University of Nottingham

UK | CHINA | MALAYSIA

An Exploration of Young People's Perceptions of what Contributes to Positive Wellbeing within Education.

Hollie Riley

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

July 2021

Abstract **9**

List of Tables **11**

List of Figures **12**

Abbreviations **13**

Chapter 1: Introduction **14**

1.1 Background and interest in the research area **14**

1.2 Context of the current study **14**

Chapter 2: Literature review **16**

2.1 Introduction **16**

2.2 Definitions and terminology **16**

2.2.1 Wellbeing 16

2.2.2 Mental health and wellbeing 19

2.2.3 Young people, youth and adolescents 20

2.3 Adolescence **21**

2.4 Pupil voice and wellbeing **21**

2.5 Wellbeing amongst young people **23**

2.6 Wellbeing, gender and socio-economic status **25**

2.7 The importance of wellbeing **26**

2.7.1 Wellbeing, academic achievement and school engagement 26

2.7.2 Wellbeing and development 27

2.8 National context **27**

2.9 Wellbeing and COVID-19 ..... **29**

2.10 The role of educational settings **31**

2.11 The role of educational psychologists **33**

2.12 Systematic literature review **35**

2.12.1 Introduction to the systematic literature review 35
2.12.2 Qualitative research synthesis 36
2.12.3 Meta-ethnographic methodology 37
2.12.4 Phase 1: Getting started 37
2.12.5 Phase 2: Deciding what is relevant 38
2.12.5.1 Search strategy 38
2.12.5.2 Eligibility criteria 39
2.12.5.3 Rationale for eligibility criteria 41
2.12.5.3.1 Participant sample and setting 41
2.12.5.3.2 Study focus 41
2.12.5.3.3 Research design 41
2.12.5.3.4 Data presentation 42
2.12.5.3.5 Research type 42
2.12.5.3.6 Country 42
2.12.5.4 Study selection 42
2.12.6 Phase 3 and 4: Data extraction and relationship between studies 44
2.12.6.1 Results of the screening process 44
2.12.6.2 Characteristics of included studies 45
2.12.6.3 Appraisal of studies 45
2.12.7 Phase 5 and 6: Translation and synthesising translations 45
2.12.8 Phase 7: Expressing the synthesis 46
2.12.8.1 Teacher-pupil relationships 46
2.12.8.2 Peer relationships and support 47
2.12.8.3 The school environment 47
2.12.8.4 Academic pressures and success 48
2.12.8.5 Access to support 48
2.12.8.6 Learning opportunities 49
2.12.9 Summary 50
2.12.10 Review of the methodology 50
2.13 Rationale 51
2.14 Research aims and questions 52

Chapter 3: Methodology **53**

3.1 Epistemological and ontological orientation **53**

3.2 Qualitative research methods **55**

3.3 Thematic analysis **56**

3.3.1 Limitations of thematic analysis 57

3.4 Other approaches considered **58**

3.4.1 Grounded theory 58

3.4.2 Interpretative phenomenological analysis 59

3.5 Stakeholder engagement **60**

3.6 Participants and recruitment **60**

3.6.1 Sampling of participants 60

3.6.2 Recruitment of participants 61

3.6.3 Participant characteristics and sample size 62

3.6.4 School characteristics 63

3.7 Procedure **64**

3.7.1 Semi-structured interviews 64

3.7.2 Pilot and development of interview schedule 66

3.7.3 Completion of semi-structured interviews 66

3.7.4 Transcription of semi-structured interviews 67

3.8 Ethical considerations **67**

3.8.1 Valid consent 68

3.8.2 Confidentiality 68

3.8.3 Debriefing 69

3.8.4 Right to withdraw 69

3.8.5 Minimising harm 69

3.9 Validity and trustworthiness of qualitative research **70**

3.9.1 Validity of qualitative research 70

3.9.1.1 Sensitivity to context 70

3.9.1.2 Commitment and rigour 71

3.9.1.3 Transparency and coherence 71
3.9.1.4 Impact and importance 72
3.9.2 Ensuring trustworthiness in qualitative research 72
3.9.2.1 Confirmability 73
3.9.2.2 Dependability 73
3.9.2.3 Credibility 73
3.9.2.4 Transferability 74
3.9.3 Reflexivity 74
3.10 Data analysis process 75
3.11 Summary 77
Chapter 4: Findings 78
4.1 Theme: Conceptualisation of wellbeing 78
4.1.1 Subtheme: Wellbeing as multifaceted 78
4.1.2 Subtheme: Active engagement and fulfilment of needs as markers of wellbeing 80
4.1.3 Subtheme: Coping and self-efficacy 82
4.2 Theme: Social belonging and peer relationships 83
4.2.1 Subtheme: Peer interaction and connectedness 84
4.2.2 Subtheme: Peers as a source of support 85
4.2.3 Subtheme: Negative interactions with peers 87
4.3 Theme: Academic and social pressures 88
4.3.1 Subtheme: Containment of academic demands 89
4.3.2 Subtheme: Academic performance as a measure of success 90
4.3.3 Subtheme: Pressure to succeed and expectations of self and others 92
4.3.4 Subtheme: Perceived judgement and social comparison 94
4.4 Theme: External influences 95
4.4.1 Subtheme: Parental influence and family dynamics 96
4.4.2 Subtheme: COVID-19 97
4.5 Theme: Relationships with educational staff: relational behaviour, skills and support 99

4.5.1 Subtheme: Teacher presence and availability 99
4.5.2 Subtheme: Recognising and responding flexibly to individual needs 101
4.5.3 Subtheme: Trust as a foundation for positive teacher relationships 102
4.5.4 Subtheme: Meaningful support and encouragement 103
4.5.5 Subtheme: Rapport and connectedness 104
4.5.6 Subtheme: Teacher skills and opportunities for professional development 105

4.6 Theme: Provision and opportunities 106
4.6.1 Subtheme: Access to extra-curricular activities 107
4.6.2 Subtheme: Specialist support and a safe space: confidentiality, objectivity and emotional validation 108
4.6.3 Subtheme: The promotion of wellbeing and mental health in school 110

