing, they won't be able to count, learn* *Wellbeing builds the foundation for learning*

4.5.4 Structures and Systems

4.5.4.1 Community Links

There was a clear emphasis from staff about the wider links the school has and the impact of the school within the local community.

Table 4.10: Findings Table for Sub-theme of Community Links

Refined Code(s)	Supporting extract
• **Community** • **Community System**	*Really welcoming feeling, like an extended friend* *Contributing to local community* *Having an influence on family systems* *Care about community* *There are great things about the school and community*

4.5.4.2 Environment

Staff described the features of the school environment that they believe support children's wellbeing.

Table 4.11: Findings Table for Sub-theme of Environment

Refined Code(s)	Supporting extracts
• **Environment**	*Enticing, safe and stimulating environment* *Welcoming environment* *Progress is massive because of what impact this place has* *It's a happy place, work flows, it's slick* *Accepting environment* *This school is the real deal*

4.5.4.3 Ethos

Staff spoke of the importance of an ethos which is caring to promote wellbeing.

Table 4.12: Findings Table for Sub-theme of Ethos

Refined Code(s)	Supporting extract
• **Ethos**	*Be the best you can be* *Caring ethos* *Children are at the heart of our ethos* *All children being value is part of ethos*

4.5.4.4 Boundaries and Expectations

Staff described how children respond well to consistency in terms of the boundaries and expectations that are in place in the setting.

Table 4.13: Findings Table for Sub-theme of Boundaries and Expectations

Refined Code(s)	Supporting extracts
• **Consistent approach** • **Boundaries**	*Get most respect from children with boundaries in place* *Model that consistency, I'm saying no today and tomorrow, not big boundaries.*

4.6 Discovery Phase: Parent views

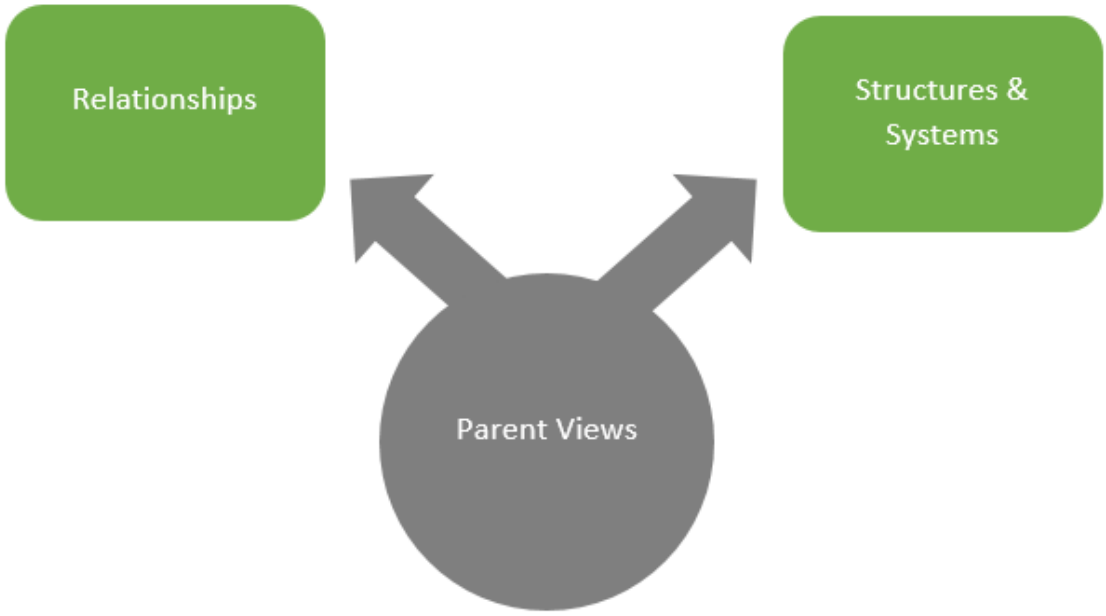


Figure 4.10: Overarching themes of parent views of facilitative factors which promote wellbeing

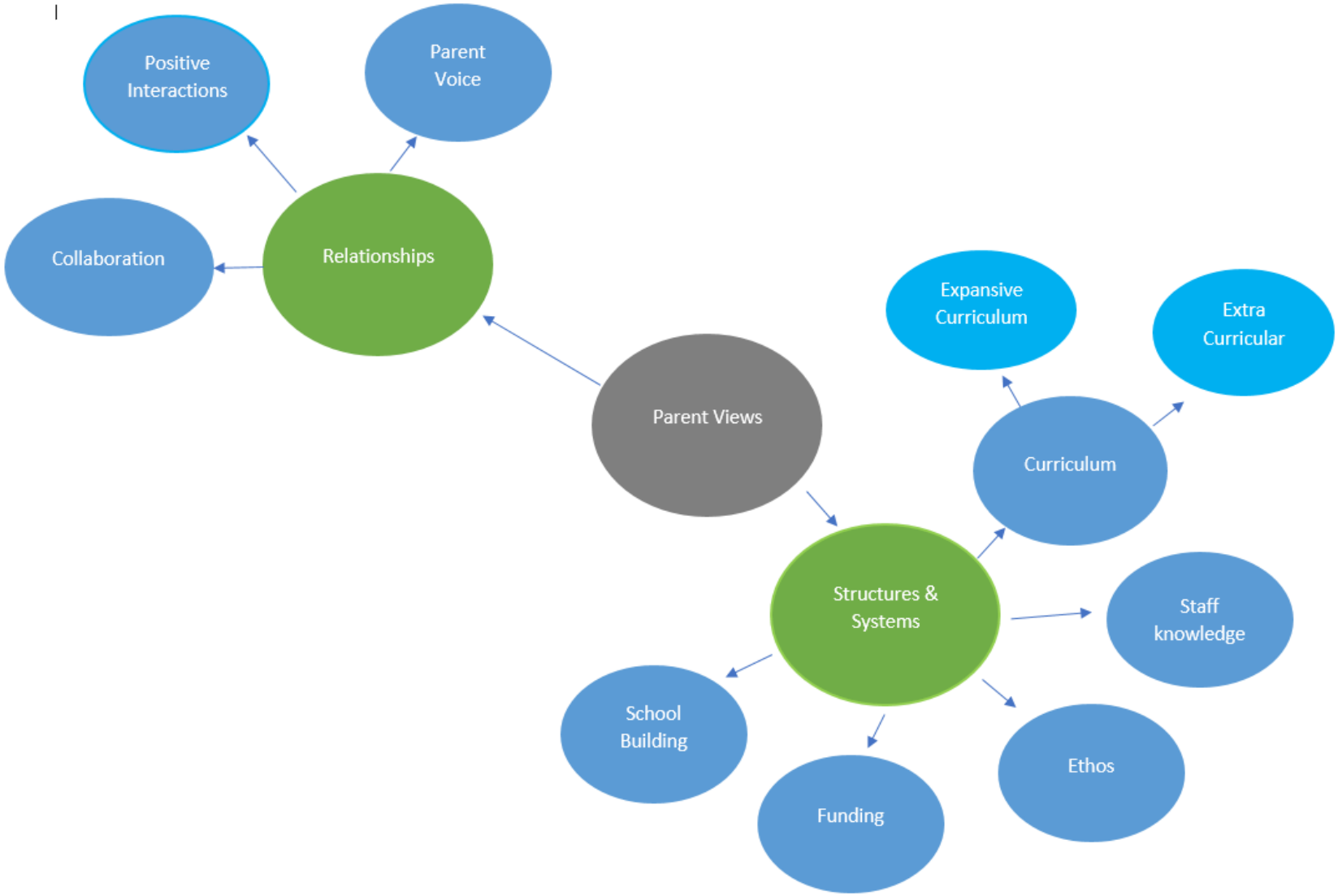


Figure 4.11: Thematic map of parent views of the facilitative factors that promote wellbeing in children

Each theme and sub-theme will be explored in turn. Each sub-theme is presented in a table format with the refined code(s) for the theme as well as all the supporting extracts for that theme.

4.6.1 Relationships

4.6.1.1 Positive interactions

Parents spoke of the nature of interactions they have with staff in school which they feel are important for promoting wellbeing in children.

Table 4.14: Findings Table for Sub-theme of Positive Interactions

Refined Code(s)	Supporting extracts
• **Welcoming staff** • **Communication** • **Relationships** • **Communication with staff**	*(I have) Positive relationships with Teaching Assistants* *Nursery Teacher showed us around, daughter spoke to all staff in the first introductory meeting* *(My) child is the youngest in the class, staff keep us informed and up to date.* *Caretaker always has a warm welcome to parents and children, smiles, high fives*

4.6.1.2 Collaboration

Parents acknowledge the value of working together with staff to support their children.

Table 4.15: Findings Table for Sub-theme of Collaboration

Refined Code(s)	Supporting extracts
• **Listened to by staff** • **Working together**	*Collaboration – teacher, school and child* *A series of meetings to support child with social communication needs. She is doing better in year 2 due to meetings in Reception. Shared understanding across the transition, staff were listening.*

4.6.1.3 Parent Voice

Parents described the advocacy role they take on to promote the best outcomes for their children.

Table 4.16: Findings Table for Sub-theme of Parent Voice

Refined Code(s)	Supporting extracts
• **Parent voice** • **Parent advocate**	*Parents encourage them (children)* *We must support and encourage our children* *How you have to persist when your child has special needs*

4.6.2 Structures and Systems

4.6.2.1 School Building

Parents cited the school building as playing a core role in giving their children the best experiences.

Table 4.17: Findings Table for Sub-theme of School Building

Refined Code(s)	Supporting extracts
• **School building**	*New, beautiful school* *Built as a three from, but now two form, so spare rooms year one can use for free play*

4.6.2.2 Funding

Parents feel that the school can offer great experiences for their children as they are supported by external funding.

Table 4.18: Findings Table for Sub-theme of Funding

Refined Code(s)	Supporting extracts
• **Government funding** • **Funding**	*Helped by governmental funding* *Funding*

4.6.2.3 Ethos

Unlike EY practitioners, parents did not cite a 'caring' ethos as one which supports their children, but they did recite the school's ethos when asked about the values that the school holds.

Table 4.19: Findings Table for Sub-theme of Ethos

Refined Code(s)	Supporting extracts
• **School ethos**	*Values, be the best you can be* *Be the best you can be*

4.6.2.4 Staff Knowledge

Parents acknowledge the expertise that school staff have in being able to support their children's development.

Table 4.20: Findings Table for Sub-theme of Staff Knowledge

Refined Code(s)	Supporting extracts
• **Supporting children with English as an Additional Language** • **Supporting children with Special Educational Needs** • **Staff knowledge** • **Staff training**	*Son has SEN, staff are on the ball, they study the child all the time and keep you informed, helping him on his educational route* *They (EY practitioners) are more aware, more educated.* *The teachers/staff are really informed, unlike GPs* *Son's Romanian and English is limited, staff are supporting his language. Staff are doing their best to support him because he struggles to express himself.* *Teachers understand my child much more*

4.6.2.5 Expansive Curriculum

Parents attributed a range of opportunities within the curriculum as a core part of promoting their child's wellbeing.

Table 4.21: Findings Table for Sub-theme of Expansive Curriculum

Refined Code(s)	Supporting extracts
• **Opportunities** • **Sports** • **Creative activities** • **Wellbeing curriculum** • **Child-led interests** • **External staff** • **Learning**	*Children have access to a range of activities* *Wide choice for children to try different things, experience.* *Children have a lot of things to learn in school, they have plenty of activities and interesting things to help them development* *Sports day* *People coming in, for example the animal topic. Children have really enjoyed the animal topics and experiencing animals coming into the school.* *Children have choice and access to a range of activities* *Bug school/hotel* *Use (child) interests for learning* *Music room, to express themselves* *Craft area, creativity wasn't restricted*

	Yoga *Sports, paid outside staff for P.E. twice a week*

4.6.2.6 Extra Curricula

Parents spoke of activities outside of school hours which they feel also promote their child's wellbeing.

Table 4.22: Findings Table for Sub-theme of Extra Curricula

Refined Code(s)	*Supporting extract*
• **Before and after school clubs** • **Sports**	*Afterschool clubs, positive activities* *Breakfast club*

4.7. Themes and Definitions

As advised by Braun and Clarke (2006), Tables 4.23 and 4.24 show the overarching themes and sub-themes from this research along with a definition for each. To arrive at these definitions, I drafted definitions for both the overarching and sub-themes based on my interpretation of what these meant and checked them over with a fellow researcher. A few amendments were made based on this discussion.

Table 4.23: Overarching Themes and Definitions

Overarching themes	**Definition**
Relationships	The connection or bond between two or more people
Structures and Systems	Parts of the wider school and beyond which impact children
Child-Centred	Prioritising the interests and needs of children
Team Identity	The phenomena of individual team members that make a group of people into a cohesive team

Table 4.24: Sub-themes and Definitions

Sub-themes	Definition
Boundaries and Expectations	Having clear and consistent rules and limits for behaviour
Environment	Features of the school setting
Ethos	Beliefs and ideals of the school
Vocation	A career which is seen as worthy and requiring dedication
Values	Principles a person holds
Team	A group of people working together to achieve a common goal
Attachment and Emotional Containment	An emotional connection between adults and children
Staff-Parent Relationship	The ways these two groups of people regard and behave towards each other
Value Wellbeing Core	Note the centrality of wellbeing to a child's overall development
Unique Child	Seeing children as individuals
Flourish	Grow or develop successfully
Positive Interactions	Co-operative social communication
Collaboration	Working together to achieve something
Parent Voice	Parents feeling listened to
School Building	Features of the school building
Funding	Money provided by external sources, including the government
Staff knowledge	Information and skills that staff have through experience and education
Curriculum	Lessons and content in a school setting
Expansive Curriculum	Access to a broad curriculum
Extra Curricula	Access to activities after core school hours
Community Links	A group of people living in the same area

4.8 Findings summary

Overlaps in themes between both participant groups were identified during the analysis process. These themes have been merged to form overarching themes to represent the common positive core as well as identifying each group's overarching themes, which are represented in Figure 4.12 below.

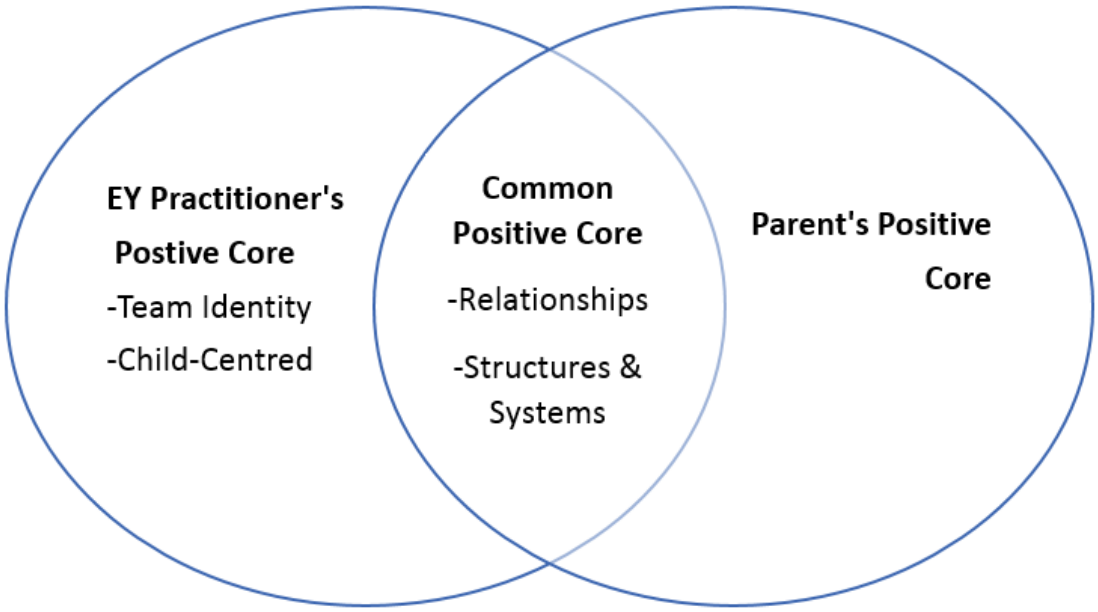


Figure 4.12: Venn diagram of positive core

4.9.Process Evaluation

This section presents the outcomes for Research Question 2: Has the process of AI had a transformative impact on the Early Years Foundation Stage setting?
Bushe and Kassam's (2005) evaluative process-oriented dimensions are explored here by synthesizing multiple perspectives of those who participated.

Table 4.25 presents a summary of evidence gathered from the process evaluation phase of this research. The information gathered from the interviews with participants suggests that overall this AI has demonstrated transformative change, with four out of five of Bushe and Kassam's (2005) Key Evaluative Dimensions being met.

Table 4.25: Process Evaluation summary of evidence for transformational change

Key Evaluative Dimensions	Met/Unmet	Evidence
Transformative	✓	Scores given by all participants were 7 out of 10 and above for level of perceived transformative impact.
Knowledge-Process	✓	New insight that arose that both groups of participants want the same thing for the children.
Generative Metaphor	✓	Metaphor of 'community', evidence for this throughout all AI phases (See Section 5.2.1.3)
Figure-Ground	✓	Scores given indicate scope for actions being 7 out of 10 and above. Indication that EY staff recruited a parent to work in setting, which was due to AI process.
Improvisation-Implementation	x	Staff feel able to carry out some actions independently, however they also acknowledged that they are constrained by 'top down' processes. This is therefore seen as an implementation approach.

4.9.1 Transformational Dimension

All the participants responses indicated that there had been a perceived change in the system with their ratings out of a possible 10.

The SENCo gave ratings for the initial draft programme as a whole:

> *10… Why, because it's an opportunity to really transform current practice and make it all about the children more than the subjects and I think that, and that parental engagement with us, which I feel is missing or lacking, would help strengthen those relationships between us, the child, parent, to make it more of a holistic approach for everybody really, for the interest of the child.*

And then for the initial actions from the AI:

> *I would probably put them at a 9 to a 10, because particularly the child led interest assemblies, because I don't think we do that enough, we haven't got the child's voice, so I think that would be really impactful and Thrive information with parents because they know we're a Thrive school, they know about you know, they hear it banded about but they don't understand the process of it, what it all means, so I think that for them would be really quite*

enlightening for them as parents so I think those two in particular I would probably say a 10.

And the coffee mornings, I think that would start off quite small and be quite small impact but I think once word of mouth got out, I think that would be potential to get people involved and to let them know that actually their voice does matter, it's not just us that they are the primary educators as well as us, well more so than us, so I think yeah that has got the potential to be a 10 definitely.

There was agreement with these ratings in the EY practitioner and parent focus group.

EY practitioner 1 shared:

I'd put them very close to the top because it's going to build bonds between parents and the teachers and all of the staff. It's going to make this more of a community led building which it should be anyway. It is a community building, schools always should be. I think for the children with the interest led assemblies, it's massive and for the children with the coffee mornings, because parents get to know each other, and it can unravel so many other things and Thrive as well… I think I'd say about an 8.

Parent 1 added:

Thrive, I suppose if I was a parent who understood it and could implement it, and needed to implement it, if I understand the purpose of it correctly, then it would be massive, because you get to interact with the teachers and your child together as a group and that could be huge for someone I think. Coffee mornings, they would be nice, and you know you get to see other parents and you can discuss things, and as we've just said it becomes more of a community area then. School isn't just something there where your kids go and that you don't really understand, it becomes more like a, a "normal." And then the assemblies, I could just imagine (my child) would probably be terrified, going "I couldn't possibly go up in the front", but if she saw someone like me or Dad up there or someone else's parents, then she would. She always talks about the news reel or what we talked about in assembly, so I think that would be great.

So, I suppose all of them would be kind of considered up pretty high, 7 or 8ish.

4.9.2 Knowledge-Process Dimension

The knowledge gained throughout the AI process was that both school staff and parents want the same thing for the children.

EY practitioner 1:

I think the feeling that we all want the same thing, definitely. The positivity of the things that could like you said (to parent) unravel from it and it could just build massively.

Parent 1:

Because we're not just parents are we, we're parents with knowledge and education and jobs that could be very beneficial for everyone.

EY Practitioner 1:

And people that care, if you care, what bad things can it bring, it can only bring good things can't it.

This was echoed in my interview with the SENCo:

I don't know if it's been any knowledge but what it certainly has done is when I hear colleagues and parents talk is that we all want the same thing. And I think when you're in a busy role and you're here, there and everywhere that you sometimes forget that we are all in it for the same reason and sometimes it can feel a bit disjointed but actually it sort of confirms for me that they want, parents want this as much as we do, or the staff that were involved. And so, I think for me it was that. I dunno, but again that validation that this is what needs to happen.

One parent also talked about gaining knowledge of how the school functions.

Parent 1:

I didn't know of Thrive before, that's new to me, obviously, because I've never heard of it. I suppose the inner workings of a school, yes I've been to school

but that was in a completely different country, I'm not from here, so I know my children go to school, but once they go to school and that door closes, what they do in there I have no idea. Because you wouldn't know.

When the AI started it became apparent in the 'Discovery' phase that EY practitioners and parents had differing views on the school's positive core (See Figure 4.2 & 4.3). It was disheartening to see parents struggle at first to name positives about the school. There were times when the parents used the chance for reflection to share their negative experiences about the school, as they perhaps had not previously had the opportunity to do so. For both groups to then come to the realisation by the 'Integrated Design' phase that they both wanted the same things for the children was enlightening for all of us to see. The AI appeared to break down barriers between two separate groups and in its place reveal knowledge that everyone is on the same page.

4.9.3 Generative Metaphor Dimension

Parent 1 was quick to identify a metaphor which resonated with her:

Community, I think is what I think about when I look at this, because that's what we all are, we're all part of a whole community and that's what we want. We want to be able to interact with each other and exchange information, all for the wellness of our children really.

This was echoed by others in the group:

EY Practitioner 1:

Yeah and I was going to say working together.

Clare:

Is that under that umbrella of community?

EY Practitioner 1:

Yeah it is,

EY Practitioner 2:

Yeah because that's what it's all about isn't it, partnerships.

Clare:

Okay, any others?

EY Practitioner 1:

Strength, I just think it would make everything so much stronger.

Parent 1:

Because there's so much possibility just lying waiting. It's like you said (EY practitioner 1) about you seen this lady that's now going to come and work, but if you weren't interacting with her maybe at the gate, or wherever you met and started talking or unravelling each other then you never would have come up with that and that's what it's about as well.

EY Practitioner 1:

And that's what we say because we have that opportunity and that's what we want throughout the school. We have the opportunities and we have the time to speak to people, we do actually get to know them and they get to know us, because by the end of the year you're no longer oh like Mrs X or (name), as they call me now, I'm just I'm a person, I'm a human being who wants to help their children, that's it and at the end of the day that's what I am. I'm not a title, I'm a person.

EY Practitioner 2:

It breaks those barriers down, because some parents are a bit nervous about talking with us.

EY Practitioner 1:

And that's all we want really isn't is, we want exactly what you (parents) want really, we've just got stupid titles, that sometimes do put barriers up and they do.

The SENCo did not name a metaphor as such, but was able to talk about what the *process of AI meant for her, which appeared to centre around her feeling of 'vocation':*

... I think for me it was a validation of everything that I believe in as a professional, as a Teacher as well as a parent and then I think I was in a meeting earlier where we talked about an ex-colleague who had sadly passed away and one of the colleagues who used to work here, 15 years ago, who retired had said that that member of staffs core belief was you look at the children as humans and you sought to understand that before the academic stuff matters and falls into line and that resonated with me because I thought yeah that's absolutely what we're about or we should be about and so to hear that from an ex-colleague who I worked with who was my phase leader years ago and thinking of our ex deputy head, I thought yeah, that's what it's all about and so that and then coming in and seeing this (poster journey) now is like, that's what it's all about, it's all about the child first and then everything else will follow. It's those relationships, that nurturing, the patience and the time and also with the parents those things, because I think sometimes the parents just need that little bit of reassurance that you're on their side and it's not them and us, so I think for me it's sort of like revisiting, being reborn, in that sense of that's what for me it is all about and everything else will come naturally after that.

For me I felt that the 'community' metaphor resonates strongly as it's a theme which featured as a thread which appears throughout each phase the AI process both explicitly and implicitly through actions and words.

4.9.4 Figure-Ground Dimension

All participants indicated that they thought there was good to major scope for the actions which arose out of the AI.

SENCo:

Achievable, yeah. They're very quick fixes that could happen very quickly… I think it's because it's something that doesn't take a lot of organisation, it's something that you know we could do very quickly, the coffee mornings could be set up very quickly, you could have a couple of dates in the diary, get them up and running. The child led interest assemblies, that's something again that

could happen because we've got lots of children who do lots of things outside of school which we don't always know about.

Then the Thrive information, that might be a bit trickier because it depends on staff availability and when you can do that, but you could do that perhaps at quarter past nine on a Tuesday morning when there's no assemblies and parents could be invited in to those then and staff could lead on that. So yeah, they are very achievable.

During the focus group with EY practitioners and parents, one of the EY practitioners was able to talk about her experience, whereby since the AI she has approached a parent to come and work in their setting.

Clare:

(To early years practitioner 1) *Would you like to talk about, because I didn't record you earlier when you were saying what has happened since the AI and you asking that parent to come into school, would you mind sharing that?*

EY Practitioner 1:

No, we have a parent who probably not had the best background at school, who is really lovely with children, is lovely with the staff and very caring. I've seen examples of things she's doing for other families outside of school through things that have been said and things that have happened and I was talking to (EY Lead) and we started discussing about what we could actually do for this particular lady who is lovely. And we said it would be a wonderful idea if she came in and worked with us. So I went out and suggested it to her and she was really up for it and we've already said to her that if she really likes it, we think it would be wonderful if she went and did a bit more education herself and we'd support her through it, which we will. And she's coming in! We've had permission for her to come in, so it will be lovely… And I think as well with her coming in, that's gonna trickle out, because she's going to be saying 'I'm going up to school and I'm doing this and doing that', we could get more people that want to come in.

Again, in the focus group (Beginning-Destiny phase), there was acknowledgement of the potential scope of the actions, but also a realisation that this would also require support from higher up in the school:

EY Practitioner 1:

I think they would probably have to be done so many at a time, a few at a time and like I said they would have to be given time to be embedded and to get people interested.

EY practitioner 2:

It's all doable by us, but it needs to be started from the top down, it has to be agreed up there and then…

EY practitioner 1:

I think there will be enough people that will be interested, because when you listen in the staff room, they say exactly the same things as we do don't they.

Clare:

Okay, so in terms of scope for the programme, a bit like before, so if 0 would be there's no scope for the programme to happen and 10 would be major scope, what rating would you give.

Parent 1:

…Well if they came into place that would be amazing.

EY Practitioner 1:

If we can get the backing to do it, I would say a 9, if we can get the backing to do it because I think the support will be there.

Clare:

Any other ratings?

Parent 2:

I'd say 8.

EY Practitioner 2:

I think between a 7 and an 8 depending on how it trickles down through school.

4.9.5 Improvisation-Implementation Dimension

The responses to this dimension appeared to demonstrate an implementation approach over an improvised one. The SENCo for example shared that as different people have different roles within school, the actions they carry out are likely to be different:

I would say with enthusiasm and drive actually, particularly around the Thrive and I think particularly with the child led interest assemblies, I think those would be very achievable.

…Once dates are set, staff are very good at getting things going and I think the Thrive definitely, because you've got our learning mentor, our deputy. The child led interest [assemblies] I think children would be up for that straight away and the coffee mornings that's something that we can do, so yeah I think with enthusiasm definitely.

Clare:

Okay, do you think you'll be able to carry out the actions that you feel most passionately about independently?