4.7 Individuality in findings 111

4.8 Summary 112

Chapter 5: Discussion 113

5.1 Conceptualisation of wellbeing 113
5.1.1 Medical and social models of wellbeing 113
5.1.2 Ecological systems theory 114
5.1.3 Hedonic and eudaimonic wellbeing and self-determination theory 114
5.1.4 Environmental mastery and support-seeking 115
5.1.5 Maslow's hierarchy of needs 116

5.2 Social belonging and peer relationships 116
5.2.1 School as a place of social opportunity: peer influence and belonging 116
5.2.2 Characteristics and implications of peer relationships 118
5.2.3 Anti-bullying approaches at individual and whole-school level 119

5.3 Academic and social pressures 120
5.3.1 Pupil attainment and academic demands 120
5.3.2 An 'audit culture': pupil wellbeing and self-efficacy 121
5.3.3 Perceived expectations of self and others 123
5.3.4 Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation 124

5.4 External influences **125**
5.4.1 Parental mental health, wellbeing and stress: family dynamics 125
5.4.2 Home-school relationships 126
5.4.3 Parental beliefs and attitudes 126
5.4.4 Restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic and implications 127
5.5 Relationships with educational staff: relational behaviour, skills and support **128**
5.5.1 Relational behaviour of teachers 128
5.5.2 Teacher wellbeing 129
5.5.3 Teacher skills and opportunities for development 130
5.6 Provision and opportunities **131**
5.6.1 Extra-curricular activities 131
5.6.2 A safe space: focussed support from trained professionals 132
5.6.3 From simplification to normalisation: mental health literacy in schools 133
5.6.4 Psychoeducation for young people 134
5.7 Summary **135**
5.8 Methodological issues and limitations of the research **136**
5.8.1 Participant sample 136
5.8.2 Semi-structured interviews 137
5.8.3 Thematic analysis 137
5.9 Implications of the current research **138**
5.9.1 Implications for educational psychologists 138
5.9.2 Implications for educational settings and staff 140
5.10 Future research **142**
5.11 Conclusion **143**
References **146**
Appendices **193**
Appendix 1. ***Phases of a meta-ethnography (Noblit & Hare, 1988).*** **193**
Appendix 2. ***Systematic search terms used in the systematic literature review.*** **194**

Appendix 3. ***Summary of studies included in the systematic review and main concepts/themes identified.*** **..... 195**

Appendix 4. ***CASP ratings for qualitative studies.*** **..... 200**

Appendix 5. ***CASP guidance material.*** **..... 201**

Appendix 6. ***Braun and Clarke's (2006) 15-point checklist for a good thematic analysis.*** **..... 206**

Appendix 7. ***Information sheet for settings.*** **..... 207**

Appendix 8. ***Information sheet for participants.*** **..... 210**

Appendix 9. ***Information sheet for parents/carers.*** **..... 213**

Appendix 10. ***The proposed semi-structured interview schedule.*** **..... 216**

Appendix 11. ***Ethical approval for the study.*** **..... 222**

Appendix 12. ***Participant consent form.*** **..... 224**

Appendix 13. ***Participant debrief form.*** **..... 226**

Appendix 14. ***Steps taken to ensure trustworthiness during each phase of the thematic analysis.*** **..... 227**

Appendix 15. ***Research journal extracts.*** **..... 228**

Appendix 16. ***Sample transcript.*** **..... 229**

Abstract

An increasing focus is being placed on the wellbeing and mental health of children and young people (CYP) in education, through government policy, initiatives and guidance (Department of Health (DoH) & Department for Education (DfE), 2017; DfE and DoH, 2015; *Children and Families Act*, 2014), with the UK Government regularly measuring indices of CYP's wellbeing (Office for National Statistics, 2018). Despite an increasing focus being placed on wellbeing and its importance, many CYP continue to report not being happy with their lives (DfE, 2019a).

The current study aimed to contribute to the growing body of research surrounding the wellbeing of young people by exploring what pupils perceive contributes to positive wellbeing in education. Through capturing the voice of young people, it is hoped research can further illuminate ways in which educational professionals and settings can enhance pupil wellbeing. Semi-structured interviews (SSIs) were conducted with seven young people aged 15-16 years and data was analysed using Thematic Analysis (TA). Findings highlight the pivotal role of educational settings in promoting and supporting pupil wellbeing. Interpersonal relationships with peers and educational staff, academic demands, self-imposed and externally located pressures and expectations, influences external to school, and opportunities and provision within school were found to be influential to the wellbeing of young people in education. School was perceived as a place of social opportunity, where feelings of belonging are nurtured, and pupil self-efficacy and self-esteem augmented. The role of educational settings in supporting the development of the whole child is emphasised.

The study has implications for current practice in supporting and fostering the wellbeing of pupils in education. This includes the continued increase in both awareness and support in school, opportunities for educational staff to develop their skills and knowledge in supporting pupil wellbeing and mental health, equipping young people with the skills to develop and fulfil their potential, increasing a sense of social belonging, school connectedness and nurturing social opportunities with teachers and peers. Opportunities for further research are also considered.

Acknowledgements

Firstly, I would like to extend my gratitude to the Doctorate in Applied Educational Psychology team at the University of Nottingham, in particular my research supervisor Anthea Gulliford for your continued support, guidance and belief in me throughout my research and training.

To the school and the young people who participated in the study, thank you for your time and your openness, this research would not have been possible without you.

To Cohort 13, for your humour and support throughout this journey.

I would also like to thank my Educational Psychology Service colleagues and my placement supervisor, for providing me with opportunities to develop and for your unwavering support and guidance.

My parents for always supporting and believing in me. Mum, thank you for always being there to provide me with the reassurance and encouragement I need.

My husband Tom, for your endless support and encouragement. I could not have embarked on this journey without you. Your love and kindness never cease to amaze me.

Edie and Ethel, for always being by my side, for being a constant source of comfort and for forever making me smile.

I dedicate this thesis to my grandparents, who have inspired me in more ways than they will ever know to achieve my dreams and aspirations.