SENCo:

…Yeah, I could start the coffee mornings up, I might perhaps do the child led interest assemblies. I wouldn't probably do Thrive, that would be another colleague.

Clare:

If there are any that are not, then why is that?

SENCo:

That would probably come down to experience and it's somebody else remit more than mine, so the learning mentor tends to do more of the Thrive than I

do and the deputy, they've both done the family training as well so it would probably be more their expertise than mine for that.

The EY practitioners expanded on this further in the focus group by sharing that although they would be keen to take part in carrying out the actions from the AI, they perceived that they will need permission and direction from those 'higher up' in the system than them:

EY practitioner 1:

Little bits at a time probably, because you'd have to embed each one, make sure it's working properly and then do your next one.

EY practitioner 2:

It's finding time for a lot of those things, if like we're back to coffee mornings again, like if they want certain staff to come in and talk about certain things, then it's arranging the cover and things like that. Each one of those things will possibly have something that needs to be rearranged in order for that to move into practice.

EY practitioner 1:

To do it, yeah, because they do like the clubs and that don't they.

EY practitioner 2:

The problem is we have very little time in the day don't we, the teachers are here late and here early, all their time if filled, so it is difficult for them so it would take some manoeuvrability, moving around.

Clare:

Do you think you'll be able to carry out any of these actions that you feel most passionately about independently?

EY practitioner 1:

…I've gotta be honest, anything on there, I'd be willing to get involved with some of it, but I couldn't get involved with all of it obviously, because that

wouldn't be possible. But I don't think anybody would actually want to do it alone. I think you would want somebody with you.

Parent 1:

As parents I suppose we can't really do much, but I would definitely help out with the Retreat space if there was anything between 10 and 2 if I wasn't doing anything else.

EY practitioner 1:

I think the coffee thing, could be done, because it might not just be a morning, it might be an afternoon, that might be at any time during the day, I think. But I think parents will get involved with that and I think they'll help run it, I don't think that'll just be us, I think parents will help run that, because in a way they will be the leads in that for what they need. If somebody wants to know about dyslexia, alright we've got to go back and try and find somebody to come in and talk about it, but that'll be generated by what you're (parents) saying really.

EY practitioner 2:

I think because we're TA's, it's very hard for us to go in and say, 'right we're going to start doing this', do you know what I mean, we always have to seek permission don't we.

EY practitioner 1:

We get involved with most things don't we, but it trickles down because we're like, I don't wanna say this in the wrong way, but we're like, the bottom echelon if you like, we do do a lot of things, and we get involved in so much, that people don't even know we're involved in, but we're always the last person to know, because we're the last sort of layer of the pack if you like.

EY practitioner 2:

We're sort of like the jugglers, like juggling everything aren't we, trying to keep it all up.

EY practitioner 1:

We're always willing to get involved, but we have to be told by someone else really.

4.9.6 Concluding comments

Although this piece of research has concluded, the AI process of the school in improving the promotion children's wellbeing is only just beginning and will hopefully lead to more sustained changes in the long term.

A future consideration could be to hold a meeting with senior management to review actions taken, this would be similar to Pahil (2019) using a hybrid change approach (i.e., bottom up inquiry and top-down planning) as adopted by Waters & White (2015).

4.9.7 Reflections

This section will further explore the outcomes for Research Question 2: Has the process of AI had a transformative impact on the Early Years Foundation Stage setting?

I asked the participants for their reflections on AI at the end of each phase (Discovery, Dream, Design). Participant reflections were captured on flipchart paper. Participants were asked for their reflections on AI at the end of the 'Beginning-Destiny' phase, which were audio recorded and transcribed. Transcribed audio data from the 'Beginning-Destiny' phase is also presented throughout where it pertains to participants reflections on the AI. I also captured my own reflections on each phase in my research diary which will also be presented to further triangulate the data.

4.9.7.1 Reflections on the 'Discovery' phase

Please see Appendix P for EY practitioner and parent flipchart reflections as well as my research diary reflections for this phase.

The EY practitioners had a positive 'Discovery' session to the extent where their positive energy following the session inspired another member of staff to take part. Their reflections on this phase included that they felt the topic of wellbeing was 'relevant and pertinent'. They felt that the focus group and linked semi-structured questions allowed them to feel 'comfortable, open to share and safe.' When asked

what emotions were evoked, responses included ‘pride’, ‘love for your friends’ (in reference to colleagues), ‘respect’ and ‘valued’.

The parent ‘Discovery’ session was not matched with the same feeling of positive energy, this is not only reflected in their positive core where they were not able to identify any ‘values’ that the school holds (See Figure 4.2) but also during their reflections. They shared that they need to be ‘a warrior’ to get child’s needs met and spoke of wanting an increased quantity and quality of communication from staff. Parents felt that the topic of wellbeing is ‘important to steer away from academics in the EYs and have a focus on wellbeing because when children are happy, they are in a better place to learn.’ They felt ‘what went well’ included the chance to ‘have discussions’ and ‘not feel alone’. However, in terms of what emotions were evoked for them they responded ‘upset’, ‘angry’ and ‘annoyed.’

One parent shared that she would like more understanding of what actually happens in school. I believe that the AI process helped this to happen for her as she was the parent who when asked about if any knowledge had been gained from the AI process in the ‘Beginning-Destiny’ phase commented:

The inner workings of a school…

I reflected that the ‘Discovery’ phase with EY practitioners felt energised and they were engaged with the session, they were able to give detailed stories and were supportive and attuned to one another. One EY practitioner reflected that it felt good to reflect as they wanted to ‘focus more on 90% of good work (they do) and do this more with parents.’

4.9.7.2 Reflections on the ‘Dream’ phase

Please see Appendix P for EY practitioner and parent flipchart reflections as well as my research diary reflections for this phase.

In the ‘Dream’ phase, again EY practitioners felt that this session was ‘enjoyable’ and ‘positive’. They also felt it was ‘a safe space to be open and honest.’ Emotions evoked for EY practitioners in this phase linked back to their ‘Discovery’ experience with one word: ‘pride’.

Reflections of parents started to shift to the positive in the 'Dream' phase. They reflected that the discussion in this phase 'felt nice' and that they were 'productive – lots of points (to make)'. Parents feel that they 'share the same vision but reality knocks us down.' The emotions of the parents sharply contrasted how they felt in the 'Discovery' phase, as they reported feeling 'positive' and 'hopeful'.

Initially I had concerns with attendance levels at the 'Dream' phase for EY practitioners as one staff member was absent due to internal pressures and another member did not attend due to her attendance being needed at a training course. However, another staff member joined this session. Despite initial concerns, the session ran well, staff gave rich descriptions; for example 'it's the spine' when referring to the EY curriculum and there was good engagement with all activities. When they thought about the 'wish' (during the Dream phase), negative comments and feelings were felt, with staff reflecting on how things used to be, 'we used to have parent assemblies.'

4.9.7.3 Reflections on the 'Design' phase

Please see Appendix P for EY practitioner and parent flipchart reflections as well as my research diary reflections for this phase.

The EY practitioners reflected that this phase 'brings it all together'. Interestingly this is another phase where there were contrasting emotions experiences by both groups.

The EY practitioners reflected that they felt 'angry', 'disappointed', 'helpless' and 'slightly demoralised'. Staff explained this further by sharing that these feelings were evoked because their discussions in the 'Design' phase about what they would like to see were things that the school used to do years ago under previous management, 'we did it so well.' Their feelings were evident from phrases they were using too, including 'I feel like a little fish in a big pond.' One of the EY practitioners then went on to say she felt 'hopeful' and this led others to agree and say they felt 'passion', 'empowered' and 'driven' to make these changes happen.

Parents reflected that the 'Design' phase 'felt doable' (actions), 'something can be done on every aspect of our dream to make things better.' The parent group again reflected what they felt in the 'Dream' phase, by sharing that the main emotion that was evoked for them was 'hope'.

As noted in my research diary (Appendix P) there was great engagement from both groups in the 'Design' phase, I could see it was a challenging session for the staff who were reflecting on previous practice and how this made them feel. It was pleasing to see that they were able to identify that this was not a reflection on them and their practice but rather about their frustrations of practice they do not see in higher year groups in the school.

4.9.7.4 Summary of key emotions evoked during AI phases

Tables 4.26 and 4.27 summarise the key emotions that were evoked for participants, which they shared during the conclusion of each phase of the first three phases of AI and which me and my colleague wrote onto flipchart paper.

Table 4.26: EY practitioners emotions evoked during Appreciative Inquiry phases

	Discovery	Dream	Design
EY practitioners	*Pride* *Love for your friends* *Respect* *Valued*	*Pride*	*Angry* *Disappointed* *Helpless* *Slightly Demoralised* *Hopeful* *Passion* *Empowered* *Driven*

Table 4.27: Parent emotions evoked during Appreciative Inquiry phases

	Discovery	Dream	Design
Parents	*Upset* *Angry* *Annoyed*	*Positive* *Hopeful*	*Hope*

4.9.7.5 Reflections on the 'Integrated Design' session

Unfortunately, there was not time at the end of the session to gather the groups reflections on this session. However, I captured my own reflections which are as follows. I was initially worried about how open the groups would be with each other as their 'positive core' differed greatly and emotions were varying at different stages of the process for each group. Despite concerns, the integrated group worked well together, and I think this is because they recognised early on that they had a shared vision moving forward (See Section 4.8.2). I felt that there was a strong sense and theme of 'community' running through this session.

4.9.7.6 Reflections on the overall process of AI

A concluding question asked to the participants during the audio recorded process evaluation was 'Are there any other thoughts you have about the process of AI?' Feedback indicated that participants found it an enjoyable experience, 'I think it's been great' and 'I really enjoyed it'. The SENCo reflected on how she felt it contributed to positive change:

> *I think as a school we got to the point where we were feeling quite stagnant… I think when you strip it back and you do appreciate what you do do, you sort of think, 'gosh, yes we do make a difference.' We have got the child's best interests at heart, we are desperate to work closely with families and to make a difference. So for me it's been and I know people like EY practitioner 1 and others who have been involved have felt quite empowered by it… you feel empowered that you can, because sometimes you feel like it's a top down model and that, the pressure comes from government and all that but when you're in it at a grassroots level, you sometimes feel that that gets lost, but when you look at it like that (points to poster journey) you think, 'gosh, we're doing a great job really.'*

The SENCo also spoke of the emotional side of the AI process:

> *I think it's been a really useful process, because it really does make you think about what you do day by day, because I think you just come in and you just get on with it but when you strip it back and look at what you actually do, it does make you feel proud to be in that role. So I think, when we first started it I felt quite emotional about some of it because I thought, and I think some of my colleagues felt the same, I'm quite passionate about, yes we do make a difference and we have got a voice and we would like things to be, they're not bad, but we'd like them to be better, you know, for everybody. So yeah, I've found it a useful and powerful tool and for us I suppose the excitement is now how we move on with it.*

EY practitioners found it useful to have the time to reflect on their practice, '

> EY practitioner 1:

I think it's been quite nice to actually talk about the things we do and our feelings and actually just some self-reflection I think and when we (staff) were all talking, how we were praising each other, and I think that was really nice and it sort of built our own little team didn't it.

One parent reflected similar in terms of increased communication:

Parent 1:

I think it's broken down some barriers between parents and teachers and doing this has sort of allowed us to come into the school and for a reason, whereas before you come into school but it's not the same, you don't get that time to talk or give your opinions, so it's been good.

The SENCo reflected that it was nice to listen to the viewpoints of parents who were new to school and who were able to offer a fresh perspective:

It's nice to have fresh eyes on it and I thought that what they said and what they offered was valuable. So yeah that was interesting for me and they embraced it as well, they were really wholeheartedly wanting to be involved in making things better for their children.

There was also an energised dialogue between two of the EY practitioners about moving the AI forwards:

EY practitioner 1:

It would be nice to have informal meetings actually, even if it was just the four of us and then drag other people in as well (laughs), literally 'come on, you're coming!' …It would be nice because at the same time we do all of this and we don't want it to start slipping backwards, if we do manage to get it, then I wanna know we're getting it right.

EY practitioner 2:

We need to strike while the irons hot, we've started now.

EY practitioner 1:

And it is going in the right direction that people want and that's why you still need that contact I think, because we won't know it from your side (to parents) and you won't know it from ours will you.

Participants were also asked if they could think of improvements to the current AI process, the first suggestion was about size of the participant sample and can be seen in the dialogue below:

EY practitioner 1:

Probably if there'd have been more of us, because then you get people with different ideas.

EY practitioner 2:

Then again, there wasn't many parents that wanted to come in was there.

The SENCo echoed this in her response too:

It would have been nice to have some more parents, but that's where we're at with our parents, so there's a few that will engage and a few that are not quite ready to but hopefully this (points to poster journey) would help with future things, yeah definitely.

Other methodological improvements that were suggested included giving more notice to parents as they reported short timelines between being given the information leaflet about the research and then coming in to take part. This will be explored further in the Discussion (See Section 5.6.3).

Another point raised was to gather the voice of the child.

EY practitioner 2:

I think it might have been interesting, a little consultation with some children, see what their thoughts or ideas might have been.

This was discussed with the Headteacher at the start of the research, but due to limited timescales it was agreed that this could become a future consideration of the AI following the conclusion of this original AI.

This leads on to the last reflections which were to ask participants if there is a central topic they would like to see for change in a future AI.

The SENCo's choice was on the topic of behaviour:

> *For me, and that's just my opinion, it would be around respectful behaviours consistently across the board.*
>
> Clare:
>
> *From children?*
>
> SENCo:
>
> *From staff as well… So because I feel that some of our rules and routines have got a little bit shambolic and we're not picking up on them enough, but I think we need almost a clear drive and everybody does it because it's a bit hit and miss and I feel then that again doesn't help with children's ability to be available to learn because it's like 'oh we can do what we like' and I feel like that would be a good one, and as many people as possible, because I think parents worry about that, staff worry about that because it adds to your own wellbeing levels… if you're constantly dealing with behaviour that's you know... For me that's what I would say.*

The EY practitioners and parent focus group talked at length about the topic of funding and the impact it could have. They were reluctant to call the topic 'funding' initially and felt it was more about using the funding to become 'self-sufficient funding that regenerates itself' and the wider impact this would have on the school system, which is detailed in the extract below:

> Parent 1:
>
> *I think everything comes down to funding all the time, because remember last time we were discussing these, 'oh we did that, but funding…' it always comes back to the F word, which is funding and it's just, but we can't let that beat us you know, because there's so much you can do if you just involve what's already accessible which is grandparents, parents, whatever, if they can be brought into school and be part of school, then maybe that's a step towards achieving stuff without funding.*

EY practitioner 2:

I think it would have a knock-on effect, parents come in more, they'll want to help out with friends of [school name], they'll be more money made, then because people would come to all of the things that we have on and then we'd have more money.

Parent 1:

There would be more of a buzz and a positive thing.

EY practitioner 2:

And the allotment, you'd get the allotment going with parents help and then we could sell the veg or use it at school and save money, we'd all eventually help the funding.

EY practitioner 1:

Yeah because that's what we're doing, we're growing veg, and ask the parents for 10p for a bag of beans so that we can buy it in the following year and then pass on what we've got for you guys (Reception class).

EY practitioner 2:

The partnership with parents is the foundation and then we can build on that.

4.9.7.8 Summary

The key findings which have been identified in this chapter will be further expanded upon and discussed in the following chapter within the context of current literature and theoretical insights.

Chapter 5 Discussion

5.1 Introduction to chapter

This chapter will present the findings of the current research in relation to the Research Questions and existing research and theoretical bases. Throughout the discussion I will highlight shared themes between participant groups and themes which occurred throughout the AI process. The strengths and limitations of this current research are then considered by evaluating the research's methodology, aims and original contribution. This is followed by implications, directions for future research and my reflections on the process and conclusions.

5.2. Summary of Findings in the Current Research

The findings of the current study will now be discussed in relation to Research Question 1: 'What facilitative factors are perceived to promote wellbeing in children within an Early Years Foundation Stage setting in a school, according to the views of EY practitioners and parents?'

Each theme will be discussed in relation to previous research and I will relate the findings to the Qualitative Research Synthesis. First, the themes will be explored from the 'Common Positive Core', as shown in Figure 5.1.

5.2.1. Overarching Theme: Relationships

The theme of relationships was widely evident throughout the AI process for both groups of participants. Although the overarching theme was the same for both groups, the sub-themes within varied.

EY practitioners focused on attachment and emotional containment when referring to their relationships with the children. It was clear to see that EY practitioners had a good understanding of attachment theory, for example they spoke of '*containment*', '*attunement*' and '*secure base'* in the 'Discovery' phase.

EY practitioners also spoke of staff-parent relationships, wanting parents to feel welcomed to the school, noting the importance of building trust with parents. EY

practitioners felt that parents value the work that they do and that this is evident through gestures from parents, such as 'thank you' cards.

The Relationships theme for parents focused more on the elements that support staff-parent relationships such as positive interactions and collaboration. Parents talked of positive interactions with staff and the value of collaboration, working with staff at school to feel listened to, with the goal of promoting wellbeing for their children.

Parents highlighted within this theme their role as an advocate for their child, to ensure the child's needs are met.

5.2.2 Theme Interpretation and Links to Existing Research

This theme relates strongly to previous research, with all studies included in the Qualitative Research Synthesis presenting with the theme of Relationships and PSED (Robson, Brogaard-Clausen and Hargreaves, 2017; Bertagno, 2016; Aubrey and Ward, 2013; Mooney et al., 2008 and Roberts, 2007) . There were several sub-themes to this in the literature, including the importance of teacher-parent and teacher-child relationships, friendships in young children and PSED elements which form the basis of relationships. In line with the current study, previous research emphasised the importance of the key person approach for developing a child's wellbeing (Robson, Brogaard-Clausen and Hargreaves, 2017; Bertagno, 2016). Elements of building teacher-child relationships also features such as emotional containment (Bertagno, 2016) along with attachment theory (Robson, Brogaard-Clausen & Hargreaves, 2017).

The theme of staff-parent relationships resonates with previous research, particularly the importance of engaging parents to promote a child's wellbeing (Mooney et al., 2008; Bertagno, 2016 and Robson, Brogaard-Clausen and Hargreaves, 2017).

5.2.3 Overarching Theme: Structures & Systems

Both participant groups referred to the importance of ethos, with EY practitioners feeling that a caring ethos is facilitative for wellbeing. Parents referred to ethos when thinking about the school's values. Parents were aware that the school have an ethos in place, but it did not appear to have the same emotional connotation as the EY practitioners who view children as being at the heart of the ethos.

Given the context of the school (see Methodology section 3.3.9.1) it was not surprising to see that parents view the new school building as a facilitative factor to their child's wellbeing. This is in place of the old building which had many physical faults, including leaking rainwater into classrooms. Parents noted the physical aspects of the building, whereas EY practitioners referred to the 'feel' of the school environment. This is similar to the sub-theme of ethos, where the language used by EY practitioners brought the school environment to life. For example, some of the words used by the EY practitioners to describe the school environment were 'enticing', 'accepting' and 'safe'. This coincides with the idea in AI that the language people use create their reality (Cooperrider and Srivastva, 1987).

EY practitioners value having clear boundaries and expectations with the children they work with, feeling that the consistency modelled to them helps the children to know what is expected of them on a daily basis and in turn building trust and respectful relationships. This for me links to the parents' theme of staff-knowledge. Parents valued both the skills and knowledge that staff have in relation to supporting their child's development and wellbeing, ranging from the specific knowledge they hold for supporting children's needs including Special Educational Needs (SEN) and English as an Additional Language (EAL), but also the daily knowledge of 'knowing' their child well.

Parents acknowledged quite early on in the process that they view funding as a facilitative factor for their child's wellbeing at school. Parents see funding as vital in being able to give their children access to a wide range of learning opportunities which would be difficult to provide without this external funding.

Parent views also highlight the curriculum as a key facilitative factor for their children. Parents spoke extensively about the range of opportunities that their children have access to at school, both during school hours and after that they feel facilitates their child's wellbeing.

A systemic facilitative factor for EY practitioners from the beginning of the AI process has been community links. The EY practitioners see themselves and the school as part of a wider system and appreciate the roles that others play in supporting the

children they work with. The local context is important to EY practitioners and is something they feel they impact through their work.

As noted earlier, parents did not articulate community links as a facilitative factor during the 'Discovery' phase, however, this theme began to emerge explicitly for them as the AI developed. For example, in the 'Dream' phase, parents' wishes referred to community, 'chance of community activities' and it was also mentioned in their aspiration statement, "By the end of the year 2020, what we most aspire to a shared sense of community where there are happier staff and children thriving in a safe environment, open for the community throughout the year with a broader range of activities to support wellness." In the 'Design' phase, one of the parents draft provocative propositions was 'School is open for community activities after school hours and during holidays. During the Process Evaluation (Beginning-Destiny Phase), when asked if the AI had generated a metaphor for them, one parent was quick to answer 'community', which was corroborated with other members of the group. Therefore, although community did not feature as an overarching theme for parents in their positive core, I feel that it is something they aspired to wanting (as expressed during Dream and Design Phases) and by the 'Beginning-Destiny' phase, it is something that became actualised for them through the language they used (Bushe & Kassam, 2005).

5.2.4 Theme Interpretation and Links to Existing Research

The importance of a supportive ethos, one which is caring and where children are at the heart of it is noted in previous research (Mooney, et al., 2008; Bertagno, 2016).This ties in with the notion that all staff should have a shared responsibility for promoting wellbeing (Mooney et al., 2008). Having a positive and universal focus on wellbeing which is reflected in the school ethos is also recommended in the systematic literature review by Weare (2015).

Staff knowledge was a theme in this current research which is supported by previous research whereby wellbeing is promoted where staff have a good understanding of the importance of childhood (Robson, Brogaard-Clausen & Hargreaves, 2017). This can be enhanced by further staff training both at regional and national levels (Mooney et al., 2008; Bertagno, 2016).

Funding is also highlighted in previous research (Robson, Brogaard-Clausen & Hargreaves, 2017; Mooney at al., 2008) as being crucial in promoting children's wellbeing, which was a theme identified by parents in this research.

The importance of providing children with clear and consistent boundaries underpinned by a whole-setting approach (Robson, Brogaard-Clausen & Hargreaves, 2017, Bertagno 2016; Roberts, 2007) is also identified in previous research as being invaluable when promoting wellbeing in children.

Resources in schools are noted in the literature as important in promoting wellbeing (Mooney et al., 2008), resources as a term can cover a vast amount, for example ranging from classroom equipment to suitable space outside for children to access physical activity. In this current research, it was the school building and environment that is felt to be an important structure which can promote wellbeing in children.

In terms of community links, we can look to the previous research that highlights the impact of a child's religion and culture on their wellbeing (Robson, Brogaard-Clausen and Hargreaves, 2017; Aubrey and Ward, 2013; Mooney at al., 2008). Important considerations that were highlighted in previous research included the need for EY practitioners to be respectful of the child and their parents' cultural background (Mooney at al., 2008). I believe this features in the current research with the EY practitioners acknowledging that they work as part of wider system outside the school and that they want parents to feel welcome in school.

5.2.5 Individual Group Themes

All the Parent's overarching themes overlapped with those of the EY practitioners. Two further overarching themes arose for the EY practitioners group which will be explored now.

5.2.6 EY practitioners Overarching Theme: Child-Centred

EY practitioners agreed that having the child front and foremost in their minds is key to facilitating their wellbeing. EY practitioners acknowledged that they value the unique child and see that supporting the development of wellbeing provides the basis for the child to flourish.

5.2.7 Theme Interpretation and Links to Existing Research

This theme features heavily in the literature and is also linked to the EYFS statutory framework with one of its four key principles being “every child is a unique child” (DfE, 2017). Previous research explores this theme further, with findings showing the importance of listening to children (Robson, Brogaard-Clausen & Hargreaves, 2017; Bertagno, 2016) and giving children a sense of agency (Robson, Brogaard-Clausen & Hargreaves, 2017; Roberts, 2007).

5.2.8 EY practitioners Overarching Theme: Team Identity

EY practitioners presented with a strong sense of team identity, noting the features that made them a distinguishable team from others. EY practitioners and the SENCo both spoke of their role being a vocation, talking about going above and beyond their job role to meet children’s needs. They see themselves as different from other teams and other schools, often talking about what makes them unique and how they put the children first before themselves. The EY practitioners could articulate the values they held that are important to their team identity. For example, valuing inclusion, equality and honesty. The sense of belonging they felt as a team enables them to work effectively together to facilitate the promotion of children’s wellbeing.

5.2.9 Theme Interpretation and Links to Existing Research

Team identity again parallels previous research, with the importance of working as a team and having support from management, working as a team and sharing concerns with colleagues can support staff wellbeing too (Bertagno, 2016).

5.3 Theoretical interpretations of Findings

I will now explore the psychological theories which support the current themes for this study.

5.3.1 Bronfenbrenner’s Bioecological model

In Chapter 2, I spoke about Bronfenbrenner’s social ecological model and how it represents the child’s interactions with the world and in turn how this can impact on wellbeing (Section 2.3.3).

The four overarching themes found in this study which promote children’s wellbeing can be mapped onto Bronfenbrenner’s bioecological model and can be seen in Figure

5.2. The four themes are written in red text boxes and the arrows demonstrate the link between the theme and the associated layer in the system.

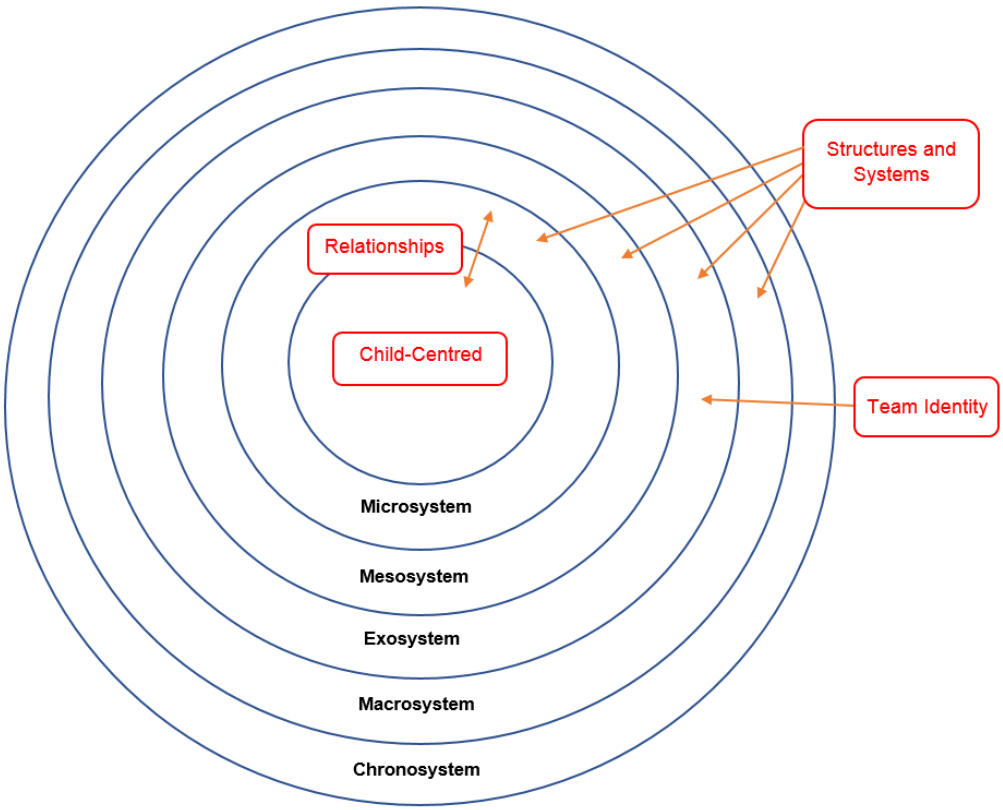


Figure 5.1: Themes from the study mapped onto Bronfenbrenner's bioecological model

The 'child-centred' theme reflects the individual child at the centre of the system and is thus mapped on the central part.