List of Tables

Table 1. *The search terms used in the systemic search.*

Table 2. *The number of search results for each database searched.*

Table 3. *The number of search results from searching grey literature.*

Table 4. *Inclusion and exclusion criteria for the literature search.*

Table 5. *The five studies included within the review.*

Table 6. *Four key research paradigms and their associated epistemological and ontological positions (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Allison & Pomeroy, 2000).*

Table 7. *Sample characteristics.*

Table 8. *Braun and Clarke's (2006) six phases of thematic analysis and the process used within the study.*

List of Figures

Figure 1. *Components of self-reported wellbeing (adapted from The Children's Society, 2019a).*

Figure 2. *Flow diagram illustrating the search and selection process.*

Figure 3. *Thematic map for theme 'Conceptualisation of wellbeing'.*

Figure 4. *Thematic map for theme 'Social belonging and peer relationships'.*

Figure 5. *Thematic map for theme 'Academic and social pressures'.*

Figure 6. *Thematic map for theme 'External influences'.*

Figure 7. *Thematic map for theme 'Relationships with educational staff: relational behaviour, skills and support'.*

Figure 8. *Thematic map for theme 'Provision and opportunities'.*

Figure 9. *The interacting areas of a health-promoting whole-school environment (Wyn et al., 2000).*

Abbreviations

CYP: Children and Young People

DfE: Department for Education

DoH: Department of Health

EHWB: Emotional Health and Wellbeing

EP: Educational Psychologist

EPS: Educational Psychology Service

EWB: Emotional Wellbeing

GT: Grounded Theory

IPA: Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis

LA: Local Authority

NICE: National Institute for Health and Care Excellence

PHE: Public Health England

SENCo: Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators

SLR: Systematic Literature Review

SSI: Semi-structured Interview

TA: Thematic Analysis

WHO: World Health Organisation

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Background and interest in the research area

This research explores the perceptions of young people, in relation to what they feel contributes to their positive wellbeing within education and has been completed as part of professional doctoral training in Educational Psychology at the University of Nottingham. Undertaking research within this area has been influenced by my ongoing interest in supporting and promoting the wellbeing of CYP in education, both in my current and previous professional roles. My previous role as a teacher enabled me to observe and consider the role of school and educational staff in positively fostering the wellbeing of pupils, and in turn the impact of this on different aspects of school life, development and achievement. This was considered further in roles both as an assistant and trainee educational psychologist (EP), encouraging me to reflect on the role of educational professionals more generally, in working with settings to support and actively promote the wellbeing of CYP. Opportunities to work with educational settings, families and CYP, both prior to and in respect of COVID-19, has emphasised the pivotal role of educational professionals, including EPs, in both supporting and promoting positive wellbeing. Capturing and advocating the voice of CYP, to guide and inform practice, is believed to provide a valuable contribution, offering a distinct insight into experiences within education and will therefore be focussed upon within the current study.

1.2 Context of the current study

Promoting the wellbeing of CYP is emphasised within society, government policy and guidance DoH & DfE, 2017; DfE, 2018a; DfE, 2020; Public Health England (PHE), 2015). This research is therefore both timely and reflective of these current priorities and the need to gain a greater understanding of the wellbeing of CYP in education and the potential implications for educational professionals (DfE, 2019b; The Children's Society, 2019a). It is asserted that research rooted within education can provide a meaningful contribution to literature surrounding wellbeing (Soutter, 2011). The role of educational settings in

augmenting the wellbeing of CYP is widely reflected within guidance (National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE), 2020; DfE, 2018; DfE, 2020a; PHE, 2015) and the role of educational professionals, including EPs, is increasingly recognised (Roffey et al., 2016; NICE, 2020). The importance of the use of qualitative approaches to understand experiences of wellbeing is acknowledged (Camfield et al., 2009), as well as the need to elicit the voice of CYP and gain an insight into their experiences within education, to both guide and inform practice (Vujčić et al., 2019; Weare, 2015).

The present study therefore aims to explore what young people perceive contributes to positive wellbeing within education, given the current context and emphasis placed both on wellbeing and mental health. Research which seeks to highlight ways in which wellbeing can be supported and promoted within education is both timely and pertinent. To acknowledge my active role within the research, the decision has been made to write in the first person (Foster & Parker, 1995).

Chapter 2: Literature review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter will introduce the topic of pupil wellbeing within education. Different definitions of wellbeing and terminology will be considered. Pupil voice, wellbeing amongst young people and the importance of wellbeing will be explored, acknowledging the relationship between wellbeing and academic achievement, school engagement and development. The national context will be considered, as well as the impact of COVID-19 on the wellbeing of CYP. The role of both educational settings and EPs will also be explored.

A systematic literature review (SLR) is presented, which explores the current evidence base in relation to young people's perceptions of wellbeing within education. Findings are synthesised and the rationale and aims of the current study are outlined.