The two-way arrow for the theme of 'Relationships' shows the bidirectional exchange between the child and the microsystem, but also appears in the mesosystem, reflecting the communication between those around the child.

The 'Team-identity' theme of the EY practitioners is mapped onto the exosystem, as this is an indirect factor which can affect the child.

The theme of 'Structures and systems' is mapped onto several layers in the model. This covers sub-themes ranging from ethos (microsystem), school building/environment (microsystem), staff knowledge (exosystem), culture (macrosystem) and community links (micro to macrosystem). The sub-theme of 'community links' is represented throughout Bronfenbrenner's model and links back to an earlier quote, "It takes a village to raise a child" which I believe has been brought to life through the outcomes of this research.

5.3.2 Attachment Theory

EY practitioners in this research appeared to have a good knowledge of attachment theory and how they can utilise it to support children's early development. For example, components of attachment theory were evident particularly through EY practitioner accounts, especially in relation to attunement, containment and being a secure base.

This supports recent developments in the area of attachment theory including Siegel & Payne Bryson (2012). For example, children who present with challenging behaviours may do so due to a disorganised attachment style where parents are not attuned to their child's needs. This can lead to emotional and behavioural dysregulation and mean developing relationships can be fraught with difficulties for the child. The EY practitioners in this study use skills which relate to Siegel & Payne Bryson's (2020) 4 S's (feeling safe, seen, soothed and secure) which in neurobiological terms leads to an integrated brain, valuing both logic and emotions (Siegel & Payne Bryson, 2011). Attachment experiences are shown to be crucial in the development of structural right brain-based systems which are involved in emotion and self-regulation (Schore & Schore, 2008).

In terms of Porge's polyvagal theory, we can see that poor vagal tone correlates with behavioural problems and emotional dysregulation (Cozolino, 2017) which has been seen to lead to significantly more behavioural problems in preschool children. It appears that the EY practitioners in this study are able to use their interpersonal skills including simple gestures, for example 'to *just say 'hello' in the corridor'* to create a sense of safety in the child's social engagement system, thus promoting emotional regulation and enabling attachments to occur.

Linking back to the work of Bronfenbrenner, he noted that to support positive outcomes for children "in short, somebody has to be crazy about the kid" (Bronfenbrenner, 2005, p.22). This is echoed in UK policy in the Early Years in relation to the child's key person (DfE, 2017) and links to the importance of secondary attachment figures which was discussed in Chapter 2.

5.3.3 Carl Rogers Unconditional Positive Regard

EY practitioners in this study valued the importance of seeing the child as an individual and valuing what makes the child unique. The theme of team identity demonstrates the qualities that the EY practitioners see in themselves, including being inclusive, seeing others as equals and being able to have fun at work. Rogers found that teachers create trusting relationships with the children they work when they display congruence, unconditional positive regards and empathy (Hayes, O'Toole & Halpenny). Unconditional positive regard for example is about caring about the uniqueness of the child and celebrating this (Hayes, O'Toole & Halpenny). Roger's work has been used in education and is known as 'student-centred teaching.' EY practitioners use this approach as they facilitate learning using the interests of the child, with this being how the curriculum in the EYFS is delivered. It is thought that this approach is inclusive and diverse in that it can meet the needs of children from a range of different backgrounds and abilities (Hayes, O'Toole & Halpenny).

5.3.4 Team learning

Team identity arose as a theme for the EY practitioners and relates to one of Senge's five components in his learning organisation model, 'building shared vision and team learning'. Senge shared his thoughts on those who work in a 'great team', 'people talk about being part of something larger than themselves, of being connected, of being generative. It becomes quite clear that, for many, their experiences as part of truly great teams stand out as singular periods of life lived to the fullest' (Senge, 1990, p.13). This resonated with the EY practitioners in this study as their comments reflected that they saw their job role as much more than that, aligning more so to a 'vocation' or a calling.

Senge (1996) believed that shared vision fosters genuine commitment rather than compliance; this for me is one of the reasons why this team work so well together, because they have a shared vision in how they practice and what they want for the children that they work with.

5.3.5 Grassroots model of flourishing

This research used a definition of wellbeing based on the GMoF (Pahil, 2019). The findings of the AI in this study will now be considered against the GMoF.

The findings from this AI were largely in line with the GMoF, with themes and sub-themes from each group's positive core aligning with the flourishing dimensions of the GMoF. Table 5.1 highlights the theme and sub-theme in the current research which aligns with each dimension of the GMoF.

Table 5.1: Themes from this AI in relation to the GMoF

Flourishing Dimension	**A child who is flourishing…**	**Associated theme and sub-theme in current research**
Growing character	has unique traits, is developing good character/character traits, and/or aspires of making a difference;	Child-Centred (theme) Unique child (sub-theme)
Regulation of emotions	manages their own emotions well;	Relationships (theme) Attachment and emotional containment (sub-theme)
Autonomy	engages in self-motivated action (underpinned by their own goals and/or views);	Child-centred (theme) Flourish (sub-theme) Structure & Systems (theme) Expansive Curriculum (sub-theme)
Sense of belonging	has a sense of belonging and close attachments to others;	Relationships (theme) Attachment and emotional containment
Strengths/Competence	participates in activities that are motivating or energizing to them; and/or can do something successfully (through perseverance).	Child-centred (theme) Flourish (sub-theme) Structures & Systems (theme) Expansive curriculum (sub-theme)

For example, the 'Growing character' dimension from the GMoF aligns with this research with the theme of 'child-centred' and the sub-them of 'unique child' where EY practitioners shared that they treat each child as an individual.

Both themes that were highlighted in this research from the common positive core, relationships and structures and systems, can both be mapped onto the GMoF.

Perhaps the only theme which did not overtly align with the GMoF is the EY practitioners theme of 'team identity'. This could be because this theme relates specifically to this research, being about what the EY practitioners do to promote children's wellbeing rather than how a child shows that they are flourishing.

5.4 Evaluation of AI being transformative in the current research

In responding to Research Question 2, the transformative nature of AI in the EYFS setting will now be evaluated through the process evaluation and participant reflections.

Research Question 2: 'Has the process of AI had a transformative impact on the Early Years Foundation Stage setting?

I will address key themes that arose during the AI process which have featured in previous literature on AI and which relate to the transformative nature of AI.

5.4.1 Positivity versus generativity

From a constructionist perspective it is felt that the dominant modes of conversation in an organisation, guide the images for action (Gergen, 1994), leading to the idea that "positive images lead to positive action" (Cooperrider, 1990). However, it is now recognised that positive affect alone may not be enough to sustain change (Bushe, 2010).

Generativity rather than positivity can be viewed as a key change lever when looking at AI cases that have been transformational (Bushe, 2013). Generativity can be defined as the creation of new images, metaphors and physical representations through process and capacities that help people see old things in new ways (Bushe, 2013). Generativity originated in the work of Gergen (1978) with his seminal paper "Toward Generative Theory." AI began as a method to make grounded theory more generative and therefore AI developed as a methodology that would meet Gergen's criteria for creating a social science which focuses on generative capacity (Bushe, 2010).

Generativity does not exclude negative sentiment, is it usually a dynamic relationship between positive and negative phenomena (Roberts, 2006). Bright, Powley, Fry and Barrett (2011) research into 'cynical conversations' highlights that it is possible to explore negative emotional states in ways that are appreciative and generative. They note that generativity occurs "where people are heard and valued, where people collaborate, where new perspectives generate collectively held, co-constructed representations that enable action" (Bright et al., 2011, p.154).

In this research, a generative metaphor of 'community' was evident. Interestingly, Bushe and Kassam (2005) found generative metaphors were evident in all the cases they identified as showing transformative change, compared to only 8% in the non-transformational cases.

5.4.2 AI and the constructionist principle

Bushe (2005) states that one of the ways that AI can create change is by changing the organisation's inner dialogue, which relates to the constructionist principle of AI. Bushe (2005) refers to the inner dialogue of individuals as day dreams that we quickly forget about, we may not even be consciously aware of them. In organisations the inner dialogue is those small group confidential conversations that occur outside of official meetings.

As Bushe puts it: "When people talk in the hallways and over coffee it is often stories of past events that they use to justify the interpretations and judgements of current events. These stories get passed on and embellished with time and their historical veracity is irrelevant to the impact they have on how people make sense of organizational events. From this point of view AI can change an organization if it changes the stories that circulate in the organization's inner dialogue" (Bushe, 2005, p.4).

The staff in the research alluded to their inner dialogue when talking about what their dreams for the future:

> *…when you listen in the staff room, they say exactly the same things as we do, don't they?*

5.4.3. AI and systemic change

The final phase in AI was originally called ‘Deliver’, this was changed to ‘Destiny’ as the developers of AI experienced more transformational change the less they tried to guide it (Bushe and Kassam, 2005). This meant “abandoning the ‘Delivery’ ideas of action planning, monitoring progress and building implementation strategies” (Cooperrider and Whitney, 2001, p.16). Likewise, some AI theorists claim that by allowing the transformational process to occur “bottom up”, change occurs much faster than from any attempt to control or implement new ideas, known as improvisation (Bushe and Kassam, 2005). This research followed this as closely as it could with a “bottom up inquiry.” EY practitioners voiced that although they are happy to carry out actions from the AI, they would ultimately need the support from higher up in the school to be able to do so. It was important to have a stakeholder from the school taking part, which in this case was the SENCo. Recruitment of a stakeholder in the organisation makes it more likely that actions from the AI will be implemented (Bevington, 2015).

This approach also hoped that tacit knowledge (individual experiences, ideals and values) would alter into explicit knowledge (communicable data) as this is a feature of successful organisations (Fullan, 2001). Tacit knowledge is a bottom-up process and comes from those inside organisation. Fieldhouse and Onyett (2012) found that external facilitation is vital in accessing tacit knowledge. Effective organisations listen to tacit knowledge. Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995) state that tacit knowledge turns into shared knowledge through interaction.

5.4.4. AI and pre and post identity groups

Bushe (2002, 2013) proposed that AI has different outcomes for pre and post identity groups. Groups that do not feel a strong sense of common belonging of concern for the group are thought of as the ‘pre-identity groups’ and groups that do have a sense of common belonging are thought of as the ‘post-identity groups’ (Bushe, 2002, 2013). I feel that in this research, the AI practitioners identified as a ‘post-identity group’, which I believe is evident from one of their core themes from the ‘Discovery’ phase, ‘team identity.’ Therefore, in line with Bushe (2002, 2013) it was important that I included stakeholders from outside this group for this AI to be generative, in this case this was the parent participants who took part in the entire AI process and worked together with the EY practitioners from the ‘Integrated Design’ phase onwards.

5.5. Participants' reflections of Appreciative Inquiry

In further responding to Research Question 2, the participants reflections of AI will now be evaluated.

This research has included group reflections following each phase of AI, because as noted by Pahil (2019) there is no reflective space within AI methods (unlike AR) to enhance personal mastery (Senge, 1990). Personal mastery describes the discipline of personal growth and learning. People who exhibit this share some basic characteristics, for example being able to connect to others and life without losing their uniqueness. Opportunities are needed for reflection to further foster personal mastery (Senge, 1990).

It was evident from the interviews that this AI also helped to break down barriers between participant groups, particularly when they gained the knowledge that they wanted to achieve the same thing. Again, this links to Senge (1996) who stated that shared vision fosters genuine commitment over compliance.

Tables 4.25 and 4.26 in section 4.9.6 summarise the key emotions that were evoked for participants during the phases of the AI. It was interesting to note the differing and at times contrasting nature of emotions felt by both groups at different times in the AI process. As the researcher, it felt disheartening at first to see both groups start off in such opposing positions, where the EY practitioners identified a strong positive core in themselves and the work they do compared to the parents who struggled to identify what it is that the school are doing well. For example, the parents shared more of what they wanted from the school rather than what the school were doing well, including improved communication from staff. This naturally led to differing emotions being evoked between the groups throughout the AI process. However, it was interesting to see that by the 'Design' phase both groups were on the same page, with similarities not only in the 'provocative propositions' that they created but also the emotions they were feeling by this point, e.g. 'hopeful'. For me this highlights that AI as an approach does not only seek out positive narratives but also values listening and allowing participants to share those negative narratives they may be holding, as these can be the impetus to identify and create resources to overcome them. This also has links to

the implications for the debate around the positivity principles in AI which has been discussed in section 5.3.1.

AI can be viewed a shadow process; a shadow can be defined as “censored emotional and/or cognitive content”, with the term “censored” referring to “any conscious or unconscious regulation of cognition/emotion where it is judged not to fit with accepted cultural or group norms (Fitzgerald, Oliver and Hoxsey, 2010). I sought to overcome this by listening and acknowledging negative discourse from participants during the AI process. It is hoped that this ‘authentic appreciation’ of their views, helped to recognise and include ‘shadow’, because without it, people’s narrative would be censored and not as rich as they could be.

5.5.1 AI and empowerment

AI aims to empower all participants as co-contributors within their situation (Nicholson and Barnes, 2013) and overcome issues of power (Reed, 2006). This became pertinent in this current research when hearing the EY practitioners' reflections in the ‘Design’ phase, where they felt “helpless” and “demoralised”.

However, by the end of the AI process, the SENCo’s reflection on the process of AI for me highlights that AI appeared to empower those who took part:

> *So for me it’s been and I know people like EY practitioner 1 and others who have been involved have felt quite empowered by it… you feel empowered that you can, because sometimes you feel like it’s a top down model and that, the pressure comes from government and all that but when you’re in it at a grassroots level, you sometimes feel that that gets lost, but when you look at it like that (points to poster journey) you think, ‘gosh, we’re doing a great job really.’*

5.6. Strengths and Limitations of the current research

An evaluation of the research’s methodology, along with aims and original contribution will now be presented.

5.6.1 Evaluation of methodology

5.6.1.1 Evaluation of setting

My original aim for this research was to include all the staff from an EY setting in an AI. However, numerous constraints occurred which prevented me from doing so. There were also limitations with the number of parents who were able to take part.

Firstly, I reflected in my research journal that on the date that I was set to meet with staff to explain my research, school staff were not aware of the meeting and they had been booked onto another staff training session. This was quickly resolved by the Headteacher. However, after sharing dates for the research sessions with staff which I had agreed with the Headteacher, they were concerned that they already had other meetings booked in on these dates. The dates therefore had to subsequently be changed. This meant that original dates which were sent to parents needed changing and resulted in shorter notice being given for them to take part.

The EY foundation stage was also facing the pressure of reduced staff, that I was not made aware of at the time, including two members of staff not returning to work after the school holidays without handing in their notice. The pressure of reduced staff numbers and availability on research dates ultimately meant that not all staff were able to take part in this research and so an AI summit could not be implemented, but the principles and process of AI could be.

Once these initial logistical complications were overcome, there was a good response and engagement to the research by participants involved and I was able to gather views from EY practitioners and parents about the factors that facilitate wellbeing in children in the EYFS. This enabled me to reflect on the notion of 'real world research' and helped me come to terms with the realisation that some aspects of the research were out of my control and that this is to be expected with a busy organisation such as a school.

5.6.1.2 Evaluation of data-gathering

I had to be aware throughout that AI and its positively focused methodology could have created a "conscious concealment of reaction" (Schein, 1969, p.23), meaning that the views of less vocal participants may have been suppressed. This was

hopefully overcome by the methods used (focused group, semi-structured interviews, summary sheets), and through the skills I was able to utilise as a TEP, including building rapport, active listening and empathy.

Working in small groups was a great way to gather participant views in their respective groups and in the integrated group. Having each group take part in focus groups separately before the integrated phase of a mixed participant focus group helped to ensure that they had experience of sharing views in a small group and feel more at ease in sharing their views.

Semi-structured interviews were effective in ensuring that the participants' accounts could be fully heard and allowed for flexibility as and when needed. The wording of the interview questions was member checked with an EY practitioner and a parent before the research commenced. Despite this, a couple of participants needed further clarification of the wording of a couple of questions in the process evaluation phase, particularly the scaling questions (transformative and scope of actions). However, as the interviews were semi-structured, this allowed me to further clarify and reword the questions as needed.

Data from the AI sessions for both groups (Discovery, Dream and Design) and the Integrated Design session were written onto flipchart paper by me and an EP colleague to record this. I feel that as there were two of us collecting this information and member checking and reflecting what was written with the participants, this reflected an accurate recording and account of the participants views during these sessions. The data gathered was rich and enabled salient themes to be identified. On reflection, it may have been possible to gather an even richer picture by audio recording and transcribing these sessions as was done with the 'Beginning-Destiny' phase.

5.6.1.3 Evaluation of Appreciative Inquiry Methodology

The current study followed strength-based AI methodology to enable me to gather views of key people in young children's lives with the aim of further promoting wellbeing for these children. Although the findings from the study have been able to demonstrate links with previous research and psychological theories, it must be kept

in mind that these links are tentative as the small sample and single setting do not offer generalisability beyond the boundaries of this study.

5.6.1.4 Evaluation of Rigour, Quality and Phronesis

The measures to enhance the rigour, quality and phronesis in this research were described in Chapter 4 through methods of triangulation, positionality and phronesis. Rigour was achieved by triangulating different methods and perspectives of those taking part. For example, as an EP colleague was present during the AI sessions, this allowed for observer triangulation. This added another layer to member checking with participants, supporting the clarity of our recordings on the flip chart paper.

Argyris and Schon (1996) state that rigour occurs in collaborative inquiry as people in organisations are co-researchers rather than subjects of the research. Therefore 'people are more likely to give valid information about their intentions and reasons for action when they share control of the process of generativity, interpreting, testing and using information' (Argyris & Schon, 1996, p.50). I believe that this research demonstrated rigour through the collaborative nature of AI. It is also hoped that external facilitation of the AI process helped to support authentic collaboration, such as supporting everyone to provide an equal contribution without individuals taking over (Fieldhouse and Onyett, 2012).

As this research was conducted under a transformative paradigm, I have outlined my subjectivity and positionality, including that I see the benefits of working systemically to bringing about positive change in a system. The aim is that, by being open about my positionality, it does not become a flaw of the research (Thomas, 2016).

The themes which were identified in this research are in line with those in existing research which indicates to some extent a degree of credibility within the findings. However, the purpose of this research was never to generalise findings to other settings but rather to seek phronesis, that is the practical knowledge that can be obtained through research (Thomas, 2016). In this way, the findings can offer knowledge to EY settings of a similar context to the one in this research when considering how to promote wellbeing of children in their settings.

5.6.1.5 Evaluation of analysis

Analysis was carried out in two phases, this allowed for co-construction of salient themes with participants during the AI process. Following the AI process, I carried out further analysis with the sole purpose of meeting doctoral qualification requirements.

The co-construction of themes with participants during the AI process helped achieve a greater sense of collaboration, with member checking occurring throughout. Further co-construction throughout may have further helped with the equalising process of AI, as AI aims to empower everyone as co-contributors within their situation (Nicholson and Barnes, 2013).

Thematic Analysis was deemed to be appropriate in its use for identifying themes that occurred during the 'Discovery' phase once the research was completed. This form of analysis allowed the findings to be shared in an accessible way with participants in the debrief. As the data sample was relatively small, the analysis was carried out manually rather than using a computer package to assist. This allowed me to go into greater depth with the data.

5.6.1.6 Evaluation of research aims and original contribution

Limitations to the current research have been highlighted, despite this I feel that the aims of the research were met. As the research aims involved hearing the views of largely unheard participant groups, it is felt that a qualitative methodology was the most effective way to achieve this through the gathering of rich data.

This research listened to the voice of EY practitioners which remain largely unheard in literature around promoting young children's wellbeing, within an EY setting along with the views of their parents. This research is unique because it is the first research within England to exclusively explore the factors that facilitate wellbeing in an EY setting as viewed by EY practitioners and parents. It has also explored these facilitative factors by utilising a methodology which to my knowledge has not previously been utilised within this area. Through the research, an action plan was developed to further promote wellbeing in the EY setting and across the school community.

As well as utilising AI to promote wellbeing in young children, this research was also interested in further exploring the transformative, emancipatory nature of AI for the

participants to see if personal and systemic transformation had occurred. This research ensured there was time for group reflections following each phase of AI because as noted by Pahil (2019), unlike traditional forms of AR which have space for reflection built in, AI does not. The purpose of the reflections is to further enhance participants' personal mastery (Senge, 1990). I feel that the language used by participants as part of their reflections demonstrates that the AI empowered them to create change in their lives.

When considering the contribution of this research to the existing evidence base, I found that the findings from this research could be linked to previous research which explore children's wellbeing. However, I must be mindful of the limits of generalisability from my findings. That being said, the findings here may offer some insight for other settings of a similar context when considering how they are working to promote wellbeing.

The findings also support previous research concerning the importance of parental engagement to support children's wellbeing (Weare, 2015). Here we can see that the parents felt valued by having their voice listened to, leading to a breakdown of previously perceived barriers between the parents and school. This realisation developed a further sense of community for those taking part. This has wider implications moving forward for how we consider the role of the wider community in supporting children in schools which will be explored further in section 5.7.4.

5.7 Implications of current research

I will now explore the implications of the current research for EY settings, policy-makers, future research and EP practice.

5.7.1 Implications for Early Years Settings

The outcomes of this research further highlight the importance of parental engagement, a lack of which has been identified as being detrimental to supporting children's emotional needs (Conelly et al., 2008). EY settings need to be aware of the simple but effective strategies they can use to improve parental engagement, such as leaflets, taster sessions, one-off events and support with pre-school transitions

(Mooney et al., 2008; Bertagno, 2016). These small gestures can help to break down barriers and build relationships from the outset.

This research has demonstrated that the application of AI in an EY setting has helped to break down such barriers between parents and staff. Through this research, the EY setting are now aware of AI as a tool which can be utilised in the future for any other topics they wish to explore. The research shows that the application of AI is relevant to EY settings and hopefully this provides the impetus for it being used more widely in similar settings, facilitated by an EP for example.

5.7.2 Implications for LAs and policy-makers

Implications from this research highlight the importance of working with policy makers to promote understanding amongst educators that emotional education is as important as teaching academic skills (see table 4.9). This is echoed by Weare (2000, p.5) 'It is vital that those who seek to promote high academic standards and those who seek to promote mental, emotional and social health realise that they are on the same side, and that social and affective education can support academic learning, not simply take away time from it.' It was also noted by the EPPE (2004) that settings who view academic and social development equally, see children making better all-round progress.

One such way to do this, would be for LA's to commission research into their own local context on wellbeing and the factors that facilitate it. This may also help address the term 'wellbeing' being ill-defined and abstract (Barblett and Maloney, 2010) as different geographical areas could create their own definitions of wellbeing which are meaningful to their local context. The data generated could be used to develop a wellbeing programme in schools. In my placement LA, the pilot Flourish Programme based on the GMoF (see Chapter 2) is in the process of being rolled out across all schools and will cover the following:

- key characteristics of flourishing children based on research at a local primary school (Pahil, 2019);
- a holistic framework to support with the promotion of positive mental health starting with developing the personal characteristics of the 'unique child';
- a whole school framework that recommends a whole-system change to building resilience in all children in line with the latest mental health policy (Burstow et al., 2018); and

- a series of workshops for all staff to support with fostering capabilities in all children.

It is hoped that the current research can build on this, with the potential to develop an EY Flourish Programme to complement the one for schools. This demonstrates a way that the current research findings can be disseminated in the LA where the research took place, and support wellbeing further in other EY settings. I also hope to continue my work in the EY setting where the AI took place and continue to see how it develops moving forward.

The four key themes from this research (Relationships, Systems and Structures, Team Identity and Child-Centred) relate to the four building blocks for building a resilient generation (Burstow et al., 2018) (See section 2.3.1). Moving forward EY guidance looks likely to contain resilience more explicitly in its ELG for 'self-regulation' and already contains it within one of its EY principles (DfE, 2018). This suggests that policy makers are taking into consideration the importance of resilience when looking to support wellbeing in children.

5.7.3 Implications for future research

The voice of the child has been the focus of increased attention and is often associated with The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). Article 12 of the UNCRC states that children have the right to say what they think when adults are making decisions about their choices including their education (UNCRC, 1989).

As noted from suggested improvements for the AI process given by participants in this current research (See Section 4.9.5), future research could seek to gain the views of young children in terms of what is important to their wellbeing and how they think it is promoted. This could further enhance the study's emancipatory aims and would also enhance child participation as advocated by the UNCRC (1989). There would need to be careful consideration of how this is done and how the term "wellbeing" is operationalised for young children to understand. One such method could be The Mosaic Approach (Clark and Moss, 2001). Tools used in the original Mosaic Approach study include carrying out narrative observations of the children, a structured child interview, asking children to photograph areas of the setting which interest/are of importance to them, child-led tours and interviews with practitioners and parents (Clark and Moss, 2001). This approach has proven to be a useful way to evaluate early

settings, with the potential for it to be embedded in everyday practice (Clark and Moss, 2001). There are advocates of its use by EPs (Soni, 2017) although there appears to be little to no evidence of this currently occurring in the literature.

This research was small scale and due to limitations highlighted with the setting, was only able to recruit a cross-section of staff rather than the whole team. This represents a start in listening to the views of EY practitioners in promoting wellbeing, but future research should seek to gather a larger sample to add to the existing research base. This research was also only able to recruit a small number of parents and whilst the results were promising in terms of breaking down barriers between the groups and working collaboratively together, if done on a larger scale, perhaps in a multi-academy trust, the level of impact would be potentially be far greater.

If we look to the wider world, the Duchess of Cambridge has released the "5 Big Questions Survey" with the aim of supporting mental health and emotional resilience in young children with the hope it builds foundations for them into adulthood. This is a national level survey and so has the potential to generate a wealth of data which can be used to promote wellbeing. It is therefore hoped that this research inspires others to research this under researched and topical area with the aim of creating more 'upstream' knowledge and practice to support young children's wellbeing.

5.7.4 Implications for EP practice

This AI was seen as supporting positive organisational change and system development, which is consistent with the transformative aims of the research. The research highlights the potential for EPs to work systemically with EY settings, supporting previous findings including those by Shannon and Posada (2007), Soni (2010) and Douglas-Osborn (2017). Douglas-Osborn (2017) for example used an AR model to demonstrate that EPs can work in a different way rather than individual casework. EPs are often challenged on what makes them unique and this research has highlighted that EPs can make a unique contribution by utilising a strength-based tool such as AI to create organisational change and build capacity in the school (Cooper and Woods, 2017). This aligns with Morgan (2016) and how EPs can utilise solution focused approaches systemically in educational settings, AI shows elements of being solution focused, for example with the use of the 'miracle question'.

However, this research has also demonstrated the limitations staff feel in implementing actions without support or direction from those higher up in the system. Therefore enrolment of the whole system is needed, particularly from those with decision-making powers, for organisational change processes such as AI to be successful. Therefore, in my future EP practice in this area I will encourage participation from senior management in schools to plan a co-facilitated AI which stays true to the principles of AI whilst generating realistic goals.

AI offers an alternative to problem focused approaches to organisational change. It emphasises empowerment, participation and building on existing strengths of the organisations, which are said to mediate feelings of stress and enhance wellbeing (Wainwright & Calnan, 2002). This is particularly pertinent when we consider the current levels of reported teachers stress in the UK (OFSTED, 2019). I was influenced by transformative epistemology and will continue to strive for emancipatory practice in my future EP practice and organisational change and system development work in schools.