2.2 Definitions and terminology

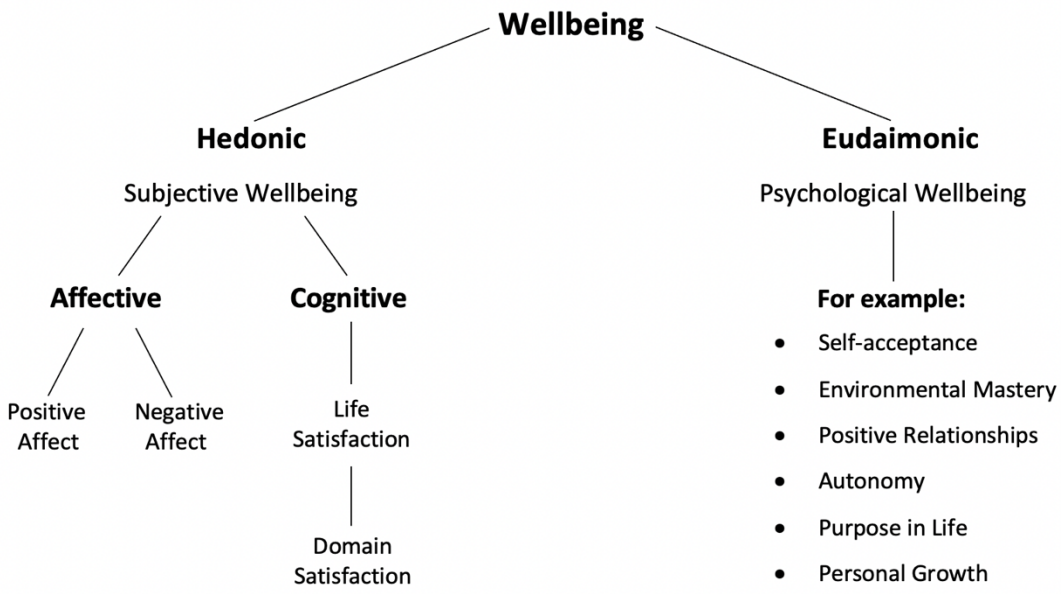
2.2.1 Wellbeing

Wellbeing is multifaceted in its conceptualisation, with there being no universally agreed definition (Lewis, 2020; Tov, 2018; Linton et al., 2016; Dodge et al., 2012). Research surrounding wellbeing encompasses two theoretical perspectives: hedonism and eudaimonism, otherwise commonly referred to as subjective and psychological wellbeing, respectively (Deci & Ryan, 2001). Subjective wellbeing places a focus on pleasure and in evaluating life positively. It comprises three components, namely positive and negative affect, and life satisfaction (Diener & Suh, 1997). Hedonic perspectives generally consider wellbeing as a specific outcome, such as happiness or pleasure (Soutter et al., 2011). Objective wellbeing includes functioning well, personal development and growth (The Children's Society, 2019b), associated with a way of living (Ryan et al., 2008). Research surrounding young people's motivation and goals (Deci & Ryan, 2008; Ryff & Singer, 2008) and the development of positive youth (Benson & Scales, 2009), notes the theoretical

influences of the eudaimonic perspective. Ryff's (1989) six-factor model proposes that psychological wellbeing comprises self-acceptance, environmental mastery, positive relationships, autonomy, purpose in life and personal growth (Figure 1).

Figure 1

Components of self-reported wellbeing (adapted from The Children's Society, 2019a).



Wellbeing is a term which can be used to refer to the quality of an individual's life (Rees et al., 2009). It is an everchanging state, influenced by an individual's ability to achieve their personal and social goals and achieve a sense of societal purpose, evolving from interactions with the world at different stages in their life (The Government Office for Science Foresight Report on Mental Capital and Wellbeing, 2008). The notion that wellbeing is the outcome of complex and interactive predispositions, experiences, processes and values is recognised (Roffey, 2015).

Seligman (2011) identifies five core elements of wellbeing, namely: positive emotions (relating to hedonic feelings of happiness), engagement, relationships, meaning and achievement. Rooted within this are, self-esteem, optimism, resilience, vitality and self-determination. This definition of wellbeing, alongside others, suggests wellbeing comprises multiple aspects/dimensions, as opposed to there being different types of wellbeing, including but not limited to, psychological, social and cognitive (Pollard & Lee, 2003). It is

suggested that rather than viewing these as different types of wellbeing, it is more useful to view them as different dimensions, therefore recognising wellbeing to be multifaceted (Noble et al., 2008; Huppert & So, 2013). Noble et al. (2008) explored thirty definitions of wellbeing, with positive affect, resilience, satisfaction with both relationships and other aspects of life, effective functioning and fulfilment of potential to be the most common features across the definitions. Renshaw et al. (2015) acknowledge the everchanging concept of wellbeing as a term which encompasses all features of living healthily and successfully, recognising that wellbeing is experienced subjectively by individuals. Kern et al. (2015) also highlight the importance of considering wellbeing as multidimensional. NICE (2020) outlines three elements of wellbeing: social, emotional and psychological, with The New Economics Foundation (2012) conceptualising wellbeing as how individuals feel and function on a personal and social level, including how they perceive their lives as a whole.

The use of objective measures in the development of policy alone are increasingly recognised as not being sufficient solely in their development and that subjective indicators, focussed on self-reported aspects of an individual's life should also be considered, such as 'happiness, social connectedness, perceived quality of life and life satisfaction'. 'Wellbeing', 'life satisfaction' and 'quality of life' are concepts often used interchangeably and include objective aspects of an individual's life which are observable, such as educational achievement and subjective aspects, such as how an individual feels in relation to certain aspects of their life (Stratham & Chase, 2010). Like wellbeing, these terms are considered to be complex and equivocal, given they are used frequently, broadly and at times interchangeably (Soutter et al., 2011).

The term 'mental wellbeing' is often used interchangeably with 'mental health' and with 'wellbeing', with the definition varying, however tending to include aspects of subjective and psychological wellbeing, encompassing both hedonic and eudaimonic perspectives (Shucksmith et al., 2009).

Within this research, wellbeing will be viewed as multifaceted, comprising different dimensions. This is felt to be imperative when considering the ways in which educational settings and professionals can support the wellbeing of young people in its entirety, with

consideration being afforded to factors within education which contribute positively to the overall wellbeing of young people.

2.2.2 Mental health and wellbeing

Mental health has been defined as, "a state of wellbeing in which an individual realises his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and is able to make a contribution to his or her community" (World Health Organisation (WHO), 2018b, para. 1). There is a noted correlation between mental health difficulties and wellbeing, with mental health perceived as a state in which individuals 'flourish', where there is an absence of psychopathology and the presence of high levels of emotional, psychological and social wellbeing (Keyes, 2005). The WHO (2018b) states that in order to promote mental health, steps should be taken to improve psychological wellbeing.

Whilst definitions of wellbeing vary and there is limited consensus surrounding a single definition, when considering social and emotional wellbeing, there is a recognition of the absence of negative emotions and mental health disorders and the presence of positive emotions (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW), 2012). Haworth et al. (2017) however argue that wellbeing goes beyond the absence of mental illness, and relates to genetic and environmental influences, as well as psychological.

Children can have low subjective wellbeing, with no symptoms of mental illness or may have a diagnosis of a mental illness, although have high subjective wellbeing (The Children's Society, 2019b). Similarly, Greenspoon and Saklofske (2001) acknowledge that it is possible to have high levels of wellbeing and mental illness or exhibit little sign of mental illness but have low levels of wellbeing, indicating mental illness and wellbeing are two independent dimensions (DoH, 2014b).

Black et al. (2019) acknowledge that when analysed in isolation, both mental health and wellbeing appear rather distinct, however certain aspects of mental health relate to wellbeing, given the broad range of symptoms evident. They further advise that conclusions informed by analyses which disregard this association should be viewed cautiously. Within

the present study, a focus is placed on the wellbeing of young people in secondary education, however, the relationship between wellbeing and mental health is acknowledged, with both positive wellbeing and mental health contributing to development.

2.2.3 Young people, youth and adolescents

The United Nations General Assembly (1989) defines 'children' as those under 18 years of age. The term 'young people' has been defined as those aged 10-24 years, 'adolescents' as 10-19 years and 'youths' as 15-24 years (WHO, 2018a), although these age ranges vary within the literature (International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF), 2012; Dahl et al., 2017). Sawyer et al. (2018) acknowledge that a broader and more inclusive definition of adolescence encompasses those aged 10-24 years, given this is more greatly aligned with understandings of this period, and patterns of adolescent growth. Often, the start of adolescence is characterised by physical, cognitive and social changes associated with the onset of puberty, with the end of this period being defined socially (Blakemore & Mills, 2014), and therefore less definitively (Bahadur & Hindmarsh, 2000). These non-mutually exclusive definitions can pose challenges, given that different definitions can be drawn upon when referring to the same individual (Sawyer et al., 2012), despite definitions inferring different meanings (Sawyer et al., 2018).

The term 'youth' is used when referring to young people who are no longer classed as children, however not yet recognised as adults and the term 'adolescence' is used to represent the period of development between childhood and adulthood (IPPF, 2012). This is a distinct period of biological, psychological and social development (Patton et al., 2016). Blakemore and Mills (2014) propose this period is influenced by both social context and social acceptance, which underpin many behaviours typical in adolescence.

The current study is focussed on exploring the perspectives of pupils aged 15-16 years, in Year 11. The term 'young people' will be used when referring to participants within this study, and the age ranges noted above will be drawn upon when referring to CYP.

2.3 Adolescence

During adolescence, environmental challenges and new stressors arise which can affect wellbeing (Zimmer-Gembeck & Skinner, 2008). School and interpersonal relationships are the most commonly occurring stressors, which can include academic challenges, bullying, difficulties with teachers and conflict with peers or family members (Donaldson et al., 2000; Williamson et al., 2003). Schools can impact on the mental health of adolescents and different areas of adolescent development (Marin & Brown, 2008), with the social environment for adolescents differing from that of children and adults. Adolescents are exposed to new situations, including starting secondary school, which can coincide with the onset of puberty. During the transition from childhood to adolescence, new situations experienced may contribute to risky decision-making, evident during this period (Blakemore & Mills, 2014). Adolescence is characterised by cultural susceptibility (Choudhury, 2010), with individuals being increasingly sensitive to their social environment (Crone & Dahl, 2013). Different aspects of the school environment, including teaching, extra-curricular clubs, feelings of safety and the social environment contribute to adolescent development, which includes academic and social development, safety, engagement in the community and mental and physical development (Marin & Brown, 2008). The influence of academic and social stressors within schools for pupils, and the impact of these on mental health, is acknowledged. Adolescence encompasses a period of opportunity for the acquisition of new skills and the formation of adult identity (Blakemore & Mills, 2014). Given educational settings are a pedagogical environment, opportunities exist to support the wellbeing and development of adolescents, including their mental health. The current study aims to explore young people's perceptions of what contributes positively to wellbeing during secondary school, which coincides with the period of adolescence.

2.4 Pupil voice and wellbeing

Opportunities for pupils to share their views can be supportive to educational staff in developing educational practice (Weare, 2015; Lansdown, 2001), given CYP are able to offer a unique perspective in relation to school, learning and teaching (Cook-Sather, 2006). Educational settings are important in locating pupil voice and in developing understandings

of child wellbeing (Kaye-Tzadok et al., 2017). Casas (2016) states that information surrounding the lives of children is most substantiated when it comes directly from them, given it is informed by their own lived experiences. Where young people are given the opportunity to share their views, in relation to decisions which will impact them, they are more likely to engage and take responsibility for what has been agreed, as opposed to when decisions are made on their behalf (Roffey, 2015). Including young people in these decision-making processes, can be supportive to both their emotional health and wellbeing, reinforcing feelings of being part of the school and wider community (PHE, 2015). NICE (2020) provides guidance on the need to ensure young people are able to contribute to decisions which will impact on their social and emotional wellbeing.

Often, conceptions surrounding how to support CYP's wellbeing most effectively are derived with little involvement from CYP themselves (Halliday et al., 2019). Adults can, however, lack the necessary insight into the lives of young people, which can result in decisions being made which can overlook the experiences and challenges young people encounter (Checkoway, 2011). There is a need to listen to and recognise the personal experiences and perspectives of CYP, in order to improve wellbeing and enable effective steps to be taken (Vujčić et al., 2019). Further, gaining qualitative data directly from CYP can elicit detailed and pertinent contextual information surrounding their lives, needs and experiences.

Vujčić et al. (2019) explored CYP's understanding and conceptualisation of wellbeing. It was found that CYP understood wellbeing as an integration of both negative and positive aspects of their lives, conceptualising it as feeling happy and satisfied, as well as functioning effectively. Fattore et al. (2007) also explored conceptualisations of wellbeing from the perspective of CYP, aged 8-15 years. They found wellbeing to be defined through positive feelings, predominantly feeling happy, with some CYP acknowledging being able to incorporate feelings of sadness and anger. Both studies found CYP's perceptions of wellbeing to be complex and multifaceted, with both positive and negative emotions integrated within their conceptualisations.

2.5 Wellbeing amongst young people

Levels of wellbeing fluctuate throughout life, declining amongst young people during secondary school years, between the ages of 11-16. During this stage of adolescence, it is recognised many physical, emotional and social adjustments are necessary, with this period representing a critical stage in the life course (Chanfreau et al., 2013). Low levels of subjective wellbeing amongst young people reportedly almost double between the ages of 11 and 15 years, with the middle teenage years specifically identified as a point of risk, whereby wellbeing declines. It is recognised that young people in these phases are presented with a range of challenges and pressures within their lives, whilst navigating a complex and dynamic world (Young Minds, 2017).