Another way EP's can help schools systemically is to develop policies and curriculums which support wellbeing across the school. This whole school approach mirrors Weare (2015) where one of the recommendations is to adopt a whole school approach to support emotional wellbeing in schools from preschool upwards. This also includes the need for a positive and universal focus on wellbeing which should be reflected in the school's ethos.

A persistent theme throughout this research was community links, under the overarching theme of structures and systems. There has been little research into the role of the EP and promoting community cohesion. Jackson Taft, Woods and Ford (2020) viewed schools as communities and explored how an EPS could promote community cohesion within schools. They found that there are opportunities for EPs to promote cohesion within school settings, for example using the model seen in Figure 5.3. Article 29 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and its associated General Comment (No.1), states that education for children should contain '...the preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of

indigenous origin' (UN, 1989, p.9). It is suggested that if EPs support cohesion in school settings, this could have a ripple effect and promote cohesion in the wider community as observed in the 'contagion effect' of children's rights-based education in schools (Covell, Howe and McNeil, 2010). This could include those schools that have undertaken the UNICEF's Rights Respecting Schools award (UNICEF, 2009).

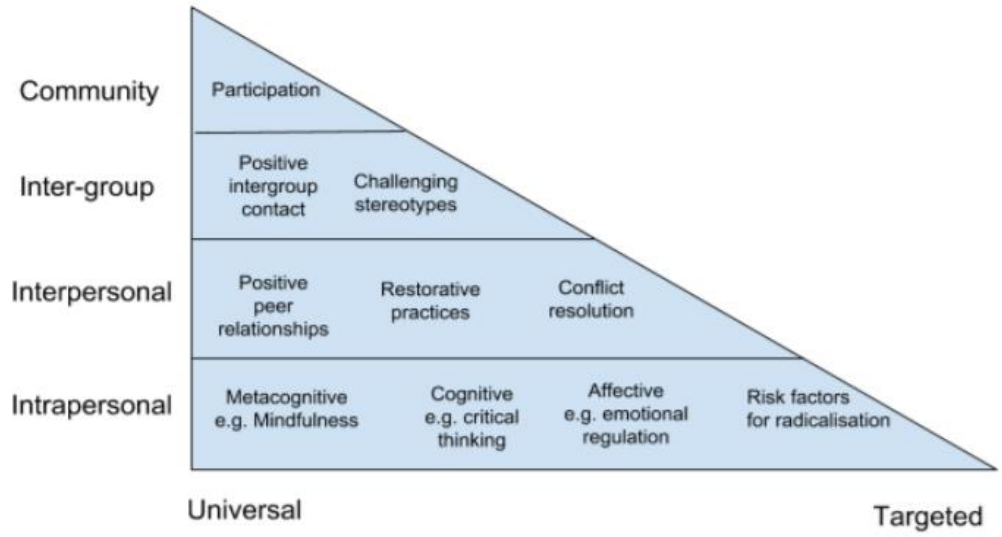


Figure 5.2: A multi-level continuum approach to promoting community cohesion, adapted from Jackson Taft, Woods and Ford (2020)

Whilst the research suggests that EPs could work more creatively in EY settings, that is not to say that there is not a place for EPs to deliver individual casework in EY settings. I would also be an advocate for EP's using solution focused approaches at an individual casework level. For example, using such approaches can help to break down any existing communication barriers between parents and staff, supporting them to work collaboratively to problem solve about the child.

EPs need to continue to be aware of early identification and intervention in line with the 'Every Child Matters' (DFES, 2003) government initiative as well as the most recent SEND code of Practice (DfE, 2015). The potential for detrimental outcomes of those who have experienced four or more adversities in childhood is documented in the research literature (Mehta et al., 2013) and so EPs can work closely with settings to further their understanding of PCEs to promote resilience.

EPs use evidence-based practice to inform their work and therefore they are well placed to deliver interventions and training underpinned by this to support staff in

educational settings. For example, EPs can support staff with attachment training as research has previously highlighted that some EY practitioners have limited knowledge of Attachment Theory and how it underpins their role as a key person (Page and Elfer, 2013). Emotion coaching is another widely used approach by EPs and is informed by Attachment Theory, for example, attunement, neuroscientific evidence, emotions and vagal tone (Krawczyk, 2017). Siegel & Payne Bryson (2020) suggest that parents and practitioners need a meta-emotion philosophy for Emotion Coaching, that is, to have emotional awareness of their own emotions and EPs are well placed to support this through delivery of training to parents and practitioners.

EPs can help schools to increase parental engagement, as this again has been recommended by Weare (2015) and others to promote emotional wellbeing in children at school. This is crucial for EPs to know moving forward, as research has highlighted that more children are accessing childcare and are doing so from an earlier age, especially disadvantaged two-year olds (DfE, 2018c). This would imply that there is a need, much like early identification and intervention with children, to build relationships with parents from the outset. EPs could support EY settings by delivering training to parents which supports parenting skills (Weare, 2015).
EPs are well placed to support EY staff with reflective processes such as group supervision which they rarely have time for. A comment noted by one of the EY practitioners before the research process began was “I feel like 90% of the time we do a good job, but we focus on the 10%.” This quote amplifies the report published by OFSTED in July 2019, which stated that teaching staff in Britain report the highest rates of work-related stress, depression and anxiety of jobs in Britain (OFSTED, 2019). The opportunity for supervision facilitated by an external person such as an EP could help support staff wellbeing and support with further problem solving in the organisation. I am aware of the time limitations that EY settings have for such sessions but feel this should not be a barrier as an approach such as Solution Circles could be used which is a relatively short but collaborative intervention (Forrest and Pearpoint, 1996).

Lastly, EPs can support schools and particularly those who are not in positions of management, such as Teaching Assistants, to achieve smaller short-term goals as this helps them to stay in their sphere of influence and not engage in those discussion

outside of their control as it can help offset the risk of a sense of helplessness by them (Onyett, 2009).

5.8. My reflections on the research process

I have found this research process to be quite powerful in terms of how both groups of participants engaged in the AI, to the extent that it has further promoted wellbeing practices for children in the school and the wider impact it has had in the school community. For example, the process has helped to break down barriers between staff and parents and further build those relationships.

I feel the research has further developed my skills of becoming an EP, particularly developing my research skills and solution-orientated practices. Skills that I have developed throughout doctoral training, including rapport building, active listening and empathy have been transferable skills; which I have been able to use in my role as researcher to facilitate the AI sessions and gather rich information from all participants.

Throughout the process I have become aware of the challenges that real world research can create and the need therefore to remain flexible to overcome such challenges. These are skills I feel have developed through the doctoral training programme and through developing my own problem-solving model when approaching casework.

5.9. Conclusions

The number of children and young people experiencing mental health problems continues to rise (DoH, 2015). It will be essential moving forward and in line with current government guidance that the focus remains on early identification and intervention of these needs (DfE, 2015). This includes following widely reported findings that the best way to support wellbeing in children is by using a mix of whole school, universal approaches along with targeted interventions (Weare, 2015).

This research has explored through a transformative paradigm, the facilitative factors which promote wellbeing in young children from the point of view of parent's and EY practitioners. It is hoped that these findings will contribute to the existing research base when considering how best to promote wellbeing in young children and be considered

by parents, schools and the further educational system to further develop best practice in supporting the wellbeing of young children.

Chapter 6 References

Ainsworth, M.D.S., Blehar, M., Waters, E. and Wall, S. (1978). *Patterns of attachment – a Psychological Study of the Strange Situation*. Erlbaum.

Argyris, C., & Schon, D A (1996). *Organizational Learning: A theory of action perspective.* Addison Wesley.

Aubrey, C., & Ward, K. (2013). Early years practitioners' views on early personal, social and emotional development. *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties, 18*(3), 435-447.

Avramidis, E. & Norwich, B. (2002). Teachers' attitudes towards integration/inclusion: A review of the literature. *European Journal of Special Needs Education*. 17(2).

Barblett, L., & Maloney, C. (2010). Complexities of assessing social and emotional competence and wellbeing in young children. *Australasian Journal of Early Childhood, 35*(2), 13–18.
Baxter, J., & Frederickson, N. (2005). Every child matters: Can educational psychology contribute to radical reform? *Educational Psychology in Practice, 21*(2), 87-102.

Bearman, M., & Dawson, P. (2013). Qualitative synthesis and systematic review in health professions education. *Medical education, 47*(3), 252-260.

Bertagno, P. (2016). *Promoting children's emotional well-being in pre-school settings: A grounded theory study exploring the views of early years practitioners.* [Unpublished thesis]. Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust/University of Essex.

Bethell C., Jones J., Gombojav N., Linkenbach J. & Sege R. (2019). Positive Childhood Experiences and Adult Mental and Relational Health in a Statewide Sample: Associations Across Adverse Childhood Experiences Levels. *Jama Pediatr*, *173*(11), Article e193007.

Bevington, T. J. (2015). Appreciative evaluation of restorative approaches in schools. *Pastoral Care in Education, 33*(2), 105-115.

Bloor, M., Frankland, J., Thomas, M., & Robson, K. (2001). *Focus groups in social research*. Sage.

Bowlby, J. (1969). *Attachment and Loss*. Penguin Books.

Bowlby, J. (1998): *A Secure Base: Clinical Applications of Attachment Theory*. Routledge.

Bowlby, R. (2007). Babies and toddlers in non-parental day care can avoid stress and anxiety if they develop a lasting secondary attachment bond with one carer who is consistently accessible to them. *Attachment & Human Development*, *9*(4), 307–319.

Boyle, C., & Lauchlan, F. (2009). Applied psychology and the case for individual casework: some reflections on the role of the educational psychologist. *Educational Psychology in Practice, 25*(1), 71–84.

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology, 3(*2), 77-101.

Bright, D.S., Powley, E.H., Fry, R.E., & Barrett, F.J. (2011). The generative potential of cynical conversations. In Avital, M., Cooperrider, D.L. and Zandee, D. (Eds.), *Generative Organization: Advances in Appreciative Inquiry*, Vol. 4. Bingley, UK: Emerald Publishing.

British Psychological Society. (2002). *Professional Practice Guidelines. Division of Educational and Child Psychology.* Leicester: British Psychological Society.

British Psychological Society. (2018). *Code of Ethics and Conduct: Guidance published by the Ethics Committee of the British Psychological Society*. Leicester: The British Psychological Society.

Brogaard-Clausen, S., & Robson, S. (2019). Friendships for wellbeing?: parents' and practitioners' positioning of young children's friendships in the evaluation of wellbeing factors. *International Journal of Early Years Education, 27*(4), 345-359.

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

Bronfenbrenner, U. (2005). *Making Human Beings Human: Bioecological Perspectives on Human Development*. Sage.

Bronfenbrenner, U., & Morris, P. A. (2006). The Bioecological Model of Human Development. In R. M. Lerner & W. Damon (Eds.), *Handbook of child psychology: Theoretical models of human development* (pp. 793-828). John Wiley & Sons Inc.

Brooks, R. (2015). *An Appreciative Inquiry into the Development of Teacher Well-Being through organisational change: Theory Development and Implications for Practice*. [Unpublished thesis]. University of Birmingham.

Burnes, B. (2012). Kurt Lewin and the origins of Organisational Development, In Boje, D., Burnes, B. and Hassard, J. (Eds.), *The Routledge companion of organisational change* (1st edn). Routledge.

Burstow, P., Newbigging, K., Tew, J., & Costello, B. (2018). *Investing in a Resilient Generation: Keys to a Mentally Prosperous Nation*. University of Birmingham. https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/Documents/research/policycommission/Investing-in-a-Resilient-Generation-report.pdf

Bushe, G.R. (2002). Meaning making in teams: Appreciative Inquiry with preidentity and postidentity groups. In Fry, R., Barrett, F., Seiling, J. and Whitney, D. (Eds.), *Appreciative Inquiry and Organizational Transformation: Reports from the Field* (pp. 39–63). Quorum.

Bushe, G.R. (2005). Five Theories of Change Embedded in Appreciative Inquiry. Presented at the 18th Annual World Congress of Organization Development, Dublin, Ireland, July 14-18, 1998. Published in Cooperrider, D. Sorenson, P., Whitney, D. & Yeager, T. (Eds.), (2001) Appreciative Inquiry: An Emerging Direction for Organization Development (pp.117-127). Champaign, IL: Stipes and in Cooperrider, D. Sorenson, P., Yeager, T. & Whitney, D. (Eds.), (2005) Appreciative Inquiry: Foundations in Positive Organization Development (121-132). Champaign, IL: Stipes.

Bushe, G.R. (2010). Appreciative inquiry: Theory and critique. In Boje, D., Burnes, B. and Hassard, J, (Eds.), *The Routledge Companion to Organizational Change.* (pp.87-103). Routledge.

Bushe, G. R. (2011). Appreciative inquiry: Theory and critique. In D. Boje, B. Burnes & J. Hassard (Eds.), *The Routledge companion to organisational change* (pp. 87–103). Routledge.

Bushe, G.R. (2013). Generative Process, Generative Outcome: The Transformational Potential of Appreciative Inquiry. In Cooperrider, D.L., Zandee, D.P., Godwin, L.N., Avital, M. and Boland, B. (Eds.), *Organizational Generativity: The Appreciative Inquiry Summit and a Scholarship of Transformation* (Advances in Appreciative Inquiry, Volume 4) (pp.89-113). Emerald Group Publishing Limited.

Bushe, G.R. and Kassam, A. (2005). When is appreciative inquiry transformational? A meta-case analysis. *Journal of Applied Behavioural Science, 41*(2),161-181.

Cameron, R. J. (2006). Educational Psychology: The distinctive contribution. *Educational Psychology in Practice, 22*(4), 289 –304.

Charmaz, K. (2006). *Constructing Grounded Theory, A Practical Guide Through Qualitative Analysis*. Sage.

Clark, A., & Moss, P. (2001). *Listening to children: The mosaic approach*. National Children's Bureau and Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

Clarke, V., & Braun, V. (2017). Thematic analysis. *The Journal of Positive Psychology, 12*(3), 297-298

Conelly, G., Lockhart, E., Wilson, P., Furnivall, J., Bryce, G., Barbour, R., & Phin, L. (2008). Teacher's responses to the emotional needs of children and young people. Results from the Scottish Needs Assessment Programme. *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties, 13(*1), 7-19.

Cooper, L., & Woods, K. (2017). Evaluating the use of a strengths-based development tool with head teachers. *Educational Psychology in Practice, 33*(1), 31-49.

Cooperrider, D.L. (1986). Appreciative Inquiry: Toward a Methodology for Understanding and Enhancing Organizational Innovation. [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. Department of Organisational Behaviour, Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, Ohio.

Cooperrider, D.L. (1990). Positive image, positive action: The affirmative basis of organizing. In S. Srivastva and D.L. Cooperrider (Eds.), *Appreciative Management and Leadership* (pp. 91–125). Jossey-Bass.

Cooperrider, D.L. and Srivastva, S. (1987). Appreciative inquiry in organizational life. In Woodman, R.W. & Pasmore, W.A. (Eds.), *Research in Organizational Change and Development*, (Vol.1, p.129 -169). JAI Press.

Cooperrider, D. L., & Whitney, D. (2001). A positive revolution in change: Appreciative inquiry. *Public Administration and Public Policy*, 87, 611–630.

Cooperrider, D.L., & Whitney, D. (2005). *Appreciative inquiry: a positive revolution in change*. Berrett-Koehler Publishers.

Cooperrider, D.L., Whitney, D., & Stavros, J.M. (2008). *Appreciative Inquiry Handbook*. (2nd edn.). Crown Custom Publishing

Cooperrider, D. (2012). The concentration effect of strengths: How the whole system "AI" summit brings out the best in human enterprise, *Organisational Dynamics, 41*, 106- 117.

Covell, K., Howe, R. B., & McNeil, J. K. (2010). Implementing children's human rights education in schools. *Improving Schools, 13*(2), 117–132.

Cowen, B. L. (1991). In pursuit of wellness. *American Psychologist, 46*, 404-408.

Cozolino, L. (2017). The neuroscience of psychotherapy: Building and rebuilding the human brain. W.W. Norton & Company.

Critical Appraisal Skills Programme (2018). CASP Qualitative Checklist (2019, July 23). https://casp-uk.net/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/CASP-Qualitative-Checklist-2018.pdf

Davies, P. (2000). The relevance of systematic reviews to educational policy and practice. *Oxford Review of Education, 26*(3–4): 365–378.

Denzin, N. K. (1988). *The research act: A theoretical introduction to sociological methods.* Prentice-Hall.

Department for Education. (2013). *Early years outcomes A non-statutory guide for practitioners and inspectors to help inform understanding of child development through the early years.* DfE. https://www.foundationyears.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/Early_Years_Outcomes.pdf

Department for Education (2015). *The New Code of SEN Practice.* London: DfE DoH.

Department for Education. (2018). *Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage*. DfE. from: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2

Department for Education. (2018a). *Early Years Foundation Stage Profile – pilot version.* DfE. https://www.foundationyears.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/EYFSP-Pilot-Handbook-2018.pdf

Department for Education. (2018b). *Mental health and behaviour in schools.* DfE. https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mental-health-and-behaviour-in-schools--2

Department for Education. (2018c September 11th). *30 hours childcare offer helping balance work and family lives.* DfE. https://www.gov.uk/government/news/30-hours-childcare-offer-helping-balance-work-and-family-lives

Department for Education. (2019). *Early Years Foundation Stage Reforms*. DfE. https://consult.education.gov.uk/early-years-quality-outcomes/early-years-foundation-stage-reforms/supporting_documents/EYFS%20reforms%20consultation.pdf

Department for Education and Skills (DfES) (2003). *Every Child Matters: Change for Children*. DfES Publications

Department of Health. (2015). *Future in mind. Promoting, protecting and improving our children and young people's mental health and wellbeing*. Department of Health.

DoH (Department of Health) and DfE (Department for Education) (2017). *Transforming Children and Young People's Mental Health Provision: A Green Paper*. London: HMSO.

Dewar, B.J. (2011). *Caring about caring: An Appreciative Inquiry about compassionate relationship-centred care*. [Unpublished Thesis]. Edinburgh Napier University.

Douglas-Osborn, E. (2017). Early investment: the use of Action Research in developing the role of an educational psychologist in an early years setting. *Educational Psychology in Practice, 33*(4), 406-41.

Durbin, N. (2009). Promoting Mental Health and Psychological Wellbeing in Children: A Socio-Cultural Activity Theory Analysis of Professional Contributions and Learning in a Multidisciplinary Team. [Unpublished PhD dissertation]. University of Birmingham.

Early Education. (2012). *Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).* Early Education. https://www.foundationyears.org.uk/files/2012/03/Development-Matters-FINAL-PRINT-AMENDED.pdf

Education Endowment Foundation. (2019, October 24). *Early Years Foundation Stage Profile Pilot*. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/pdf/generate/?u=https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/pdf/project/?id=2553&t=EEF%20Projects&e=2553&s=

Education Endowment Foundation. (2019a, April 4). *Parental engagement*. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/pdf/generate/?u=https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/pdf/toolkit/?id=300&t=Teaching%20and%20Learning%20Toolkit&e=300&s=

Erwin, E., Brotherson, M., & Summers, J. (2011). Understanding qualitative metasynthesis. *Journal of Early Intervention, 33*(3), 186–200.

Evangelou, M., Sylva, K., Kyriacou, M., Wild, M., & Glenny, G. (2009). *Early Years Learning and Development*. Department for Children, Schools and families. Research report DCSGF-RR176.

Fieldhouse, J., & Onyett, S. (2012). Community mental health and social exclusion: working appreciatively towards inclusion. *Action Research Journal, 10*(4), 356–372.

Fitzgerald, S., Oliver, C., & Hoxsey, J. (2010). Appreciative Inquiry as a Shadow Process. *Journal of Management Inquiry 19*(3), 220–233.

Fonagy, P., Gergely, G., Jurist, E. L. & Target, M. (2004). Affect Regulation, Mentalization, and the Development of Self. Karnac Books.

Ford, T., & Nikapota, A. (2000). Teachers' Attitudes towards Child Mental Health Services. *Psychiatric Bulletin, 24*(12): 457–61.

Forrest, M., & Pearpoint, J. (1996). *Solution circle: Getting unstuck a creative problem-solving tool*. Inclusion. http://www.inclusion.com/ttsolutioncircle.html (2020, March 24).

Frederickson, N., Dunsmuir, S., & Baxter, J. (2009). Introduction. In N. Frederickson, and S. Dunsmuir (Eds.), *Measures of children's mental health and psychological wellbeing*. London: GL Assessment.

Frith, E., (2016). *Centre Forum Commission on Children and Young People's Mental Health: State of the Nation*. Centre Forum. https://centreforum.org/live/wp-content/uploads/2016 /04/State-of-the-Nation-report-web.pdf

Fullan, M. (2001). *Leading in a Culture of Change*. Jossey-Bass.

Geddes, H. (2006). *Attachment in the Classroom. The links between children's early experiences, emotional well-being and performance in school*. Worth Publishing.

Gergen, K. J. (1978). Toward generative theory. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 36*, 1344–1360.

Gergen, K. (1994). *Toward Transformation in Social Knowledge*. Sage.

Gough, D., Thomas, J., & Oliver, S. (2012). Clarifying differences between review designs and methods. *Systematic Reviews*, *1*, 28.

Guterman, J.T. (2013). *Mastering the art of solution-focused counselling.* American Counseling Association.

Harris, K. (2013). Creating Virtuous Cycles: Using Appreciative Inquiry as a Framework for Educational Psychology Consultations with Young People. [Unpublished PhD dissertation]. University of Manchester.

Hayes, N., O'Toole, L., & Halpenny, A.M. (2017). *Introducing Bronfenbrenner: A Guide for Practitioners and Students in Early Years Education*. Routledge.

Hill, T., O'Hare, D., & Weidberg, F. (2013). "He's always there when I need him": Exploring the perceived positive impact of the Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA) programme. University of Bristol, England. Retrieved from the Internet On, 30, 14.

Hughes, K., Ford, K., Davies, A., Homolova, L., & Bellis, M. (2018). *Sources of resilience and their moderating relationships with harms from adverse childhood experiences: Welsh Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) and Resilience Study – Report 1: Mental Illness*. Public Health Wales NHS Trust. http://www.wales.nhs.uk/sitesplus/documents/888/ACE%20&%20Resilience%20Report%20(Eng_final2).pdf [Accessed 20 March 2020].

Jackson Taft, L., Woods, K., & Ford, A. (2020). Educational psychology service contribution to community cohesion: an appreciative inquiry. *Educational Psychology in Practice, 36*(1), 1-16.

Janssen, I., Krabbendam, L., Bak, M., Hanssen, M., Vollebergh, W., de Graaf, R., & van Os, J. (2004). Childhood abuse as a risk factor for psychotic experiences. *Acta Psychiatrica Scandinavica, 109*(1), 38-45.

Kolb, B. (2009). Brain and behavioural plasticity in the developing brain: Neuroscience and public policy. *Paediatrics and Child Health, 14*(10), 651-652.

Krawczyk, K.M. (2017). *A whole school single case study of emotion coaching (EC) training and the impact on school staff.* [Unpublished Thesis]. University of Birmingham.

Krause, N., Blackwell, L., & Claridge, S. (2020). An exploration of the impact of the Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA) programme on wellbeing from the perspective of pupils. *Educational Psychology in Practice, 36*(1), 17-31.

Learning and Teaching Scotland. (2019, June 27). *The Reggio Emilia Approach to Early Years Education.* https://education.gov.scot/improvement/learning-resources/The%20Reggio%20Emilia%20Approach%20to%20Early%20Years%20Education

Lewin, K. (1946). Action research and minority problems. In G.W. Lewin and G.W. Allport (Eds.), *Resolving Social Conflict*. Harper & Row.

Lewin, K. (1951). *Field Theory in Social Science: Selected Theoretical Papers* (Ed. Cartwright D). Harper & Row.

Lewis, A.M.J. (2015). *Can appreciative inquiry give primary children voice and influence over their writing lessons?* [Unpublished Thesis]. University of Birmingham.

Lincoln, Y. S. (2009). Ethical practices in qualitative research. In D. M. Mertens & P. E. Ginsberg (Eds.), *The handbook of social research ethics (*pp. 150–169). Sage.

Lincoln, YS., & Guba, EG. (1985). Naturalistic Inquiry. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications. In Robson, C. (2002). *Real world research* (2nd ed.). Blackwell Publishing.

Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (2000). Paradigmatic controversies, contradictions, and emerging confluences. In N. K. Denzin, & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The handbook of qualitative research* (2nd ed., pp. 1065-1122). Sage Publications.

Lincoln, Y. S., Lynham, S. A., & Guba, E. G. (2011). Paradigmatic Controversies, Contradictions and Emerging Confluences, revisited. In Denzin, N. K. & Lincoln, Y. S. (Eds.), *The SAGE Handbook* of *Qualitative Research, (*pp.97-128). Sage Publications.

Looney, E. (2018). *An Appreciative Inquiry of facilitative factors within educational provision perceived to support engagement of students attending a secondary school-based alternative provision unit*. [Unpublished Thesis]. University of Nottingham.

Ludema, J. D., & Fry, R. E. (2008). The practice of appreciative inquiry. In P. Reason & H. Bradbury (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of action research: Participative inquiry and practice* (pp 280-296). Sage Publications.

MacKay, T. (2011). The place of health interventions in educational psychology. *Educational and Child Psychology, 28*(4), 7-13.

Mahler, M., Pine, F., & Bergman, A. (1975). The psychological birth of the human infant. Basic Books.

Major, C. H., & Savin-Baden, M. (2010). *An introduction to qualitative research synthesis: Managing the information explosion in social science research*. Routledge.

Mashford-Scott, A., Church, A., & Tayler, C. (2012). Seeking children's perspectives on their wellbeing in early childhood settings. *International Journal of Early Childhood, 44*, 231–247.

McLellan, R., & Steward, S. (2015). Measuring children and young people's wellbeing in the school context. *Cambridge Journal of Education, 45*(3), 307–332.

McNiff, J. (2013). *Action research: Principles and practice*. Routledge.

McNiff, J. (2016). *You and your action research project.* (4th ed.). Routledge.

Mehta, D., Klengel, T., Conneely K.N., Smith, A.K., Altmann, A., Pace, T.W., Rex-Haffner, M., Loeschner, A., Gonik, M., Mercer, K.B., Bradley, B. Muller-Myhsok, B., Ressler, K.J. & Binder, E.B. (2013). Childhood maltreatment is associated with distinct genomic and epigenetic profiles in posttraumatic stress disorder. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences USA*, *110*: 8302–8307.

Mentally Healthy Schools. (2018, January 23). *Mentally Healthy schools.* https://www.mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk/

Mertens, D. M. (2015). *Research and evaluation in education and psychology: Integrating diversity with quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods* (4th ed.). Sage Publications.

Ministry of Education, (1996). *Te Whāriki, He Whāriki Mātauranga mō ngā Mokopuna o Aotearoa.* New Zealand: Learning Media.

Mooney, A., Boddy, J., Statham, J., & Warwick, I. (2008). Approaches to developing health in early years settings. *Health education, 108*(2), 163-177.

Morgan, G. (2016). Organisational change: a solution-focused approach. *Educational Psychology in Practice, 32*(2), 133-144.

Morris, R., & Atkinson, C. (2018). How can educational psychologists work within further education to support young people's mental health? An appreciative inquiry. *Research in Post-Compulsory Education, 23*(3), 285-313.

National Health Service. (2018, November 22) *Mental Health of Children and Young People in England, 2017.* https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/publications/statistical/mental-health-of-children-and-young-people-in-england/2017/2017

New Economics Foundation (NEF) (2009). *A Guide to Measuring Children's Well-Being.* New Economics Foundation.

Nicholson C and Barnes J. (2013). *Appreciative Inquiry*. Oxford University Press.