When exploring trends from 2009, there has been a steady decline in the number of CYP reporting being 'relatively happy with their lives', with young people aged 13-15 years consistently reporting lower measures of wellbeing, compared to those aged 10-12 years (DfE, 2019a). The disparity between these measures has increased over time, with the wellbeing of young people aged 13-15 years decreasing. Wellbeing has further been found to have weak stability between the ages of 11-14 years (Patalay & Fitzsimmons, 2018).

Since 2010, The Children's Society has gathered data on the wellbeing of CYP aged 8-17 years, through conducting household surveys. In 2019, data was gathered from almost 2,400 households across England, Scotland and Wales, from parents and CYP aged 10-17 years. Scores related to ten different aspects of life were obtained from CYP, who reported being least happy with the school they attend ('How happy are you with the school you go to?') and in relation to what may happen in the future ('How happy are you with what may happen to you later in your life?'). When exploring CYP's overall life satisfaction, almost 12% reported low wellbeing, which comprised children whose scores fell below mid-point on the numerical rating scale.

The Office for National Statistics draws on the dataset from The Children's Society Household survey each year to explore the subjective wellbeing of young people aged 10-15 years and reports the percentage of young people with low, high or very high life

satisfaction from 2012 to 2017. Whilst the sample size varies from 1,433 to 3,405, from 2012 to 2016 a positive trend in the percentage of young people with high or very high life satisfaction is noted. There was, however, a decrease from 2016 to 2017, with 81.1% of young people reporting high or very high life satisfaction in 2016 and 79.2% in 2017, with 3.8% of young people reporting low and 17% reporting medium life satisfaction. In terms of happiness, there has been a decrease from 2014 in the percentage of young people reporting high or very high happiness in relation to 'yesterday', with 76.1% of young people in 2014 to 73.2% in 2017. Finally, when considering how worthwhile the things they do are, the percentage of young people reporting high or very high ratings has also decreased, from 76.8% in 2014 to 74.5% in 2017. Responses varied when questioned about happiness, life satisfaction and feelings of things being worthwhile, highlighting the importance of exploring different aspects of wellbeing.

A State of the Nation: Children and Young People's Wellbeing Report, published by the DfE (2019a) collates evidence regarding the state of young people's wellbeing in England. Whilst the majority of young people report being relatively happy with their lives, it is identified that many are not. In a sample size of approximately 2,300 young people aged 10-15 years, 5% reported being 'relatively unhappy' with their lives, in contrast to 84.9% who reported being 'relatively happy', with wellbeing decreasing as young people become older.

The is a need to explore how educational settings can support positive health and wellbeing (Jamal et al., 2013). It is argued significant results could be achieved by prioritising the wellbeing of CYP in both policy and service delivery (The Children's Society, 2019b), further reinforcing the need for the wellbeing of CYP to be explored and prioritised, with the implications for professionals considered. Given the decline in CYP's wellbeing, there is an ever-increasing need to focus on the promotion and importance of the wellbeing of CYP in education. Further, as adolescence represents a significant period within an individual's life-course, the need to explore, from the perspective of CYP themselves, the role of educational settings and professionals in supporting and promoting the wellbeing of pupils is emphasised. It also illuminates the need to explore the concept of wellbeing more broadly, given CYP's responses can vary, depending on which dimension/aspect of wellbeing is being explored, for example 'life satisfaction' and 'happiness'.

2.6 Wellbeing, gender and socio-economic status

Studies which explore gender differences in relation to wellbeing vary, with some reporting no significant differences (DfE, 2019a), and others identifying significant differences (Bradshaw et al., 2011). Whilst, since 2009 in the UK, there has been an identified trend for females, aged 10-15 years, reporting lower levels of wellbeing than males, this difference was only statistically significant between 2013 and 2015. Also, since 2010-2011, a higher number of females have reported feeling 'relatively unhappy' with their lives; however, these findings have not been statistically significant, with age being a more consistent determinant of child wellbeing (DfE, 2019a).

The UK Millennium Cohort Study identified no gender difference in young people aged 11 years, however, a disparity did exist in young people aged 14 years, with lower levels of wellbeing and mental health being reported by females (Patalay & Fitzsimons, 2016), implying that significant differences in wellbeing and gender may begin to develop in correspondence with age. It is suggested gender differences in wellbeing present in early adolescence, between the ages of 12-15 years, which may be attributed to this period representing a stage characterised by biological shifts and stressful events in the life-course (Michel et al., 2009). Black et al. (2019) acknowledge the complexity of gender differences in relation to disorders across developmental periods. During the primary phase of education, the internalisation of symptoms is similar across genders, although a mental health difficulty is up to twice as likely to be prevalent amongst males (Patalay & Fitzsimons, 2016). In comparison, towards the beginning of adolescence, 11-14 years, there is greater likelihood of females to suffer from internalising behaviours (Patalay & Fitzsimons, 2017).

Kaye-Tzadok et al. (2017), drawing on data from the Children's Worlds Survey, an international study of children's wellbeing, identified that overall, boys have higher scores of subjective wellbeing in comparison to girls, aged 12 years, although this varied between countries. There was no significant difference in relation to satisfaction with school, however when examining individual items which comprise this measure, a significant difference was identified in girls reporting liking school more than boys. Lower levels of

subjective wellbeing amongst girls in comparison to boys, aged 11, 13 and 15 years, is further reported (Klocke et al., 2014).

A lack of consistency in gender differences with regard to reported measures of wellbeing between countries (Dinisman & Ben-Arieh, 2016; Klocke et al., 2014), could be attributed to the location of the study (Kaye-Tzadok et al., 2017). Variations in wellbeing also differ significantly depending on the domain of focus (Bradshaw & Rees, 2017; Dinisman & Ben-Arieh, 2016).