Noblit, G.W. and Hare, R.D. (1988). *Meta-Ethnography: Synthesizing Qualitative Studies*. Sage.

Nonaka, I., & Takeuchi, H. (1995). *The knowledge-creating company*. Oxford University Press.

Nussbaum, M.C. (2011). *Creating capabilities, the human development approach.* The Belknap press of Harvard University Press.

Oakes, E. (2010). *What drives us to give of our best? – An Appreciative Inquiry into how Educational Psychologists support early years children and their families.* [Unpublished Thesis] University of Manchester.

Office for Standards in Education. (2015). *School Inspection Handbook.* https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-inspection-handbook-fromseptember-2015

Office for Standards in Education (2019, July 22). *Summary and recommendations: teacher well-being research report.* https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teacher-well-being-at-work-in-schools-and-further-education-providers/summary-and-recommendations-teacher-well-being-research-report

Ogden, P., Minton, K., & Pain, C. (2006). Trauma and the Body: A Sensorimotor Approach to Psychotherapy. Norton & Company.

Onyett, S. (2009). Working appreciatively to improve services for children and families. *Clinical Child Psychology and Psychiatry, 14*(4), 495–507.
Page, J. (2008). Permission to Love Them. In *Working with Babies and Children From Birth to Three*, (Eds.), by C. Nutbrown and J. Page, (pp.181–187). Sage.

Page, J. (2010). *Mothers, Work and Childcare: Choices, Beliefs and Dilemmas*. [Unpublished PhD thesis, Volumes 1 and 2]. University of Sheffield, School of Education.

Page, J. (2011). Do mothers want professional carers to love their babies? *Journal of Early Childhood Research, 9*(3), 310– 323.

Page, J., & Elfer, P. (2013). The emotional complexity of attachment interactions in nursery. *European Early Childhood Education Research Journal, 21(*4), 553–567.

Pahil, R. (2019). *Collaborative Pursuit of flourishing*. [Unpublished thesis]. University of Birmingham.

Pahil, R. (2019a, July 1). *Building your Model of Flourishing. Thinking about children's psychological health through different lens*. [SEND Inclusion conference presentation]. SEND Inclusion Conference, Coventry, United Kingdom.

Porges, S. W., Doussard-Roosevelt, J. A., Portales, A. L., & Greenspan, S. I. (1996). Infant regulation of the vagal "brake" predicts child behaviour problems: A psychobiological model of social behaviour. Developmental Psychobiology, 29, 697-712.

Porges, S. W. (2011). The Polyvagal Theory: Neurophysiological Foundations of Emotions, Attachment, Communication, Self-regulation. Norton & Company.

Porges, S. W. (2017). The Pocket Guide to the Polyvagal Theory: The transformative power of feeling safe. Norton & Company.

Public Health England. (2016). *The mental health of children and young people in England*. PHE.
Reason, P., & Bradbury, H. (2008). *The Sage handbook of action research, participative inquiry and practice*. London: Sage Publications

Reed, J. (2006). *Appreciative inquiry: Research for change*. Sage Publications.

Roberts, R. (2007). *Companionable learning, the development of resilient wellbeing from birth to three*. [Unpublished thesis]. University of Worcester.

Robson, S., Brogaard-Clausen, S., & Hargreaves, D.J. (2017). Loved or Listened to?: Parent and Practitioner Perspectives on Young Children's Well-Being. *Early Child Development and Care, 189*(7), 1147–1161.

Rose, J., McGuire-Snieckus, R., Gilbert, L., & McInnes, K. (2019). Attachment Aware Schools: the impact of a targeted and collaborative intervention, *Pastoral Care in Education, 37*(2), 162-184.

Rutter, M. (1985). Resilience in the face of adversity. Protective factors and resistance to psychiatric disorder. *The British Journal of Psychiatry, 147(*6), 598-611.

Sandelowski M., Barroso J. (2007). *Handbook for synthesizing qualitative research*. Springer.

Savin-Baden, M., & Major, C. H. (Eds.). (2010). *New approaches to qualitative research: Wisdom and uncertainty*. Routledge.

Schein, E. H. (1969). *Process consultation: Its role in organization development.* Addison-Wesley.

Schofield, J. W. (1990). Increasing the generalizability of qualitative research. In E. W. Eisner and A. Peshkin (Eds.), *Qualitative inquiry in education: The continuing debate*, pp 201–232. Teachers College Press.

Schore, A. N. (1994). Affect Regulation and the Origins of the Self: The Neurobiology of Emotional Development. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

Schore, J. R. & Schore, A. N. (2008). Modern attachment theory: The central role of affect regulation in development and treatment. Clinical Social Work Journal, 36, 9- 2

Schram, S. (2012). Phronetic Social Science: an idea whose time has come, in Flyvberg, B., Landram, T. and Schram, S. (Eds.), *Real Social Science: Applied Phronesis*. Cambridge University Press, pp. 15-26.

Seligman, M. E. P. (2011). *Flourish: A New Understanding of Happiness and Well-Being - and How to Achieve Them*. Nicholas Brealey Publishing.

Senge, P.M. (1996). *The fifth discipline: The art and practice of the learning organization.* Random House.

Senge, P.M. (1990). *The art and practice of the learning organization*. Doubleday.

Shannon, D., & Posada, S. (2007). The Educational Psychologist in the Early Years: Current practice and future directions. *Educational Psychology in Practice, 23*(3), 257-272.

Siegel, D.J. & Payne Bryson, T. (2011). The Whole-Brain Child: 12 Revolutionary Strategies to Nurture Your Child's Developing Mind. Robinson Publications.

Siegel, D.J. & Payne Bryson, T. (2020). The power of showing up, how parental presence shapes who our kids become and how their brains get wired. Scribe Publications.

Slater, R. (2007). Attachment: Theoretical development and critique. *Educational Psychology in Practice, 23*(3), 205–219.

Soni, A. (2007). *How can young children's mental health be promoted in the early years within the Early Years Foundation Stage?* TACTYC. https://tactyc.org.uk/pdfs/Reflection-Soni.pdf

Soni, A. (2010). *Educational Psychology Work in Children's Centres: A Realistic Evaluation of Group Supervision with Family Support Workers*. [Unpublished thesis]. University of Birmingham.

Spratt, J. (2015). Childhood wellbeing: What role for education? *British Educational Research Journal, 42*(2), 223–239.

Sylva, K.; Melhuish, E.; Sammonds, P.; Siraj-Blatchford, I., & Taggart, B. (2004). *The Effective Provision of Pre-school Education (EPPE) project findings from pre-school to end of Key Stage 1*. Sure Start.

The Royal Family. (2020). *The Duchess of Cambridge launches 5 Big Questions, a UK-wide survey on the under 5s*. https://www.royalfoundation.com/5-big-questions/

5 Big Questions. (2020). *5 Big Questions*. https://5bigquestions.org.uk/

Thomas, G. (2011). *How to do your case study – a guide for students and researchers.* SAGE Publications

Thomas, G. (2016). *How to do your case study – a guide for students and researchers.* (2nd ed.). SAGE Publications.

Tickell, C. (2011). *The Early Years: Foundations for life, health and learning.* DfE. https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/180919/ DFE-00177-2011.pdf

Treisman, K. (2017). Working with relational and developmental trauma in children and adolescents. Routledge.

UNICEF (1989). United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) Retrieved 29th January, 2020 from http://digitalcommons.ilr.cornell.edu/child
UNICEF (2009). UNICEF UK Rights Respecting School Award: A Quick Guide. Retrieved from: http://www.unicef.org.uk/rrsa.

UNICEF Office of Research. (2013). *Child well-being in rich countries: A comparative overview, Innocenti Report Card 11*. UNICEF Office of Research-Innocenti.

Van der Kolk, B. (2015). The body keeps the score. Mind, brain and body in the transformation of trauma. Penguin Books.

Waters, L. and White, M. (2015). Case study of a school well-being initiative: using appreciative inquiry to support positive change. *International Journal of Well-being, 5*(1),19–32.

Weare, K. (2015). *What works in promoting social and emotional well-being and responding to mental health problems in schools? Advice for Schools and Framework Document*. National Children's Bureau.

Webber, L. (2017). A school's journey in creating a relational environment which supports attachment and emotional security. *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties, 22(*4), 317-331.

Wilding, L., & Claridge, S. (2016). The Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA) programme: Parental perceptions of its impact in school and at home. *Educational Psychology in Practice, 32*(2), 180–196.

World Health Organization (2014). Mental health: a state of well-being. WHO. Accessed 20th February 2019
at https://www.who.int/features/factfiles/mental_health/en/

Chapter 7 Appendices

Appendix A: Systematic Search Details

Date	7th July 2019
Timespan	No date limitation applied
Search language	English
Databases	EBSCO (ERIC)
Search terms/Results	"wellbeing" AND "early childhood" – 104 "wellbeing" AND "young children" – 111 "parent" AND "views" AND "wellbeing" 22 "teacher" AND "views" AND "wellbeing" 39 "preschool children" AND "wellbeing" 31 "early years practitioner" AND "wellbeing" 0
Actions	307, added to Mendeley, duplicates removed.

Date	7th July 2019
Timespan	No date limitation applied
Search language	English
Databases	Psych Info (OVID)
Search terms/Results	"wellbeing" AND "early childhood" – 192 "wellbeing" AND "young children" – 192 "parent" AND "views" AND "wellbeing" 13 "teacher" AND "views" AND "wellbeing" 9 "preschool children" AND "wellbeing" 20 "early years practitioner" AND "wellbeing" 1
Actions	427, added to Mendeley, duplicates removed.

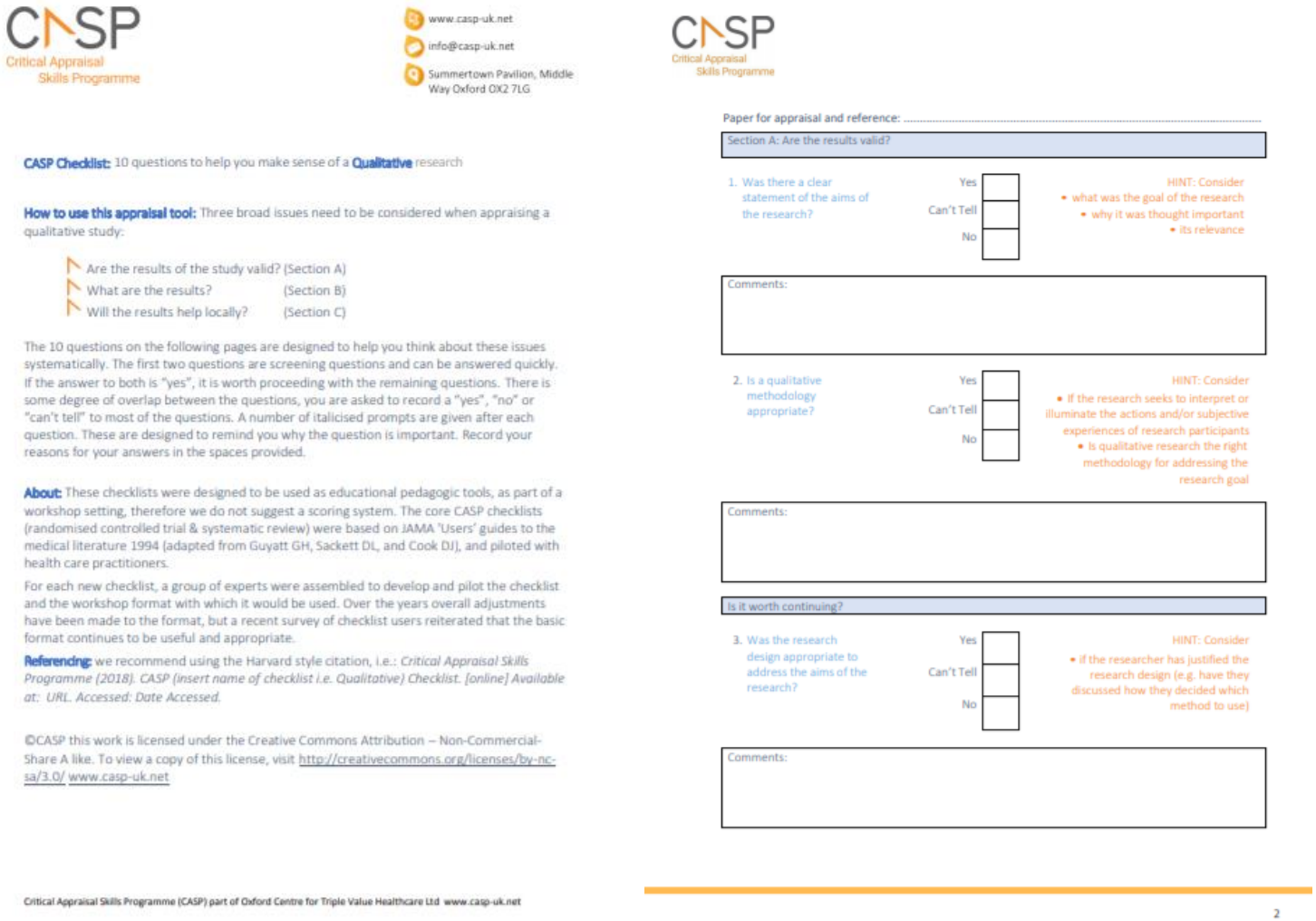
Date	5th July 2019
Timespan	No date limitation applied
Search language	English
Databases	Web of Science
Search terms/Results	"wellbeing" AND "early childhood" – 383 "wellbeing" AND "young children" – 318 "parent" AND "views" AND "wellbeing" 114 "teacher" AND "views" AND "wellbeing" 58 "preschool children" AND "wellbeing" 154 "early years practitioner" AND "wellbeing" 0
Actions	1027, added to Mendeley, duplicates removed.

= 1761, once duplicates removed **= 674 studies**

Appendix B: Selection of studies excluded from final review selection

Excluded study	**Reason why**
Hickey, McGilloway, Leckey and Stokes (2018)	Non-educational/EYFS setting
D'Onise, McDermott and Lynch (2014)	USA
Brussoni, Ishikawa, Brunelle and Herrington (2017)	Canada
Turchi (2019)	USA
Burdette, Whitaker and Daniels (2004)	USA
Mazarese, Vanuyten, Decin and Buyse (2011)	Non-UK. Topic not related to review question.
Fernandez-Moilna and Bracvo Castillo (2018)	Sample did not meet requirements, parent and staff views not relevant to EY children
Dowell and Malone (2011)	Australia
Howard, Siraj, Melhuish, Kingston, Neilsen-Hewett, deRosnay, Duursma and Luu Steven (2018)	Australia
Sims, Davis, Davies, Nicholson, Harrison, Harrman, Waters, Marshall, Cook and Priest (2012)	Australia
Hinkley, Brown, Carson and Teychenne (2018)	Australia
Melhuish, Belsky, Leyland and Barnes (2008)	No rich qualitative data

Appendix C: Guidance materials for using the CASP checklist (CASP, 2018)



CASP
Critical Appraisal Skills Programme

www.casp-uk.net
info@casp-uk.net
Summertown Pavilion, Middle Way Oxford OX2 7LG

CASP Checklist: 10 questions to help you make sense of a **Qualitative** research

How to use this appraisal tool: Three broad issues need to be considered when appraising a qualitative study:

- Are the results of the study valid? (Section A)
- What are the results? (Section B)
- Will the results help locally? (Section C)

The 10 questions on the following pages are designed to help you think about these issues systematically. The first two questions are screening questions and can be answered quickly. If the answer to both is "yes", it is worth proceeding with the remaining questions. There is some degree of overlap between the questions, you are asked to record a "yes", "no" or "can't tell" to most of the questions. A number of italicised prompts are given after each question. These are designed to remind you why the question is important. Record your reasons for your answers in the spaces provided.

About: These checklists were designed to be used as educational pedagogic tools, as part of a workshop setting, therefore we do not suggest a scoring system. The core CASP checklists (randomised controlled trial & systematic review) were based on JAMA 'Users' guides to the medical literature 1994 (adapted from Guyatt GH, Sackett DL, and Cook DJ), and piloted with health care practitioners.

For each new checklist, a group of experts were assembled to develop and pilot the checklist and the workshop format with which it would be used. Over the years overall adjustments have been made to the format, but a recent survey of checklist users reiterated that the basic format continues to be useful and appropriate.

Referencing: we recommend using the Harvard style citation, i.e.: *Critical Appraisal Skills Programme (2018). CASP (insert name of checklist i.e. Qualitative) Checklist. [online] Available at: URL. Accessed: Date Accessed.*

©CASP this work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution – Non-Commercial-Share A like. To view a copy of this license, visit http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/3.0/ www.casp-uk.net

CASP
Critical Appraisal Skills Programme

Paper for appraisal and reference: .....

Section A: Are the results valid?

1. Was there a clear statement of the aims of the research?
   Yes ☐ Can't Tell ☐ No ☐
   HINT: Consider
   - what was the goal of the research
   - why it was thought important
   - its relevance

Comments:

2. Is a qualitative methodology appropriate?
   Yes ☐ Can't Tell ☐ No ☐
   HINT: Consider
   - If the research seeks to interpret or illuminate the actions and/or subjective experiences of research participants
   - Is qualitative research the right methodology for addressing the research goal

Comments:

Is it worth continuing?

3. Was the research design appropriate to address the aims of the research?
   Yes ☐ Can't Tell ☐ No ☐
   HINT: Consider
   - if the researcher has justified the research design (e.g. have they discussed how they decided which method to use)

Comments:

CASP
Critical Appraisal Skills Programme

4. Was the recruitment strategy appropriate to the aims of the research?

Yes ☐
Can't Tell ☐
No ☐

HINT: Consider
- If the researcher has explained how the participants were selected
- If they explained why the participants they selected were the most appropriate to provide access to the type of knowledge sought by the study
- If there are any discussions around recruitment (e.g. why some people chose not to take part)

Comments:

5. Was the data collected in a way that addressed the research issue?

Yes ☐
Can't Tell ☐
No ☐

HINT: Consider
- If the setting for the data collection was justified
- If it is clear how data were collected (e.g. focus group, semi-structured interview etc.)
- If the researcher has justified the methods chosen
- If the researcher has made the methods explicit (e.g. for interview method, is there an indication of how interviews are conducted, or did they use a topic guide)
- If methods were modified during the study. If so, has the researcher explained how and why
- If the form of data is clear (e.g. tape recordings, video material, notes etc.)
- If the researcher has discussed saturation of data

Comments:

CASP
Critical Appraisal Skills Programme

6. Has the relationship between researcher and participants been adequately considered?

Yes ☐
Can't Tell ☐
No ☐

HINT: Consider
- If the researcher critically examined their own role, potential bias and influence during (a) formulation of the research questions (b) data collection, including sample recruitment and choice of location
- How the researcher responded to events during the study and whether they considered the implications of any changes in the research design

Comments:

Section B: What are the results?

7. Have ethical issues been taken into consideration?

Yes ☐
Can't Tell ☐
No ☐

HINT: Consider
- If there are sufficient details of how the research was explained to participants for the reader to assess whether ethical standards were maintained
- If the researcher has discussed issues raised by the study (e.g. issues around informed consent or confidentiality or how they have handled the effects of the study on the participants during and after the study)
- If approval has been sought from the ethics committee

Comments:

CASP
Critical Appraisal Skills Programme

8. Was the data analysis sufficiently rigorous?

Yes ☐
Can't Tell ☐
No ☐

HINT: Consider
- If there is an in-depth description of the analysis process
- If thematic analysis is used. If so, is it clear how the categories/themes were derived from the data
- Whether the researcher explains how the data presented were selected from the original sample to demonstrate the analysis process
- If sufficient data are presented to support the findings
- To what extent contradictory data are taken into account
- Whether the researcher critically examined their own role, potential bias and influence during analysis and selection of data for presentation

Comments:

9. Is there a clear statement of findings?

Yes ☐
Can't Tell ☐
No ☐

HINT: Consider whether
- If the findings are explicit
- If there is adequate discussion of the evidence both for and against the researcher's arguments
- If the researcher has discussed the credibility of their findings (e.g. triangulation, respondent validation, more than one analyst)
- If the findings are discussed in relation to the original research question

Comments:

CASP
Critical Appraisal Skills Programme

Section C: Will the results help locally?

10. How valuable is the research?

HINT: Consider
- If the researcher discusses the contribution the study makes to existing knowledge or understanding (e.g. do they consider the findings in relation to current practice or policy, or relevant research-based literature
- If they identify new areas where research is necessary
- If the researchers have discussed whether or how the findings can be transferred to other populations or considered other ways the research may be used

Comments:

Appendix D: Outcomes from CASP (2018) checklist applied to qualitative synthesis

Author	Was there a clear statement of aims?	Is a qualitative methodology appropriate?	Was the research design appropriate?	Was the recruitment strategy appropriate?	Was the data collected in a way that addressed the research issue?	Has the relationship between researcher and participants been adequately considered?	Have ethical issues been taken into consideration?	Was the data analysis sufficiently rigorous?	Is there a clear statement of findings?	Is the research valuable?
Bertagno (2016)	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Aubrey and Ward (2013)	2	2	2	1	2	1	2	2	2	2
Robson, Brogaard-Clausen and Hargreaves (2017) **Brogaard-Clausen and Robson (2019)**	2	2	1	2	2	1	2	2	2	2
Mooney, Boddy, Statham and Warwick (2008)	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	2
Roberts (2007)	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2

2 = yes, 1 = partially, 0 = no.

Appendix E: Qualitative Research Synthesis Themes Table

Table 1: first order codes

	First order codes				
	Robson, Clausen and Hargreaves, 2017 **Brogaard-Clausen and Robson, 2019**	**Aubrey and Ward 2013**	**Mooney, Boddy, Statham and Warwick, 2008**	**Bertagno, 2016**	**Roberts, 2007**
Data Extracts	-Being loved -Feeling loved -Listened to -Children's agency -Child's voice -Play -Quality of professionals -Friendships -Understanding of boundaries -Routine -Consistency -Children's self concept -Environment -Morals ethics and religion -Finances -Parents talk about love -Knowing they are loved -Attachment -Cared for -Being heard and respected -Having a voice -Consulted and involved in decision making -Good keyworker can make all the difference	-Sharing games, such as circle time, modelling and teaching consistent expectations -Social skills 'to get on with other people' -Praise -Awareness of cultural factors -children who understand expectations of EYFS, able to function better -teaching auditory discrimination -Breaking down instructions -use more able children to model socially appropriate behaviour -turn taking and negotiation	-Training materials for staff to develop wellbeing and self esteem both regional and nationally -collaborative working with other professionals -building on curriculum framework -whole setting approach, including wellbeing of staff -shared workload for health related work -Ethos of partnerships with parents -Available time allocated for health related work -Engaging parents takes time, can use leaflets, questionnaires, taster sessions and one off events -Communication -Resources	-Responsibility for children's wellbeing -Training , knowledge and professional experiences -Personal attributes, values and beliefs -personal aspects, such as being a parent -Providing containment -Feeling contained -Managing demands of the system -Working with parents, part of daily role, paramount to support wellbeing in children -Supporting parents to support children -Adapting practice to support children's individual needs -Key person approach -building close relationships, home visits, pre-school transition -Supporting children's emotional needs, interventions and circle time -listening to and talking to children coming down to the child's level -Boundaries -Expectations -Working as a team, support from management -sharing concerns with colleagues supports staff own wellbeing -Support from external agencies, e.g. EP service -EYFS guidance and principles	-Companionable attention/diagogy -companionable relationship, between very young child and adult/older sibling, builds over time with a bond of love or affection -Play, importance of free flow play for agency -reading a book together -Agency -Communication -Belonging -Boundaries -importance of routines -Physical wellbeing, linked to agency and motor control

	-Guided by professionals who understand the importance of childhood. -Good family relationships -Different circles of friends -Having friends	-dialogue for both rewards and sanctions -reflection space -rewards to have intrinsic value	-funding -respecting cultural background of parents -physical space – outdoor space for physical activity	-using PSED to assess developmental norms and plan interventions -recognising importance of wellbeing as a basis for learning -Time	
Supporting quotes	*Being LOVED and having it demonstrated that they are LOVED. That is the most important one of all, and you didn't put it in!* *Knowing they're loved* *To feel loved for who they are.* *I think it is increasingly important that parents/caregivers respond to play cues and engage in play with their children. This seems to be what is most lacking in some children that I work with and the results can be catastrophic for their development and well-being.* *A good key worker can make all the difference for these children.* *being guided by professionals who recognize the importance of childhood*	*Skills to get on with other people* *teach skills such as turn-taking and negotiation* *'Stickers' work well for rewarding* *'Time out' was seen as a necessary sanction by all interviewees but dialogue and explanations were seen as central to both rewards and sanctions* *Reflect and have 'new start' and take responsibility for the choices they made about their own behaviour.*	*Share perspectives and move forward together* *The development of a Children's Trust and appointment of a Director of Children's Services has pulled things together and emphasised the importance of integrated working. Those involved could see links between healthy schools and early years.* *Our role would be advising and supporting. Health is a specialist area. We can help put a structure in place to help people work in partnership, make strategic decisions and link local authorities and primary care trusts so that they work to best advantage.*	*Um, well, er (…), unless a child has emotional well-being, they, there are barriers to learning.* *Happiness. They, they, there's, um, and all around them. They look happy, they look well, well looked after children. Um. Er. they tend to talk, you know, they'll come up to you and have a conversation with you. Whereas some of the children, they, a child who is quite shy or maybe feeling sad will not be as, as, you know, will not come and respond as much as a, a well, you know (...), a happy child.* *Um, I think it's particularly important to support children's early, um, well-being specifically in early years because that is the foundations of their future in terms of their social life when they grow up, in terms of their future relationships and aspirations in life, you know, even down to job goals.* *You go into a caring profession because you want to look after and help and promote everything. I think their well-being, in all my teaching career and involvement, has shown me how important this is, and that's one of the reasons why I am in early years because I truly believe that it's the foundations that are laid that are so important.(…) My own personal views are that emotional well-being is paramount.* *Well, I think that when you're an early year's teacher, you kind of have that embedded in you to, um, nurture*	*Passing my culture to my children* *Mixing with other parents* *To feel loved* *Feeling important to someone* *Being in contact with distant friends* *Not being bullied* *Communication in a close relationship* *They just need to be loved – to feel safe and feel loved* *Love* *Parents are most important to the child, and child is*

	Close relationship with teacher less important with increasing age but important. *Different circles of friends e.g. neighbourhood, school, through sports/clubs.* *Having friends.* *balance between indoor and outdoor play* *Being listened to and feeling they have a voice that is paid attention to.* *A sense of being heard and respected.* *Consulted and involved in decision making. Having a voice.* *Sustained opportunities for open ended play.*		*But this needs to be adequately resourced and to involve people with an early years background and specialisation.* *The ethos of early years settings has been extremely conducive to healthy schools work.* *The [curriculum framework] allows this work to happen because it's very flexible and is developing the whole child.* *[Service] providers are likely to be keen as long as they are convinced of the value of it, rather than another thing they have to do. It's important that any Healthy Early Years Programme links with other statutory and non-statutory requirements, QA schemes for example and Developing health in early years settings 169 Ofsted inspections, where the Programme*	*children and with that, you should be naturally supporting their well-being, and for me, that is like them as a whole, like you know (…) that is that child, their well-being.* *To me, the concept of children and emotional well-being is (…) anything that makes them feel secure and happy within their environment, to feel relaxed and nurtured and safe. A lot of those things, to me, are what I believe the (…) that sort of underpin children's well-being* *Emotional well-being in a word…, I would think of a child who is happy, confident, not worried about taking risks, able to interact with adults and children.* *They need to come in and feel emotionally settled and secure and comfortable, and you can see by their facial expressions, by the way they move. They don't have to talk all the time so you can see by their faces. You, as a teacher and as a practitioner and as anyone working in early years, needs to be able to read that. Sometimes a child doesn't need to say a word. If it comes in smiling, if it comes and explores and, and, and shows us that even if it's not talking, it will show us that they are feeling confident emotionally inside* *And I, as a person, um, I think having empathy with children is very important, and also personally I think that in, in Early Years practice and generally in schools.* *Being, I think being approachable, being approachable to a child, making a child feel secure that they can come and talk to you and, and being, sometimes being a good listener* *You have to be emotionally well yourself to be able to support others*	*most important to the parents* *Mothers own wellbeing is vital* *he enjoys when we do tickling games and stuff like that, he enjoys that – he enjoys it when I actually give him attention and play with him, do eye contact and peek-a-boo and tickle* *Access to a local children's centre* *A garden for playing* *Own space* *Adults modelling wellbeing* *Parenting information and support* *Quality of staff in daycare* *I think particular people. Certainly*

			could be taken as evidence or work in the relevant area. *Additional funding [is needed] since additional support in these settings will mean an increase in time and capacity ... However, I am supportive of the need to extend work into early years settings* *It will need to be resourced centrally, or show local providers how they can resource this. What's needed is something that offers training or support to assist people to embed new ways of doing things into their setting*	*It's the way you've been brought up and it's quite difficult to change patterns.* *Um, and also that would include mmm, maybe weekly meetings with the parents, maybe short meetings and they could er-, tell us if there was any changes in the child's life.* *So, we're, really, we're teaching not just the child here, we're teaching parents in some cases. There are some cases that we don't need to do that, but a lot of the time, I would say a good seventy percent of the parents we're actually teaching them* *I need their help for me to understand their child's needs because they understand their children (…) more than I do.* *To facilitate that we need the-, we need to know that-, have the information. So working alongside parents is very important* *Um. Just (…), er, being a good listener I think, listening to them.* *It's about coming down to the child's level, making eye contact with the child.* *We have a key people, key person approach. Um. Most, we find most nurseries do that. We do that here and the idea is, behind a key person, is that you make, build a link with the family initially and then you're, sort of, you're the link for, that key person for the adults, sort of parents to come to, but then also, um, it's also you are championing that child. So, you've got a really close relationship with*	*people. Again, I keep coming back to this routine, but I think that is absolutely fundamental. I think knowing what's going on, and being able to predict what's going on is absolutely fundamental. So I think that's the first thing, that there are no surprises and he has some sense of control over what's going on and when its going on. I think having an expectation within that – so within that routine key people can come and go, so Daddy goes off every morning, but he comes back at a predictable juncture in the day …… so people coming and going within a predictable framework. Having predictable routines where the person always says*

				that child. You would pick up if that child's distressed about something or if that child's not achieving. So, you're basically championing that child and keeping the assessments and, um (…), and for, as, in it, and that child often builds a very close relationship with you because of that *You, we do home visits so that the child makes a connection and understands that their parents trust us to come into their home. So, they can come into the nursery and they will say, Oh, you came to my house and immediately there is a bond there.* *Sometimes words aren't needed, but just that sort of contact, being able to touch you and hold onto you and just to feel secure maybe and to watch what's going on and, and be there with an adult that they feel safe with I think is really important. Yeah* *I suppose we work as part of a team. So, it's very much a team and we, you know, good team work* *Talking to other practitioners. Talking within the group, within our team to make sure that we support children, um* *I think the team in itself, um, makes us, being a team because we're working with so many children and the support of the adults as well is very important. Again, so coming in myself and the teams, and if the teams aren't there then we just sort of say, That's fine, and we support each other. If we have, you know, a problem with one little thing, we try and support each other because we are human as well and there is noth-, you know, we can have bad days as well as good days and that's so important*	*goodbye, or have a nice snooze, so that you know that's the clue to what is likely to happen* *(Routines) are important for his security. The fact that he has this routine means that he can cope better with other people looking after him …… providing that they know what the routine is, and they (laugh) they follow it too. And I think they're important for us because otherwise you've got this incredibly needy entity there all the time, and what d'you do? You need to impose some structure so that the whole task of looking after this very needy creature is a task that in your own mind is a manageable task, not one that is just utterly beyond being*

				Because of training, because of things that I've read. *I suppose, I've had, um, experience, you know, years as a head and years as a deputy and, and you know, sort of supported teams through that.* *Need to be flexible and adjustable.* *Um, well, as a practitioner, I know that from past training and things like when you look at like 'every child matters', um, certain policies that have been put in place, um, that you're, that we're, we're aware of that help support children's well-being.* *Having come across many different aspects of where children settle and seeing many different ways that children settle means that you can draw on that life knowledge to support the children in different situations* *Early years practitioners do go to visit children in their homes, which is for a short time. It gives a picture of how things may look at home.* *So, it's about, a lot about the transition, making that smooth for the child.* *Having a setting that is conducive to making children feel safe and comfortable, um, and having, um, the equipment that's appropriate, space that is appropriate.* *So that they know there are rules that keep them safe.* *It's very much about the transition from home, because often nursery, in preschool is, is the first point, point that a child separates from a parent into an establishment.*	*met. So structures I think give everyone concerned a sense of security*

				We actually set, I suppose, we have a set of rules the children have to follow, a set of guidelines *A clear line management so you can go to line management if, you know, if you've got any concerns or you're struggling with something with a child.* *I would go and maybe make a referral and ask someone to come and, um, look at this child and see if they can help* *If you need to, to provide agent, you know, other outside agencies, use their support* *If I felt like I wasn't being successful as a teacher, that's again, like I said earlier, I would go and maybe make a referral and ask someone to come and, um, look at this child and see if they can help* *Well, the early year's foundation stage, which is the curriculum, is very much one of the prime areas, this children's PSED skills are not only skills but their well-being* *I mean it's vital for us to observe, to look, to see how they're separating from their parents, to see how they're separating from a, a key person or another key person.* *We can observe them, we can observe their learning.* *A lot of time we are trying to hit targets and we've got assessments to do, but we, I do try and sort of balance it out so I'm not, you know, take, it's not taking me away from the children. I do try and put, especially in nursery, we do try and tend to put the children, try and put the children first*	

				Um, in our setting, we use the earliest foundation stage and, um, that has many factors in it which helps (…) Support children's emotional well-being. For example, when you look at their personal, social and emotional development, there's aspects in there that, um, for example, making relationships that would help support their, um, emotional well-being *f, for example, you're assessing a child and they are, and they're (…) Typically very below where they should be then that would be a way of highlighting perhaps maybe some cause for concern or some intervention put in place so, yeah, it can be useful* *If the child was having, um (…) continuous behavioural problems, it might be underpinning something different under, um, like an underlying problem so obviously we may inter-, intervene and try to dig further into that* *So, I think it's that ability to step aside from what manifests on the outside to actually thinking about what's inside and how can you help with that or, or what's happened to them. So, you can have a bit of explanation in, in your own head, I suppose, to say about what it's like* *At planning meetings we would identify an activity or something we would do the following week to support that child.* *I think first of all, the most important thing is to know your children. All children are individuals. You need to know the child and ensure, if you're talking about an Early Years practice, to plan activities we know they are going to be able to achieve and that would be suitable for their-, their development at the time*	

				Plan that lesson or an activity around their interests *I think first of all, the most important thing is to know your children. All children are individuals. You need to know the child and ensure, if you're talking about an Early Years practice, to plan activities we know they are going to be able to achieve and that would be suitable for their-, their erm, development at the time.* *Planning the lessons in different ways, so you need to know the child-, so what their interests are-, so plan that lesson or an activity around their interests.*	

Table 2: second order themes

Overarching themes		
Relationships and Personal, Social and Emotional Development	*Structures, systems and services*	*A unique child*
Second order themes		
-Loved -Listened to -Staff-parent relationship -Staff-child relationship -Parental engagement -Key person approach -other professionals -Working as a team -Working with other professionals -Play -Friendships -Learning from others -Social Skills -Communication	-Curriculum -Ethos -Frameworks -Whole setting approach -Boundaries -Routine -Consistency -Expectations -Staff training -Staff knowledge -Strategies -Time -Cultural factors -Resources	-Child's voice -Child's agency -Listened to

Table 3: Third order interpretations

Third order interpretations
Secure base
Containment
Identity
Flourishing
Attunement

Appendix F: School Recruitment Email

Dear XXX,

I'm Clare, the trainee EP who works alongside XXX at your school. I am undertaking the Doctorate in Applied Educational Psychology at the University of Nottingham and as part of this will be undertaking a piece of research. I am seeking to discover facilitative factors which support the promotion of children's wellbeing in the Foundation Stage.

This study aims to use an Appreciative Inquiry approach, a form of action research which proposes to discover the positive factors within an environment such as a school and to build on these to create progressive change for those involved. This process would involve gaining the views of Foundation Stage staff members and of parents, as well as holding collaborative discussions and planning between staff and parents about how these supportive factors might be best developed within the Foundation Stage setting.

If you would be interested in taking part in this study, it would be great to hear from you. You can express your interest by replying to this email, following which I can arrange a visit to meet with you at a time which is convenient for you to discuss the proposed study. Your expression of interest would be greatly appreciated and will not put you under any further obligation nor affect your access to the Educational Psychology Service.

Thank you for your time.
Kind regards,
Clare Antczak

Appendix G: Parent Recruitment Flyer

Wellbeing in Early Years

The University of Nottingham
UNITED KINGDOM · CHINA · MALAYSIA



This is an opportunity to take part in research looking at improving wellbeing in young children.

If you participate you will be asked to take part in small focus groups with other parents and Early Years Staff. The sessions will take place at Richard Lee School.

If you are interested in taking part and are available on the following dates; please let a member of the Early Years Team know:

26th November 9am-12pm

10th December 2-3pm

14th January 2-3pm

Light refreshments will be provided.



Ethics approval number: S1173R

Appendix H: GDPR: Research participant privacy notice

Title of Project: An Appreciative Inquiry of the facilitative factors within an Early Years setting that promote the development of wellbeing in children.

Insert Ethics Approval Number or Taught Project Archive Number

Researcher(s): Clare Antczak [clare.antczak@nottingham.ac.uk]

Supervisor(s): Dr Sarah Atkinson

Privacy information for Research Participants

For information about the University's obligations with respect to your data, who you can get in touch with and your rights as a data subject, please visit: www.nottingham.ac.uk/utilities/privacy/privacy.aspx.

Why we collect your personal data

We collect personal data under the terms of the University's Royal Charter in our capacity as a teaching and research body to advance education and learning. Specific purposes for data collection on this occasion are as part of a research project. The researcher is part of a doctorate programme in Applied Educational Psychology, at the University of Nottingham. The purpose of this research is to explore the facilitative factors in early settings that promote the development of wellbeing in children.

Legal basis for processing your personal data under GDPR

The legal basis for processing your personal data on this occasion is Article 6(1a) consent of the data subject OR Article 6(1e) processing is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest. We hope this research will help identify the facilitative factors that can promote the development of wellbeing in children.

Where the University receives your personal data from

Some personal data about you will be collected as part of the research, which will be kept confidential. This data will come from yourself, as the research participant.

How long we keep your data

The University may store your data for up to 25 years and for a period of no less than 7 years after the research project finishes. The researchers who gathered or processed the data may also store the data indefinitely and reuse it in future research. Any data stored will be anonymised, meaning that participants will not be identifiable. Any data that might identify a participant will be left out of transcriptions. All participants will be given a 'pseudonym' (a fake name) in the research to protect their identity.

Who we share your data with

Extracts of your data may be disclosed in published works that are posted online for use by the scientific community. Your data may also be stored indefinitely on external data repositories (e.g., the UK Data Archive) and be further processed for archiving purposes in the public interest, or for historical, scientific or statistical purposes. It may also move with the researcher who collected your data to another institution in the future.

Appendix I: Semi-structured interview guide

Staff semi-structured interview guide

1. What attracted you to your present role that you find most meaningful, valuable or exciting?
   Tell me about the things in your work at this school which have given you the greatest satisfaction. What makes this possible? What is your role in this? What is the role of others in this?

   What makes you most proud of this school?

   What do you notice when your team is at its best?

   What do you notice about yourself when you are at your best at work?

2. Tell me about a 'peak experience' you have had of working with children, in relation to wellbeing.
   What circumstances do you think made this possible? What was your role in that? What was the role of others in that?

   What did you most value about this experience?

3. What are 3 wishes you have for the school, in relation to wellbeing?
   What values distinguish this school? How are they kept alive?

Parent semi-structured interview guide

1. Tell me about the best experiences you have had with this school. What do you think made that possible?
   When have you been most proud of this school? What do you think made this possible?

2. What do you think this school does well in promoting wellbeing? What is the staff's role in this? What is students' role in this? What is parents' role in this?

   Tell me about a time when you felt that your child's wellbeing was at its best? What were they doing? What helped this to happen? What were others doing? What was your role in this?

   What did you most value about this experience?

3. What are 3 wishes you have for the school, when thinking about wellbeing?
   What values do you think are important to this school? How are they kept alive?

Appendix J: Interview Summary Sheet

Interview Summary Sheet

What was the most quotable quote that came out of this session?

What was the most compelling story that came out of this session?

What were they key themes (up to 3) that stood out for you most during the session?

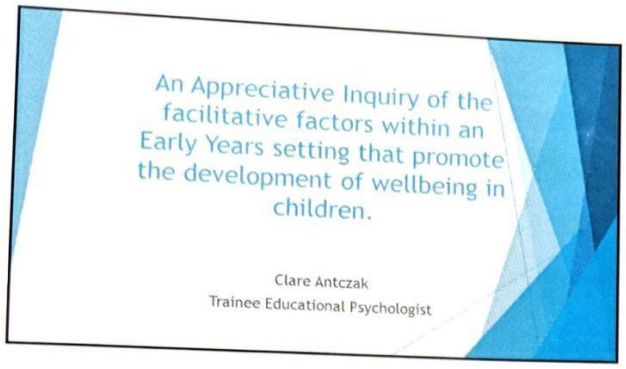
Write: strengths from the stories on the square (one strength per square)
Strength: A good quality about a person or thing.

Values on rectangles (one value per rectangle)
Value: principle or standard about our topic.

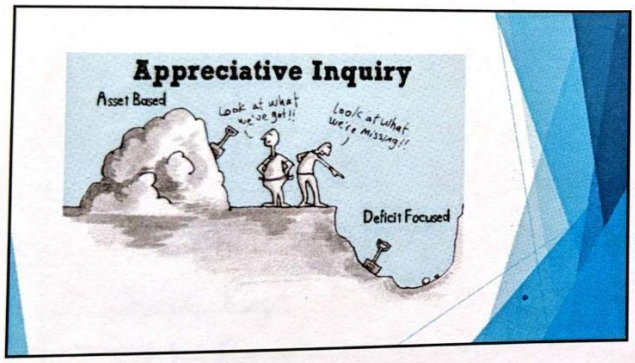
Wishes on circles (one wish per circle).
Wish: a desire or hope for something.

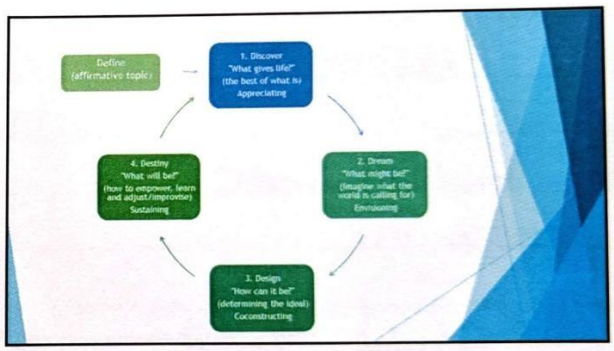
Make sure these reflect what has been shared during todays focus group.

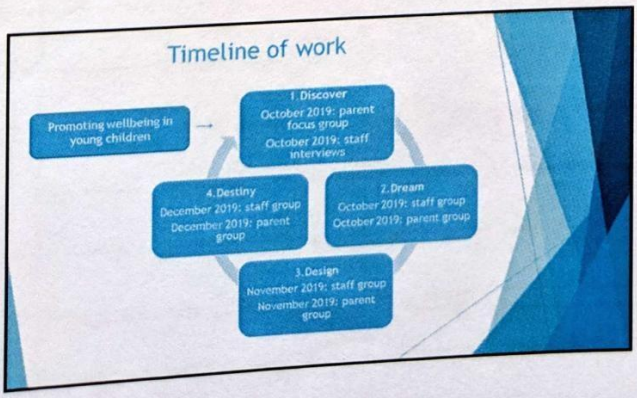
Appendix K: AI presentation for staff

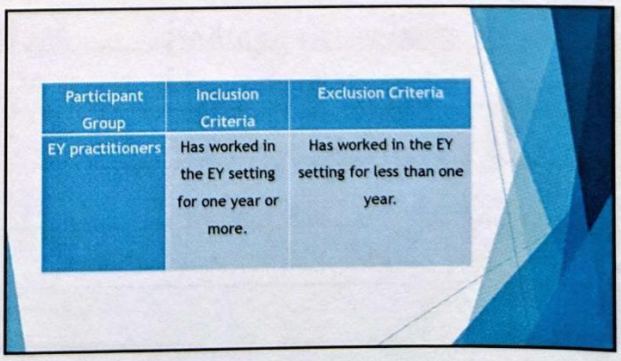












Participant Group	Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria
EY practitioners	Has worked in the EY setting for one year or more.	Has worked in the EY setting for less than one year.

Appendix L: AI handout given to all participants

***Ap-pre'ci-ate**, v., 1. to value; recognize the best in people or the world around us; affirm past and present strengths, successes, and potentials; to perceive those things that give life (health, vitality, excellence) to living systems. 2. to increase in value, e.g., the economy has appreciated in value. Synonyms: value, prize, esteem, and honor.*

***In-quire'**, v., 1. to explore and discover. 2. to ask questions; to be open to seeing new potentials and possibilities. Synonyms: discover, search, systematically explore, and study.*

Appreciative Inquiry (AI) is a strengths-based approach to organisational change and focuses on finding positives rather than deficits originally developed by Cooperrider and Srivastva (1987). AI is based on the idea that every system possesses a hidden and 'positive core' of strengths, which when highlighted provide energy for organisational transformation (Ludema and Fry, 2008).

AI has 4 phases:

1. **Discover:** All stakeholders' articulate strengths and best practices.
2. **Dream:** Creating a clear vision of potential
3. **Design:** Creating propositions of the ideal organisation. Written around a statement as if it is happening, in positive terms.
4. **Destiny:** Strengthening the capability of the whole system to build hope and sustain momentum for change.

A 5th phase of 'Define' acts as a pre-phase to decide the topic for the AI (Brooks, 2015). This is because AI requires an affirmative topic before the inquiry can begin. The affirmative topic here is promoting young children's wellbeing.

Appendix M: Question Grid Guiding Focus Group Discussion & Semi-Structured Interview based on Pahil (2019)

Type of Question	**Questions**	**Prompts/Information Provided**
Evaluative: Transformation	Let's examine the initial actions from the Appreciative Inquiry; have any of these components been tried before the start of this research? What's never been tried before? What had been tried? How transformative are these actions likely to be?	Initial actions from AI. Rating 1 included definitions of transformative change and incremental change (Bushe, 2010)
Evaluative: Metaphor	Did the AI generate a metaphor for you? If so, what is it? What does this metaphor mean for you?	
Evaluative: Knowledge	What, if any, knowledge have you acquired through the AI?	
Evaluative: Figure-Background	Looking back at the draft programme, what do you think about the actions that have been generated? What do you think about the scope of the actions? What is your rating? Why have you given this rating?	Rating 2
Evaluative: Improvisation-Implementation	How do you think the draft programme will be carried out? Do you think you will be able to carry out the actions that you feel most passionate about independently? If not, why?	
Reflective: General	In what way(s), do you think the AI process could have been improved?	
Closure	If the school were to undertake a second AI cycle, what would you like to see as the central topic for change?	

Questions Guiding the Semi-Structured Interview

1. Let's examine the draft programme, have any of these components been tried before the start of this research? What's never been tried before? What has been tried?
   How transformative is this programme likely to be?
   What is your rating?
   Why have you given this rating?

No Change	Some Change	Major Change
0	5	10

2. Did the appreciative inquiry generate a metaphor for you? If so, what is it? What does this metaphor mean for you?
3. What, if any, knowledge have you acquired through the appreciative inquiry?
4. Looking back at the draft programme, what do you think about the actions that have been generated? What do you think about the scope of the actions?
   What is your rating?
   Why have you given this rating?

No scope	Some Scope	Major
Scope		
0	5	10

5. How do you think the initial actions will be carried out? Do you think you will be able to carry out the actions that you feel most passionate about independently? If not, why?
6. Do you think the AI has had any impact in school? Have you noticed any changes at all during the inquiry (If so, what? Why do you think these changes occurred?). Do you think it (the AI) has contributed at all toward positive change? What other factors may have contributed toward these changes? Overall, how effective do you think the inquiry has been in facilitating positive change?
7. In what way(s), do you think the AI process could have been improved?
8. If the school was to undertake a second AI cycle, what would you like to see as the central topic for change?

(contd. /d): Rating 1

1) Let's examine the basis of the draft programme, have any of these components been tried before the start of this research?

   What's never been tried before?

   What has been tried?

   How transformative* is this programme likely to be?

   What is your rating?

   Why have you given this rating?

No Change	Some Change	Major Change
0	5	10

*Transformational change is when there is 'a clear, compelling change in the normative routines of staff and the changes are seen as discontinuous – that is, they were not changes that had been simmering before the AI process began' (Bushe, 2010, p.13).

Whereas incremental change is when 'any observed changes are consistent with change processes already in action'. There are no changes to normative routines or no discontinuous change. (Bushe, 2010, p.13)

(cont. /d): Rating 2

4) Looking back at the draft programme, what do you think about the actions that have been generated?

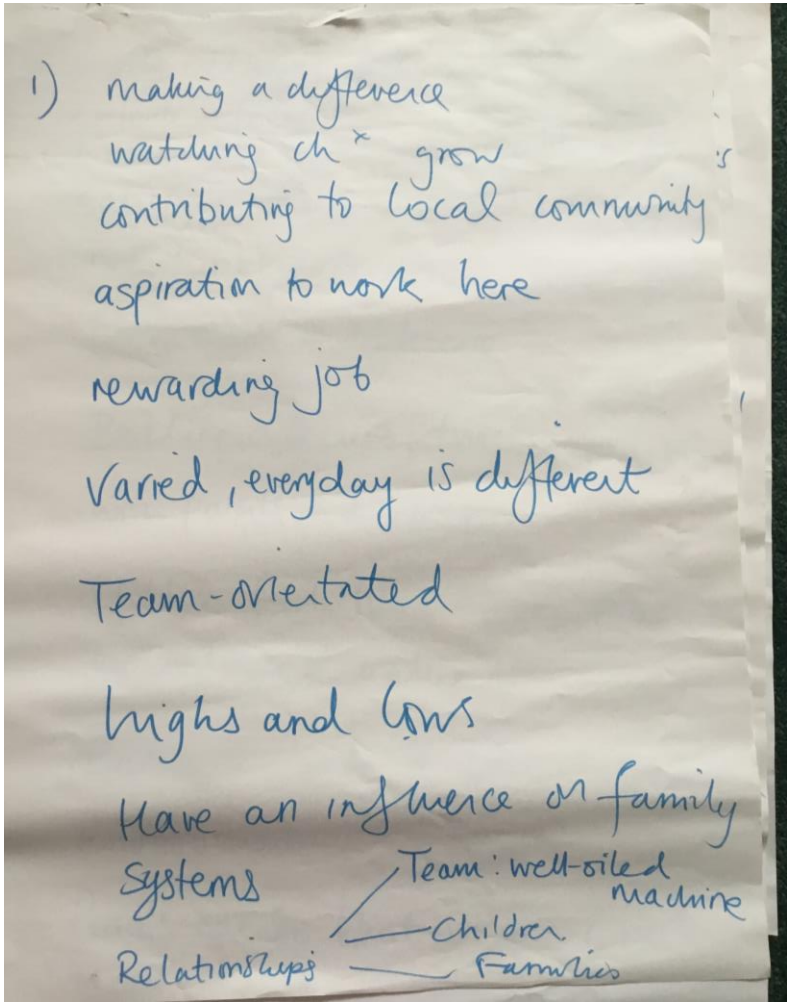
What do you think about the scope of the programme?

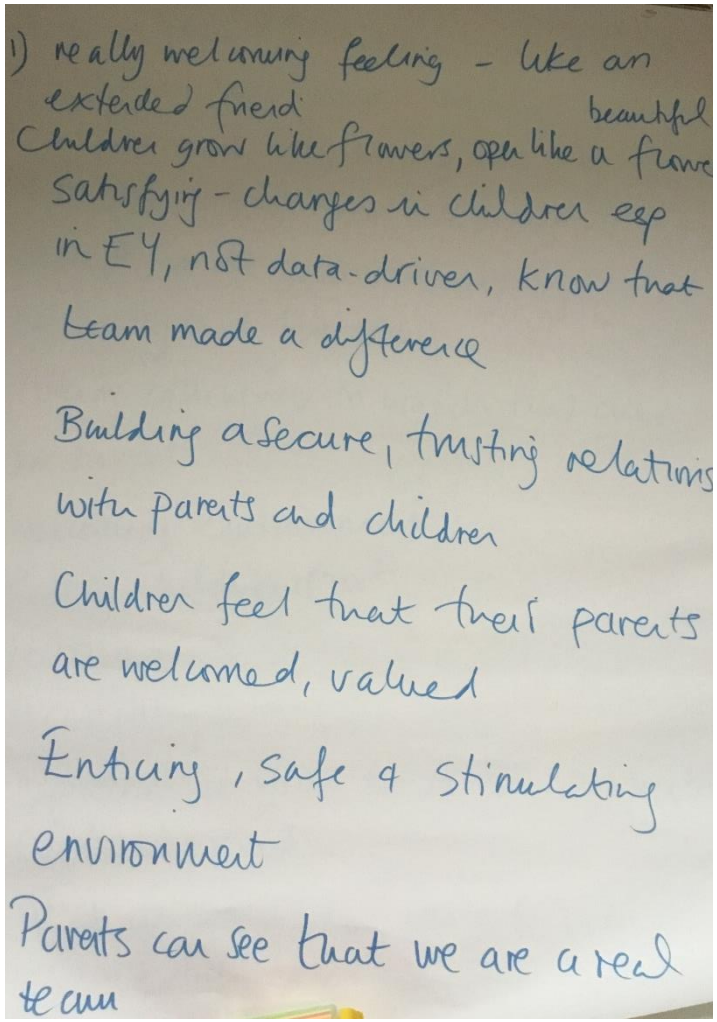
What is your rating?

Why have you given this rating?