A relationship between household income and the mental health and wellbeing of CYP is identified (Patalay & Fitzsimmons, 2017; Fitzsimons et al., 2017), with increased mental health difficulties and lower levels of wellbeing reported. The Children's Society (2019b) found both income poverty and financial strain to be associated with lower rates of school wellbeing and there to be a positive correlation between low life satisfaction and wellbeing and high levels of depression at 14 years.

2.7 The importance of wellbeing

2.7.1 Wellbeing, academic achievement and school engagement

Both positive wellbeing and mental ill health are associated with later outcomes for adolescents, including academic outcomes, engagement and social functioning (Suldo et al., 2016; Lyons et al., 2013). There is a noted relationship between higher levels of wellbeing and academic achievement (PHE, 2014a), as well as increased school attendance (Suldo et al., 2011).

The Avon Longitudinal Study of Parents and Children (ALSPAC) is an ongoing study which, among other things, explores how different dimensions of children's wellbeing, including emotional, behavioural, social and school experience are associated with educational outcomes, including academic achievement and school engagement. Findings have revealed that increased levels of wellbeing, on average, across the four dimensions, are also associated with increased levels of academic achievement and higher levels of school

engagement. Additionally, Gutman and Vorhaus (2012) have linked low levels of wellbeing with poorer academic achievement and found it to be predictive of lower levels of school engagement. The relationship between emotional wellbeing and academic achievement and success is further recognised (Young Minds, 2017). Fostering social and emotional wellbeing is a key contributor in guiding the future development of CYP; facilitating positive achievements in their education, work and throughout their lives in general (Durlak et al., 2015; Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2015). Increased levels of engagement with learning and improved academic outcomes amongst pupils are more likely, whereby wellbeing is centrally placed within schools (Noble et al., 2008).

2.7.2 Wellbeing and development

The period of adolescence is identified as pivotal to functioning in later life (Sawyer et al., 2018; Patton et al., 2016), given it is a time of expedited development, learning, adaptation and neurobiological change (Dahl et al., 2018). Therefore, positive mental wellbeing is perceived as a fundamental factor in enabling CYP to develop and live fulfilling lives (PHE, 2014b). Increasing levels of mental wellbeing amongst CYP can have a positive impact on life satisfaction and feelings of worth (DoH, 2014a) and has been found to impact on how individuals cope with later life events, including stress, trauma and physical ill-health (PHE, 2014b). The influence of a child's emotional health and wellbeing on cognitive development, learning, physical health and mental wellbeing in adulthood is further recognised (PHE, 2015). Supporting the mental wellbeing of CYP can positively influence their ability to develop and sustain relationships, play, learn and problem-solve (St John et al., 2005). Further, where wellbeing levels are high there is an increase in pro-social behaviour, as well as increased levels of mental health and resilience (Noble et al., 2008).

2.8 National context

An increasing focus is being placed on supporting and promoting the wellbeing of CYP in education, through government policy, initiatives and guidance (DoH & DfE, 2017; DfE and DfH, 2015; DfE, 2019b; *Children and Families Act*, 2014), with the UK Government regularly measuring indices of CYP's wellbeing (Office for National Statistics, 2018). The role of

educational settings in providing support to CYP is emphasised, along with the need for collaborative, multi-agency working, recognising the importance of early intervention and support (DoH & DfE, 2017; DoH, 2015). NICE (2020) provides guidance on social and emotional wellbeing in secondary education, emphasising the active role of educational professionals working with and within education, in supporting the wellbeing of young people. The need to measure and systematically assess the social and emotional wellbeing of young people is emphasised. The role of educational settings in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of CYP is further outlined within government guidance (DfE, 2020b; DfE, 2018; PHE, 2015).

The publication Transforming Children and Young People's Mental Health Provision: A Green Paper (DoH & DfE, 2017) sets out proposals on ensuring all CYP have access to high quality mental health and wellbeing support in schools and colleges, with all CYP learning about mental wellbeing. A new approach is outlined to support the mental health and wellbeing of CYP, where 'Mental Health Teams' will be formulated, a designated 'Mental Health Lead' will be placed within all schools and colleges and where there will be joint working with NHS mental health services. It is proposed that by 2022/2023, these measures will be rolled out to at least 20%-25% of the country.

A State of the Nation: Children and Young People's Wellbeing Report (DfE, 2019a) has also been published, in which available evidence regarding the state of CYP's wellbeing has been collated, in order to gain an understanding of CYP's life satisfaction and the range of experiences encountered to guide discussion and future practice. The focus on CYP's emotional health is also reflected in the most recent Education Inspection Framework (Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted), 2019). Two new measures have been included, which involve evaluating learners' 'behaviour and attitudes', including attitudes to education and commitment to learning, resiliency to setbacks and peer and staff relationships. Also, 'personal development', which evaluates opportunities for the broader development of learners and opportunities to develop resilience and confidence, as well as support in knowing how to remain mentally healthy.

The move towards a greater focus on the mental health and wellbeing of CYP within education is eliciting a greater awareness of the role of professionals who work with CYP, the significance of mental health and wellbeing and the need for early intervention and ongoing support.

2.9 Wellbeing and COVID-19

The effect of COVID-19 on the wellbeing of CYP is reflected upon widely within society, the media and support and guidance available (PHE, 2020). In May 2020, it is estimated that worldwide, 1.27 billion children were out of education or not accessing childcare (UNESCO, 2020). Further closures were mandated in January 2021, with primary schools, secondary schools and colleges across England providing remote learning to CYP not identified as 'vulnerable', or whose parents/carers have 'key worker' status (UK Government, 2021).

Barnados (2020) explored the impact of COVID-19 on the mental health and wellbeing of 4,283 CYP, aged 8-24 years, with at least a third reporting a decline in their mental health and wellbeing. Of 963 practitioners, 43% reported their main concern to be surrounding the impact of COVID-19 on CYP's mental health and wellbeing. Further, The Children's Society (2020a) has explored the views of parents and CYP to gain a greater understanding of the wellbeing of CYP, in light of the Coronavirus pandemic and school closures. Findings identified that 47% of CYP, aged 10-17 years, reported feeling 'worried to some extent' and it is suggested that an increased number of CYP have experienced low levels of wellbeing. Through consultations, it was further identified that concerns were held by young people in relation to their next academic year and in catching-up on missed learning opportunities. In addition to the potential added pressure from school to catch-up on these missed opportunities, school closures have also given rise to other pressures, including home-schooling and periods of uncertainty surrounding exams (Fegert et al., 2020). The relationship between feelings about the future and CYP's sense of wellbeing is identified (The Children's Society, 2019b), therefore the need to continue to effectively support and promote the wellbeing of CYP is emphasised.