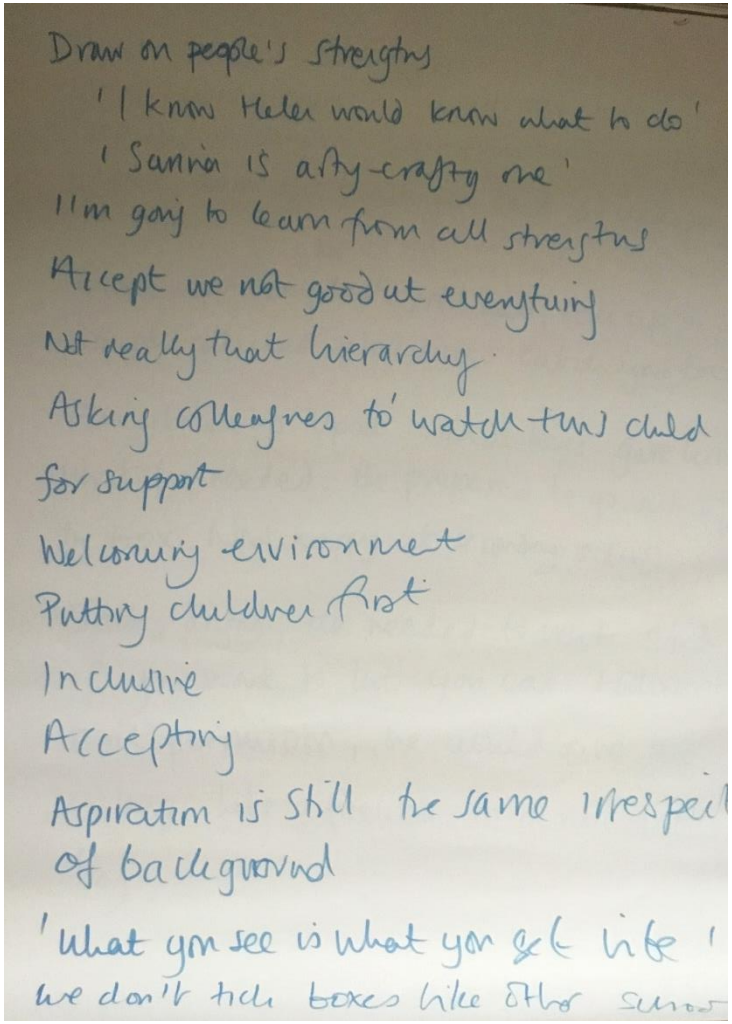
No scope	Some Scope	Major Scope
0	5	10

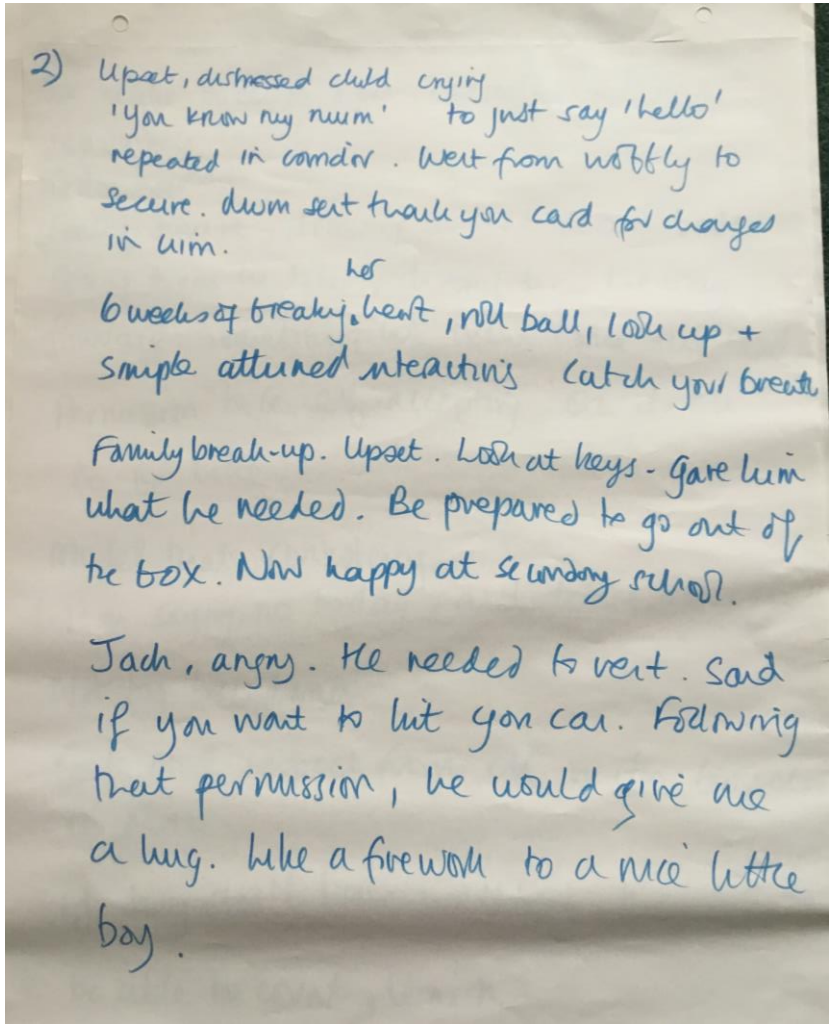
Appendix N: Audit trail for thematic analysis



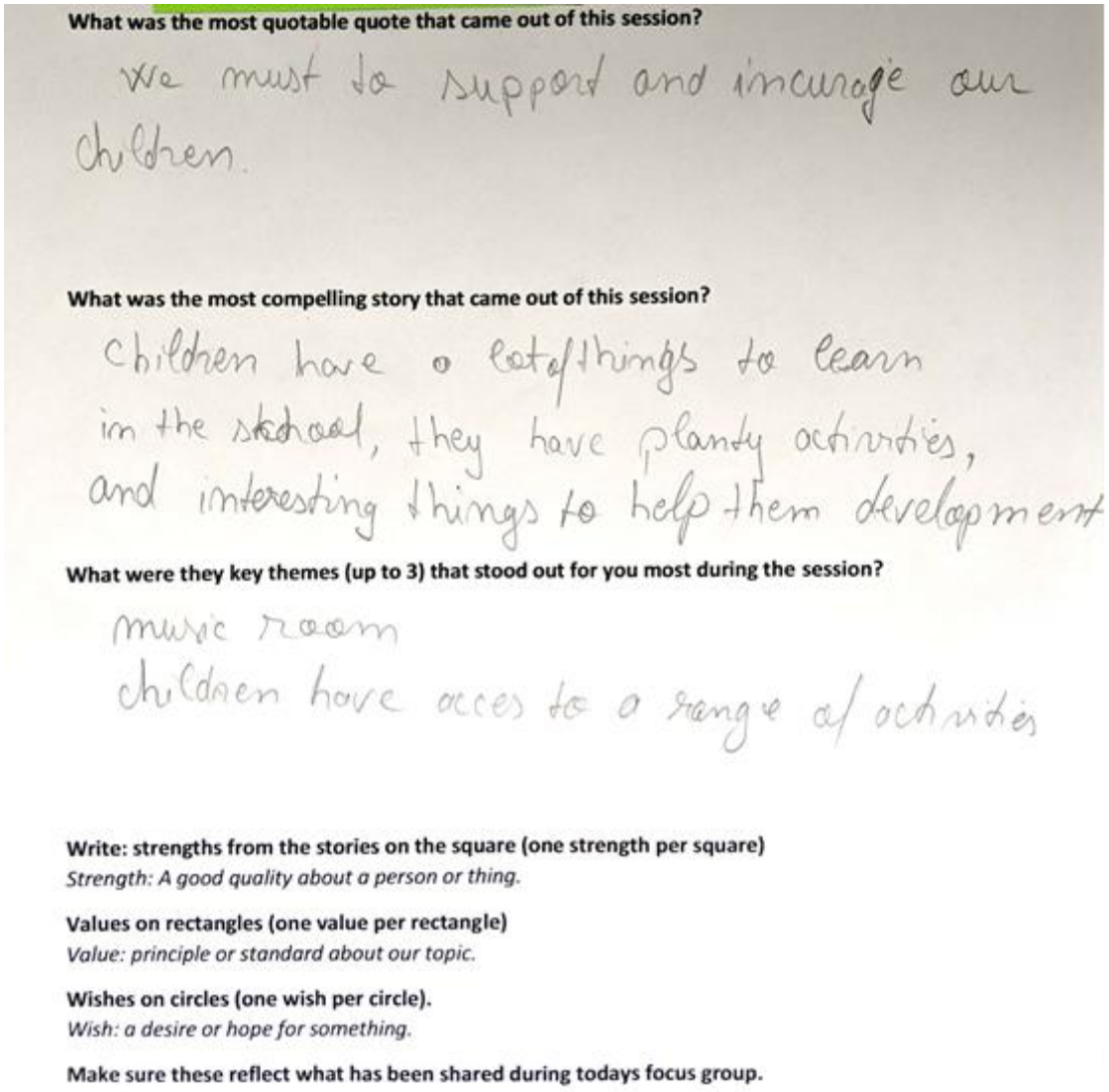


Illustrative example: Raw flipchart data from discovery sessions with particpants.





Illustrative example: Raw flipchart data from discovery sessions with participants.



What was the most quotable quote that came out of this session?

We must to support and incurage our children.

What was the most compelling story that came out of this session?

Children have a lot of things to learn in the school, they have planty activities, and interesting things to help them development

What were they key themes (up to 3) that stood out for you most during the session?

music room
children have acces to a range of activities

Write: strengths from the stories on the square (one strength per square)
Strength: A good quality about a person or thing.

Values on rectangles (one value per rectangle)
Value: principle or standard about our topic.

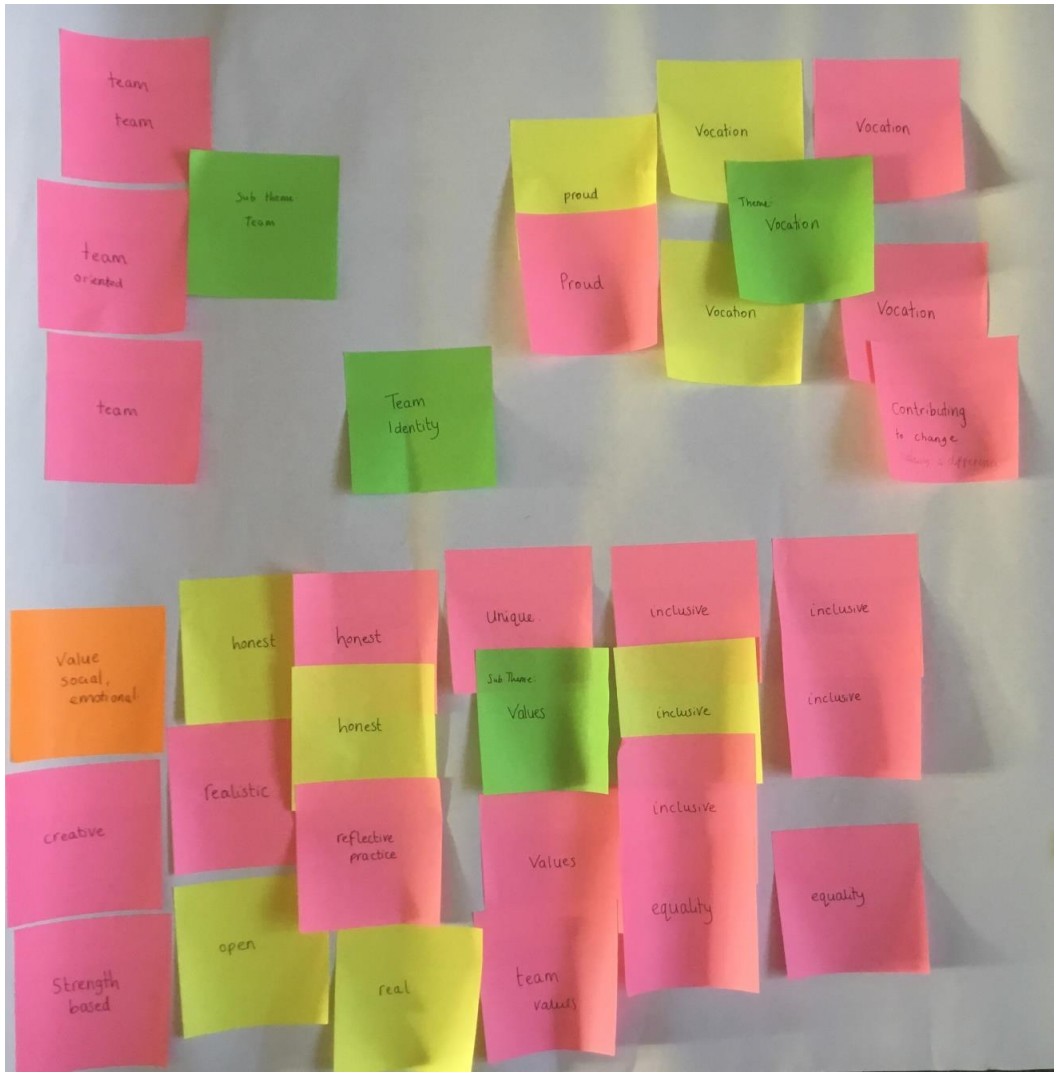
Wishes on circles (one wish per circle).
Wish: a desire or hope for something.

Make sure these reflect what has been shared during todays focus group.

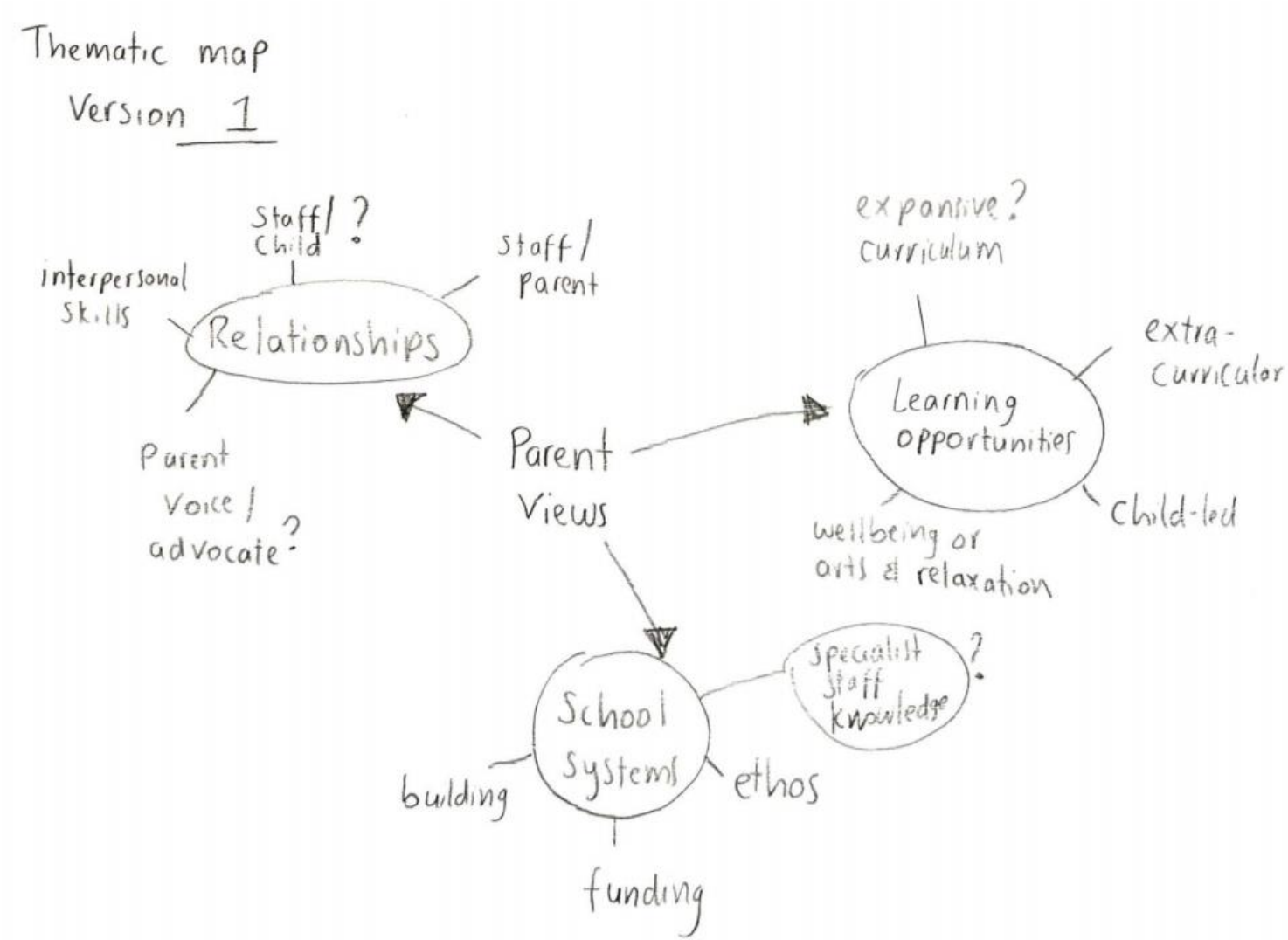
Illustrative example: Completed summary sheet raw data from discovery sessions with participants

Semi-structured interview questions for focus group	Flipchart raw data from EY Practitioner Discovery session	Initial Code	Refined Code
1. What attracted you to your present role that you find most meaningful, valuable or exciting? Tell me about the things in your work at this school which have given you the greatest satisfaction. What makes this possible? What is your role in this? What is the role of others in this? What makes you most proud of this school? What do you notice when your team is at its best? What do you notice about yourself when you are at your best at work?	Making a difference	Contributing to change	Contributing to change
	Watching children grow	Flourish	Flourish
	Contributing to local community	Community links	Community links
	Aspiration to work here	Career	Vocation
	Rewarding job	Career	Vocation
	Team-orientated	Team	Team
	Highs and lows	Rollercoaster of emotion	Emotions
	Have an influence on family systems	Community, system	System
	Relationships, with team: well oiled machine, children and families	Relationships	Relationships
	Really welcoming feeling – like an extended friend	Community	Community links
	Children grow like flowers, open like a flower	Flourish	Flourish
	Satisfying -changes in children especially in early years, not data-driven, know that team made a difference	Team, proud	Team
	Building a secure, trusting relationship with parents and children	Relationships	Relationships
	Children feel that their parents are welcomed, valued	Attachment, relationships	Relationships
	Enticing, safe and stimulating environment	System	System
	Parents can see that we are a real team	Relationships, real	Team
	Draw on people's strengths, "I know XX would know what to do", "XX is the arty-craft one", I'm going to learn from all strengths.	Strengths based	Strengths based

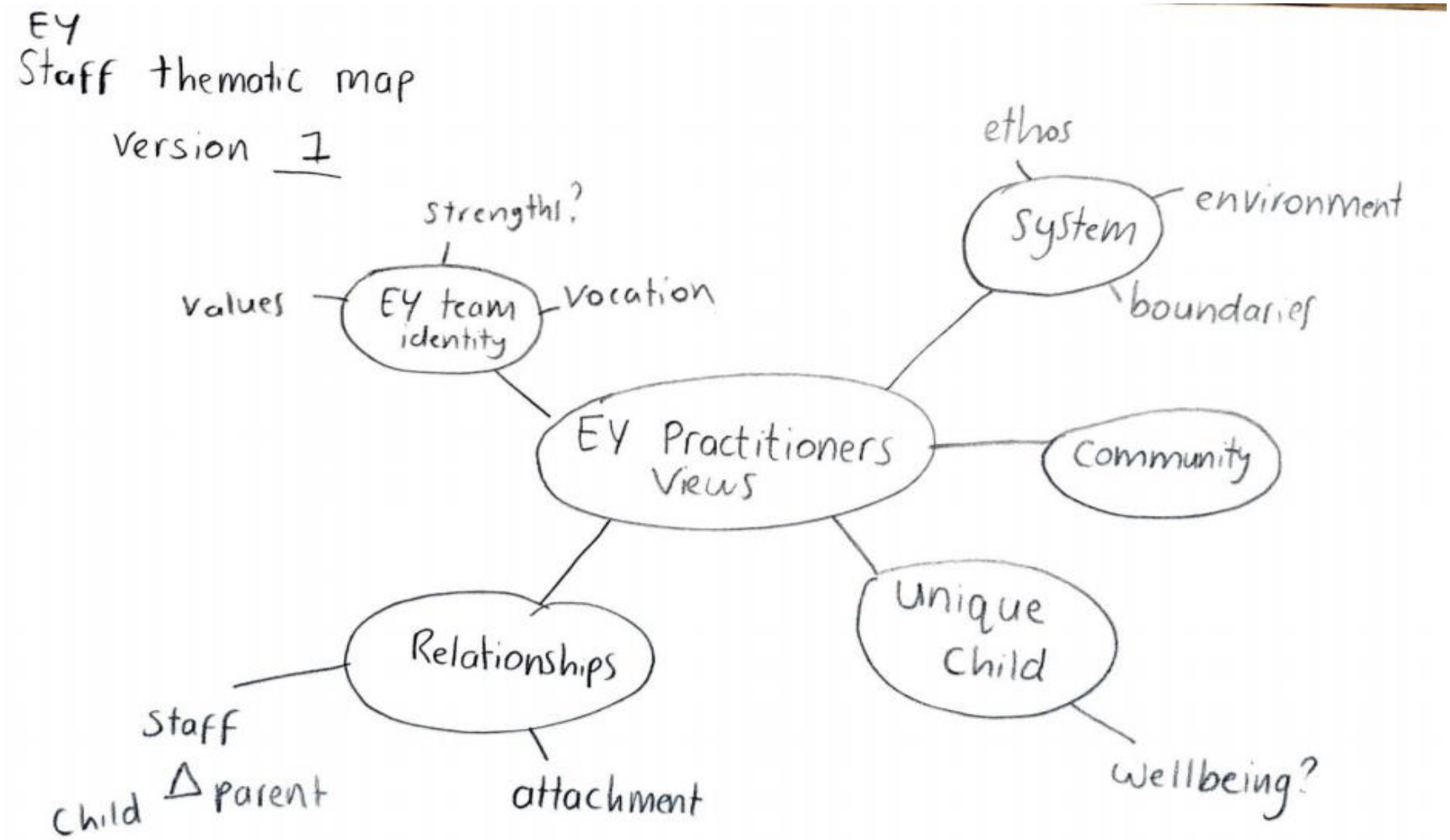
Illustrative example: Transcription extract of raw data from discovery phase, to aid familiarisation and initial and refined code generation



Illustrative example: Codes were transferred onto post-it notes, and I used these to map out common patterns between them to identify themes.



Illustrative example: Creation of thematic mind maps to represent initial themes/key ideas of analysis



Illustrative example: Creation of thematic mind maps to represent initial themes/key ideas of analysis

Appendix O: Audit trail for process evaluation

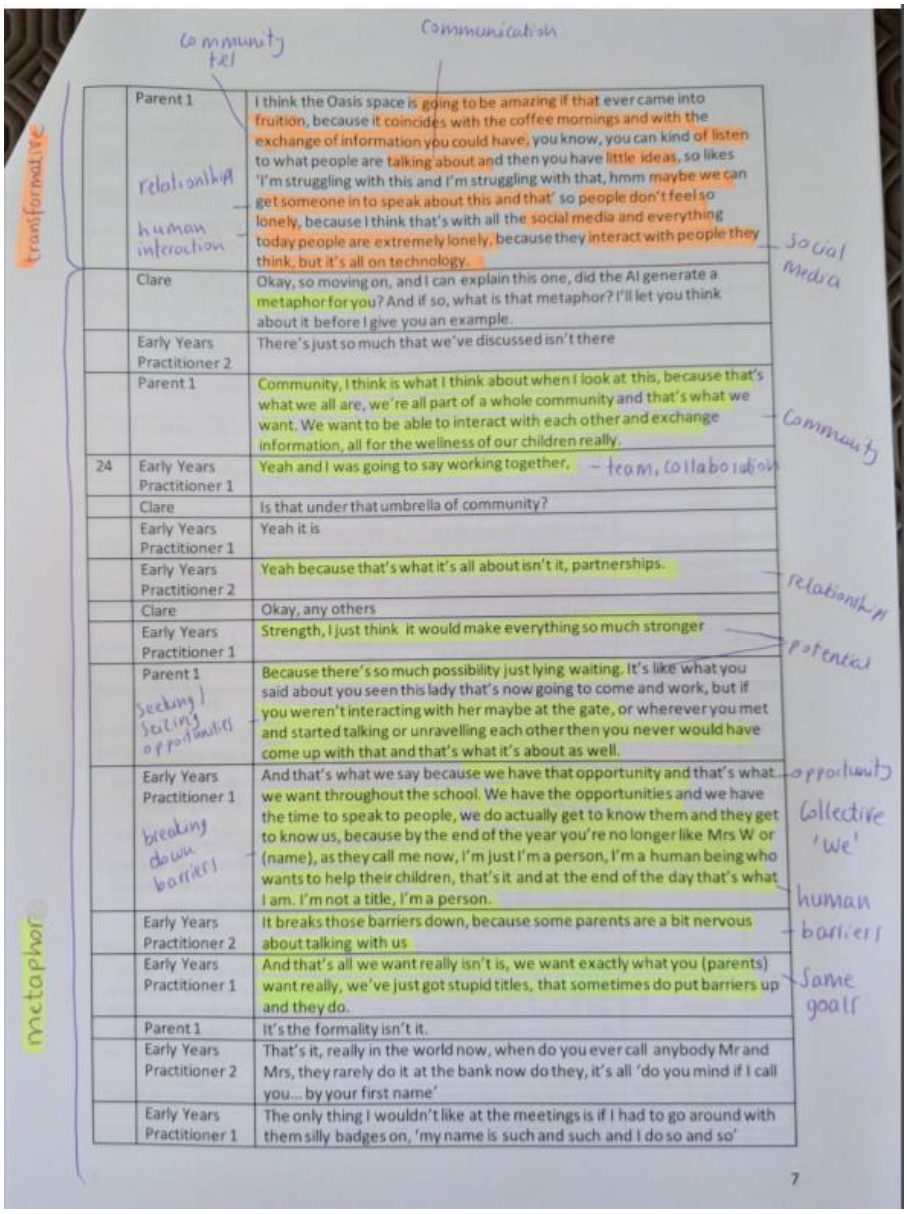
Illustrative example: Transcribed audio from 'Beginning-Destiny' phase interview with focus group

Time in recording (minutes)	**Person Speaking**	**Audio data**
	Clare	Okay, so moving on, and I can explain this one, did the AI generate a metaphor for you? And if so, what is that metaphor? I'll let you think about it before I give you an example.
	Early years practitioner 2	There's just so much that we've discussed isn't there
	Parent 1	Community, I think is what I think about when I look at this, because that's what we all are, we're all part of a whole community and that's what we want. We want to be able to interact with each other and exchange information, all for the wellness of our children really.
24.00	Early years practitioner 1	Yeah and I was going to say working together,
	Clare	Is that under that umbrella of community?
	Early years practitioner 1	Yeah it is
	Early years practitioner 2	Yeah because that's what it's all about isn't it, partnerships.
	Clare	Okay, any others
	Early years practitioner 1	Strength, I just think it would make everything so much stronger
	Parent 1	Because there's so much possibility just lying waiting. It's like what you said about you seen this lady that's now going to come and work, but if you weren't interacting with her maybe at the gate, or wherever you met and started talking or unravelling each other then you never would have come up with that and that's what it's about as well.
	Early years practitioner 1	And that's what we say because we have that opportunity and that's what we want throughout the school. We have the opportunities and we have the time to speak to people, we do actually get to know them and they get to know us, because by the end of the year you're no longer like Mrs W or (name), as they call me now, I'm just I'm a person, I'm a human being who wants to help their children, that's it and at the end of the day that's what I am. I'm not a title, I'm a person.
	Early years practitioner 2	It breaks those barriers down, because some parents are a bit nervous about talking with us
	Early years practitioner 1	And that's all we want really isn't is, we want exactly what you (parents) want really, we've just got stupid titles, that sometimes do put barriers up and they do.
	Parent 1	It's the formality isn't it.
	Early years practitioner 2	That's it, really in the world now, when do you ever call anybody Mr and Mrs, they rarely do it at the bank now do they, it's all 'do you mind if I call you… by your first name'

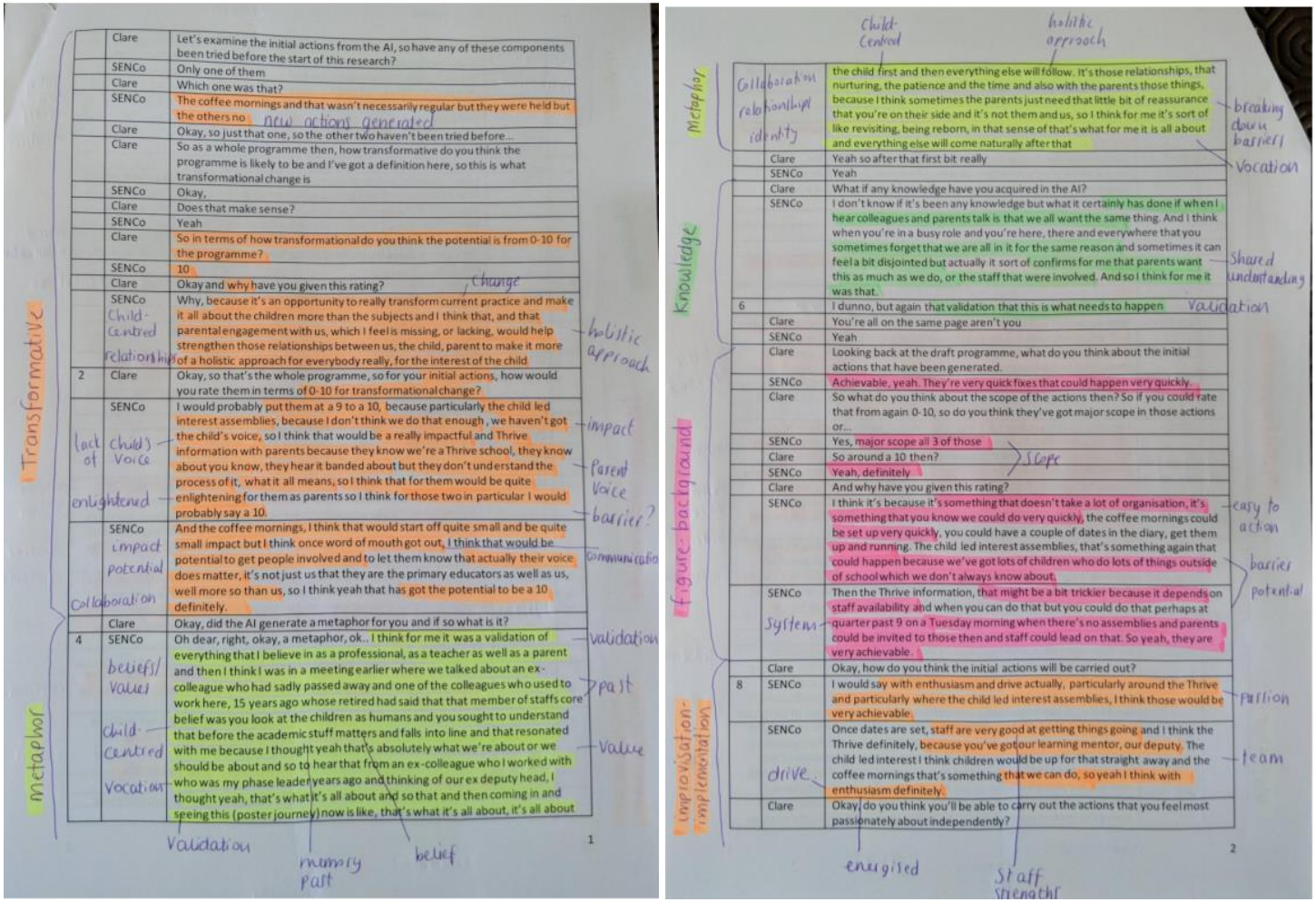
	Early years practitioner 1	The only thing I wouldn't like at the meetings is if I had to go around with them silly badges on, 'my name is such and such and I do so and so'
26.00	Clare	Okay, I think that's covered that nicely. Okay, so what if any knowledge have you acquired through the AI?
	Early years practitioner 1	I think the feeling that we all want the same thing. The positivity of the things, like you said (parent) of the things that could unravel from it and it could just build massively.
	Parent 1	Because we're not just parents are we, we're parents with knowledge and education and jobs that could be very beneficial for everyone.
	Early years practitioner 1	And people that care, if you care, what bad things can bring, it can only bring good things can't it
	Clare	Any other knowledge that you didn't necessarily aware of before?
	Parent 1	I didn't know of Thrive before, that's new to me, obviously because I've never heard of it. The inner workings of a school, yes I've been to school but that was in a completely different country, I'm not from here so I know my children go to school, but once they go to school and that door closes, what they do in there I have no idea. Because you wouldn't know.
	Early years practitioner 1	No I spent years with my sons, and I'd say, 'what did you learn today' and 'nothing', 'can't remember'
	Parent 2	And I know everything, because my child tells me everything (laughs)
	Parent 1	We're going to clone your daughter (laughs)

Illustrative example: Transcribed audio from 'Beginning-Destiny' phase interview with SENCo

Time in recording (minutes)	**Person speaking**	**Audio data**
	Clare	Okay, did the AI generate a metaphor for you and if so what is it?
4.00	SENCo	Oh dear, right, okay, a metaphor, ok.. I think for me it was a validation of everything that I believe in as a professional, as a teacher as well as a parent and then I think I was in a meeting earlier where we talked about an ex-colleague who had sadly passed away and one of the colleagues who used to work here, 15 years ago whose retired had said that that member of staffs core belief was you look at the children as humans and you sought to understand that before the academic stuff matters and falls into line and that resonated with me because I thought yeah that's absolutely what we're about or we should be about and so to hear that from an ex-colleague who I worked with who was my phase leader years ago and thinking of our ex deputy head, I thought yeah, that's what it's all about and so that and then coming in and seeing this (poster journey) now is like, that's what it's all about, it's all about the child first and then everything else will follow. It's those relationships, that nurturing, the patience and the time and also with the parents those things, because I think sometimes the parents just need that little bit of reassurance that you're on their side and it's not them and us, so I think for me it's sort of like revisiting, being reborn, in that sense of that's what for me it is all about and everything else will come naturally after that
	Clare	Yeah so after that first bit really
	SENCo	Yeah
	Clare	What if any knowledge have you acquired in the AI?
	SENCo	I don't know if it's been any knowledge but what it certainly has done if when I hear colleagues and parents talk is that we all want the same thing. And I think when you're in a busy role and you're here, there and everywhere that you sometimes forget that we are all in it for the same reason and sometimes it can feel a bit disjointed but actually it sort of confirms for me that parents want this as much as we do, or the staff that were involved. And so I think for me it was that.
6.00		I dunno, but again that validation that this is what needs to happen.

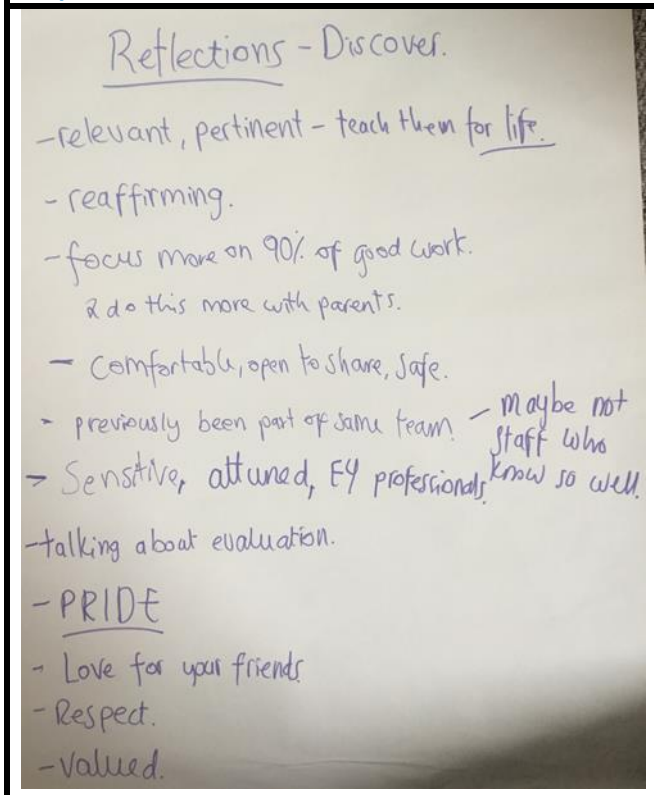
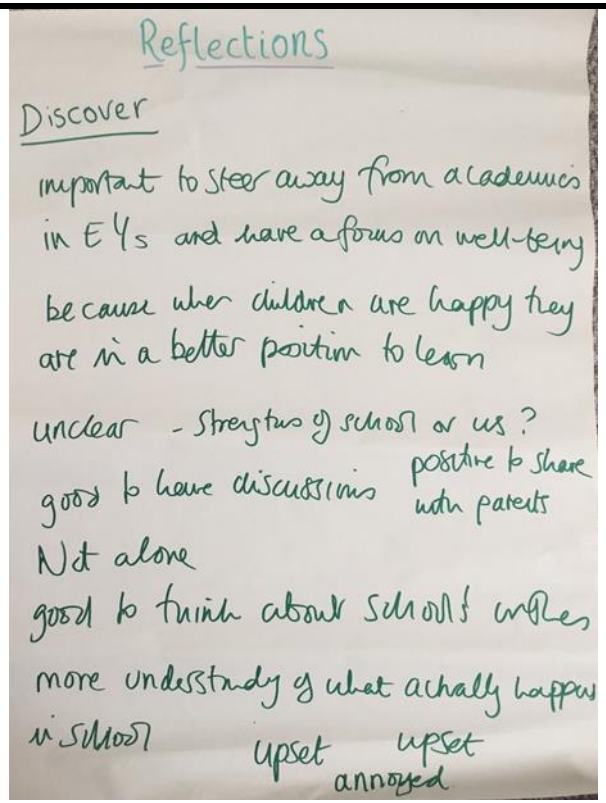


Illustrative example: Basic qualitative coding to further familiarise self with focus group data and Bushe & Kassam's (2005) coding framework (process dimensions) used to deductively group data, for example metaphor or no metaphor.

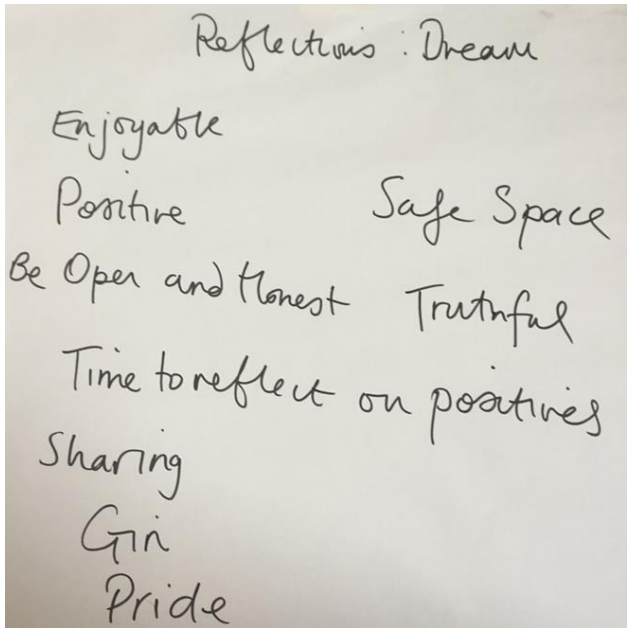
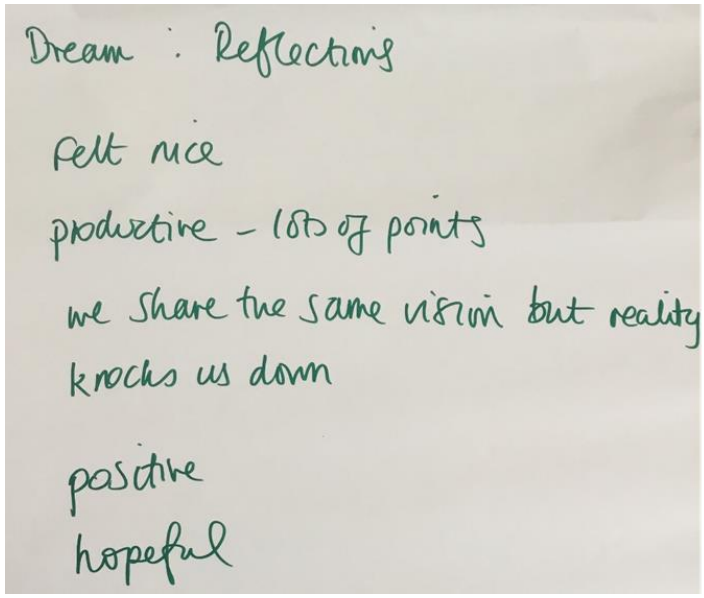


Illustrative example: Basic qualitative coding to further familiarise self with SENCo data and Bushe & Kassam's (2005) coding framework (process dimensions) used to deductively group data, for example metaphor or no metaphor.

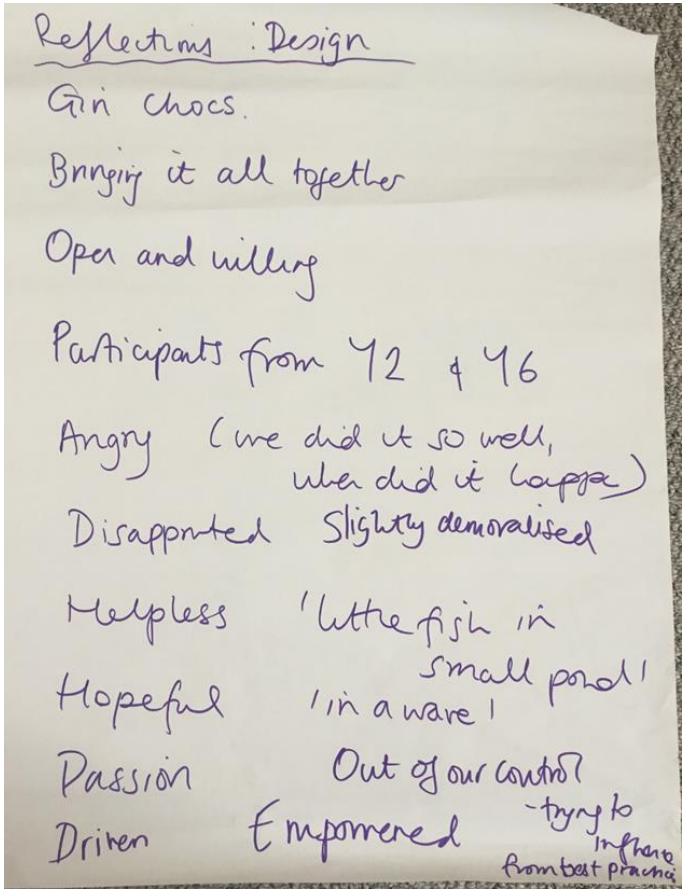
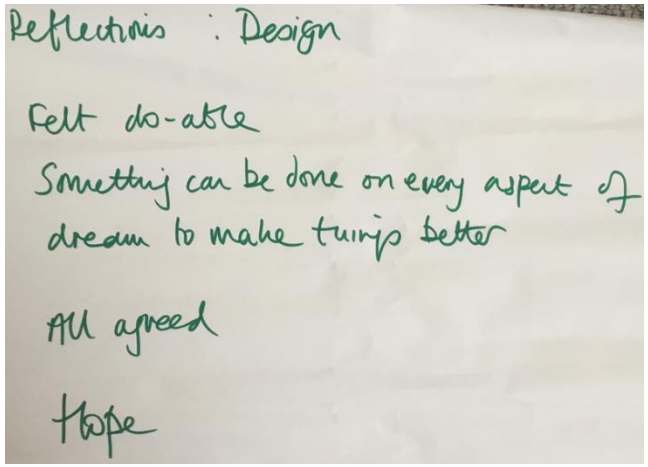
Appendix P: Audit trail for Reflections

EY practitioner Reflections	Parent Reflections	My Reflections
		**Reflections on EY practitioner 'Discovery' phase (29.10.19)** -I was a little hesitant at first, staff arrived late which I interpreted as 'not buying in' to research. However, was relieved to see how well they engaged once session started. Brilliant stories and reflections from group I open, honest space. -Staff were supportive and attuned to one another. -Process of AI well received. Space to feel positive about the work they do. -'hugged us to show child it was okay' -speaking of positive parent relationships. **Reflections on Parent AI 'mini summit'** -discord between parent and staff session. -need to be 'a warrior' to get child's needs met . -unable to identify 'values' of the school . -main focus on communication, want improved quality and quantity . -started with negative feelings and reflections, towards end felt more positive and hopeful . -did not identify any relationships at school as working well for child's wellbeing, only explicitly mentioned.

Illustrative example: Raw data from 'Discovery' phase reflections grouped together for familiarisation and triangulation.

EY practitioner Reflections	Parent Reflections	My Reflections
		**Reflections on EY 'Dream' phase (12.10.19).** -Reduced staff group, one not available as had left school due to internal pressures, one did not attend due to pre-booked training course. Was concerned about numbers, but another member of staff joined who was off sick the previous week. -Great to see positive and wide-ranging themes, member checked these at start. -Thinking of the 'wish' did bring up some negative comments from staff, e.g. 'we used to have parent assemblies' etc, important to let staff air these whilst listening for positives.

Illustrative example: Raw data from 'Dream' phase reflections grouped together for familiarisation and triangulation.

EY practitioner Reflections	Parent Reflections	My Reflections
		**Reflections on EY 'Design' phase (19.11.19).** -Great engagement, atmosphere felt different to previous session. More reflection on what school had done well previously that they no longer do. This led staff to experience some negative emotions. -They were able to identify that this was not a reflection on them but rather on the lack of what they see/don't see further up in the school. -They also recognised that this situation pulled previous sessions together and said they felt hopeful about moving forward.

Illustrative example: Raw data from 'Design' phase reflections grouped together for familiarisation and triangulation.

Appendix Q: Ethics Approval

The University of Nottingham
UNITED KINGDOM · CHINA · MALAYSIA

School of Psychology
The University of Nottingham
University Park
Nottingham
NG7 2RD

T: +44 (0)115 8467403 or (0)115 9514344

SJ/tp

Ref: S1173R

Wednesday 22nd May 2019

Dear Sarah and Clare,

Ethics Committee Review

Thank you for submitting an account of your proposed research **'An Appreciative Inquiry of the facilitative factors within an Early Years setting that promote the development of wellbeing in children.'**

That proposal has now been reviewed by the Ethics Committee and I am pleased to tell you that your submission has met with the committee's approval.

Final responsibility for ethical conduct of your research rests with you or your supervisor. The Codes of Practice setting out these responsibilities have been published by the British Psychological Society and the University Research Ethics Committee. If you have any concerns whatever during the conduct of your research then you should consult those Codes of Practice. The Committee should be informed immediately should any participant complaints or adverse events arise during the study.

Independently of the Ethics Committee procedures, supervisors also have responsibilities for the risk assessment of projects as detailed in the safety pages of the University web site. Ethics Committee approval does not alter, replace, or remove those responsibilities, nor does it certify that they have been met.

Yours sincerely



Professor Stephen Jackson
Chair, Ethics Committee

Appendix R: Participant Information Sheets/Consent Forms

School of Psychology
Information Sheet – Early Years Practitioners

The University of Nottingham
UNITED KINGDOM · CHINA · MALAYSIA

Title of Project: **An Appreciative Inquiry of the facilitative factors within an Early Years setting that promote the development of wellbeing in children.**

S1173R

Researchers: Clare Antczak [clare.antczak@nottingham.ac.uk]

Supervisors: Dr Sarah Atkinson [s.atkinson@nottingham.ac.uk]

This is an invitation to take part in a research study which will be reported as part of a doctoral thesis and assessed as part of the researcher's Professional Doctorate in Applied Educational Psychology at the University of Nottingham.

Before you decide if you wish to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully.

This study aims to discover the facilitative factors that promote the developmental of wellbeing in children through the use of Appreciative Inquiry and to build on these, creating positive change.

If you participate, you will be asked to take part in an interview with other staff members in which you will be asked questions about positive experiences of the Foundation Stage in promoting children's wellbeing. If you wish to be involved this will be arranged at a convenient time for all participants. You have the right to not take part or withdraw from the process at any time. You will also be asked to take part in later collaborative group discussions and planning with other staff members about how the positive factors identified by all participants might be best developed within the school. A couple of parents who take part will also be asked to take part in a collaborative group discussion and planning with a couple of the staff members taking part also looking at how the positive factors identified by both groups (parents and staff members) can be best developed within the school. There is also an option to take part in a Focus group where the researcher will ask participants questions about how transformative they found the process of Appreciative Inquiry, this will be audio recorded by the researcher.
Your participation will range from 3 to 5 one hour sessions. The whole procedure will take place over approximately one academic year.

Participation in this study is totally voluntary and you are under no obligation to take part. You are free to withdraw at any point before or during the study. All data collected will be kept confidential and used for research purposes only. It will be stored in compliance with the Data Protection Act.

If you have any questions or concerns please don't hesitate to ask now. We can also be contacted after your participation at the above address.

If you have any complaints about the study, please contact:
Stephen Jackson (Chair of Ethics Committee)
stephen.jackson@nottingham.ac.uk

School of Psychology
Consent Form – Early Years Practitioners

The University of Nottingham
UNITED KINGDOM · CHINA · MALAYSIA

Title of Project: **An Appreciative Inquiry of the facilitative factors within an Early Years setting that promote the development of wellbeing in children.**

Ethics Approval Number: S1173R

Researcher(s): Clare Antczak *[clare.antczak@nottingham.ac.uk]*

Supervisor(s): Dr Sarah Atkinson [s.atkinson@nottingham.ac.uk]

The participant should answer these questions independently:

- Have you read and understood the Information Sheet? YES/NO
- Have you had the opportunity to ask questions about the study? YES/NO
- Have all your questions been answered satisfactorily (if applicable)? YES/NO
- Do you understand that you are free to withdraw from the study? YES/NO
  (at any time and without giving a reason)
- I give permission for my data from this study to be shared with other researchers provided that my anonymity is completely protected. YES/NO
- I agree that the focus group session (optional pre-destiny phase) will be audio recorded YES/NO
- Do you agree to take part in the study? YES/NO

"This study has been explained to me to my satisfaction, and I agree to take part. I understand that I am free to withdraw at any time."

Signature of the Participant: Date:

Name (in block capitals)

I have explained the study to the above participant and he/she has agreed to take part.

Signature of researcher: Date:

School of Psychology
Information Sheet - Parents

The University of Nottingham
UNITED KINGDOM · CHINA · MALAYSIA

Title of Project: **An Appreciative Inquiry of the facilitative factors within an Early Years setting that promote the development of wellbeing in children.**

Ethics Approval Number: S1173R

Researchers: Clare Antczak [clare.antczak@nottingham.ac.uk]

Supervisors: Dr Sarah Atkinson [s.atkinson@nottingham.ac.uk]

This is an invitation to take part in a research study which will be reported as part of a doctoral thesis and assessed as part of the researcher's Professional Doctorate in Applied Educational Psychology at the University of Nottingham.

Before you decide if you wish to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully.

This study aims to discover the facilitative factors that promote the developmental of wellbeing in children through the use of Appreciative Inquiry and to build on these, creating positive change.

If you participate, you will be asked to take part in a focus group with other parents in which you will be asked questions about the best practices within your child's school to support their wellbeing. If you wish to be involved this will be arranged at the most convenient time for all of you. Later in the session you will also be asked to take part collaborative group discussions and planning with other parents about how the positive factors identified by all participants might be best developed within the school. Any quotations or information will be anonymised in reports and group feedback. You have the right to not take part or withdraw from the process at any time. A couple of parents who take part will also be asked to take part in a collaborative group discussion and planning with a couple of the Early Practitioners taking part also looking at how the positive factors identified by both groups (parents and early years practitioners) can be best developed within the school. There is also an option to take part in a Focus group where the researcher will ask participants questions about how transformative they found the process of Appreciative Inquiry, this will be recorded by the researcher.

Your participation will range from 2 to 4 hours over 3 sessions. The whole procedure will take place over approximately one academic year.

Participation in this study is totally voluntary and you are under no obligation to take part. You are free to withdraw at any point before or during the study. All data collected will be kept confidential and used for research purposes only. It will be stored in compliance with the Data Protection Act.

If you have any questions or concerns please don't hesitate to ask now. We can also be contacted after your participation at the above address.

If you have any complaints about the study, please contact:
Stephen Jackson (Chair of Ethics Committee)
stephen.jackson@nottingham.ac.uk

School of Psychology
Consent Form – Parent Participants

The University of Nottingham
UNITED KINGDOM · CHINA · MALAYSIA

Title of Project: **An Appreciative Inquiry of the facilitative factors within an Early Years setting that promote the development of wellbeing in children.**

Ethics Approval Number: S1173R

Researcher(s): Clare Antczak *[clare.antczak@nottingham.ac.uk]*

Supervisor(s): Dr Sarah Atkinson [s.atkinson@nottingham.ac.uk]

The participant should answer these questions independently:

- Have you read and understood the Information Sheet? YES/NO
- Have you had the opportunity to ask questions about the study? YES/NO
- Have all your questions been answered satisfactorily (if applicable)? YES/NO
- Do you understand that you are free to withdraw from the study? YES/NO
  (at any time and without giving a reason)
- I give permission for my data from this study to be shared with other researchers provided that my anonymity is completely protected. YES/NO
- Do you agree to the used of anonymous quotes? YES/NO
- Do you agree to any data collected being published in anonymous form? YES/NO
- I agree that the focus group session (optional pre-destiny phase) will be audio recorded YES/NO
- Do you agree to take part in the study? YES/NO

"This study has been explained to me to my satisfaction, and I agree to take part. I understand that I am free to withdraw at any time."

Signature of the Participant: Date:

Name (in block capitals)

I have explained the study to the above participant and he/she has agreed to take part.

Signature of researcher: Date:

Appendix S: Debrief

School of Psychology
Draft Debrief Letter – All Participants

The University of Nottingham
UNITED KINGDOM · CHINA · MALAYSIA

Title of Project: **An Appreciative Inquiry of the facilitative factors within an Early Years setting that promote the development of wellbeing in children.**

Ethics Approval Number: S1173R

Researcher(s): Clare Antczak *[clare.antczak@nottingham.ac.uk]*

Supervisor(s): Dr Sarah Atkinson [s.atkinson@nottingham.ac.uk]

Many thanks to you for your recent participation in the above research study.

Study aims: This study aimed to explore the facilitative factors within an EY setting that promote children's wellbeing. Alongside this the aim was to engage parents in this process, gathering their views and supporting collaboration between EY practitioners and parents. Appreciative Inquiry is currently underused in education and therefore this study also hoped to evaluate the effectiveness of it as an approach in an educational setting.

Outcomes: An Appreciative Inquiry approach was used to discover these positive factors. Some of the factors staff and parents identified included the following:

- Relationships (including the role of attachment and staff-parent relationships, the importance of collaboration and positive interactions with parents and staff and hearing the parent voice).
- Structures and systems (including community links, having consistent boundaries in place for children, the curriculum, the school building and environment, school ethos and funding).
- Team Identity (EY practitioners spoke of their role as a vocation and the importance of the team feeling and their values).
- Child-Centred (valuing children's wellbeing, seeing them as a unique child and watching them flourish).

An action plan was created to develop these positive factors within this school. These were the initial actions that were agreed to be carried out by EY practitioners and parents:

- The school shares Thrive information with parents.
- The school holds regular coffee mornings for parents.
- The school holds child-led interest assemblies.

Implications: It is hoped that this study can help other early years settings to promote wellbeing in children they work with, based on the positive factors which were highlighted in this study.

Further information: if you would like any further information about this study, please contact the researcher or her supervisor using the contact details above.

Thank you once again for your time and participation.