Interactions with peers have either been prohibited or limited for many CYP which, given the positive impact of peer relationships, (Oberle et al., 2010) can have a negative effect on CYP. Not only have CYP experienced loss of contact with peers, they may also have experienced a loss of daily structure and education time (Fegert et al., 2020). Widnall et al. (2020) explored the impact of COVID-19 on mental health and wellbeing and social connections of 1,047 young people aged 13-14 years, across 17 schools. 90% of girls and 88% of boys either agreed or strongly agreed that COVID-19 was a very serious issue, with their main concern being that their friends or family may contract the virus. 44% of girls and 26% of boys were worried about missing school and 42% of girls and 27% of boys were worried about the impact of COVID-19 on their friendships. A baseline survey was also conducted pre-pandemic, with data available for time-point comparison for 721-770 young people, depending on the outcomes of interest. School connectedness for girls and boys increased during the lockdown period and those with low school connectedness, prior to COVID-19, demonstrated a greater increase in wellbeing scores. There was a small increase in peer connectedness scores for boys but no changes in peer connectedness scores for girls, however pupils with low peer connectedness scores prior to COVID-19 demonstrated an increase in wellbeing scores. It is recognised overall findings may vary across secondary year groups, given different circumstances, which may include disruptions to transitions or exams.

The OxWell School survey gathered data from 19,000 CYP aged 8-18 years, across 6 counties in England, exploring the impact of COVID-19 on the wellbeing of CYP during school closures (Mansfield et al., 2020). Preliminary findings from the survey have been shared. Secondary school students constituted 69% of the overall sample, with 60% being female and 40% male. Across year groups, there was a general decrease in high levels of wellbeing and an increase in low levels of wellbeing with age, with 14% of participants reporting low levels of wellbeing in Year 4 compared to 48% in Year 13. Life satisfaction followed a similar trajectory, with satisfaction decreasing with age. 88% of participants in Year 4 reported being satisfied with their life, in comparison to 68% in Year 13. When exploring the effect of lockdown on happiness, a higher percentage of young people reported their general happiness was ‘worse’ as opposed to ‘better’ across Years 9-13. When questioned about the effect of lockdown on managing schoolwork, Year 10 represented the highest percentage of

young people reporting the management of schoolwork to be 'worse'. Participants in Years 9-13 reported the effect of lockdown on managing schoolwork to be 'worse' than those in Years 4-8. Year 10 participants also reported spending the greatest amount of time on schoolwork. When asked about going back to school, participants reported looking most forward to seeing their friends and least looking forward to school/college work, with 33% of pupils reporting feeling worried about their work.

Educational settings are often the first place CYP will seek help in relation to mental support (Fazel et al., 2014; Collishaw, 2015). Educational professionals can provide a valuable means of emotional support to pupils and are often the first to identify early signs of mental health difficulties or exposure to situations which warrant concern (Masonbrink & Hurley, 2020). CYP in poverty and who are reliant on school-based services will be disproportionately affected by the pandemic and school closures (Fegert et al., 2020; Masonbrink & Hurley, 2020). Research surrounding the impact of COVID-19 and school closures on the mental health and wellbeing of CYP is ongoing, with a number of potential risk factors already identified. The importance of educational settings, not only as a place of learning, but in providing a breadth of support and opportunities for CYP to develop is emphasised.

2.10 The role of educational settings

Teachers have a fundamental role to play in promoting the wellbeing of young people, through ensuring pupils are rooted within a supportive and nurturing environment, beneficial to learning (Wyn et al., 2000). The notion that pupil wellbeing should be embedded within a whole-school approach is recognised, whereby learners are at the forefront of educational practice (Roffey, 2015). The importance of ensuring all aspects of school organisation work together cohesively is emphasised, as part of a whole-school approach (Weare, 2015). Weare and Nind (2011) identify the need for a whole-school, multi-component approach, which generally includes changes to teaching skills and links with academic learning, school ethos, liaison with parents, teacher and parent education and co-ordinated work with outside agencies. Whole-school approaches extend beyond teaching and learning, encompassing all aspects of school life (DfE, 2014b). The need for

whole-school approaches to be implemented both consistently and comprehensively is emphasised (PHE, 2015).

It is recognised educational settings are well placed to promote positive emotional wellbeing (Vostanis et al., 2013) and have the potential either to foster or hinder the wellbeing of CYP (Spratt et al., 2006). Opportunities to develop social and emotional skills, knowledge and behaviours, within school, can be supportive to resilience and future management of mental health and wellbeing (Young Minds, 2017). The influence of school culture, ethos and environment on pupil wellbeing is further acknowledged (DfE, 2018). School culture is defined as beliefs and values, with there being an increasing recognition of the importance of developing a culture to support the wellbeing of CYP, which pervades all aspects of school and is maintained by the entire school community, as much as possible (Warin, 2017). School climate is also an important contributor to CYP's health and wellbeing (Zullig et al., 2011), referring to the school ethos and quality of life within a school, encompassing not only the physical environment but the school experience as a whole (Cohen et al., 2009).

The commitment of educational staff to the social and emotional wellbeing of young people and the need to ensure this is reflected in policies and systems is emphasised (NICE, 2020). Whilst O'Connor et al. (2018) acknowledge that schools are well-placed to promote emotional wellbeing (EWB), they highlight the need for educational staff to be supported in developing the required skills and knowledge to ensure the setting maintains its place as an environment in which emotional wellbeing can be nurtured and sustained. Although teachers would like to promote the emotional wellbeing of young people, their skills to do so can be constrained (Young Minds, 2017).

Brown (2019) in research commissioned by DfE, explored schools' published policies and other available information to gain a greater understanding of the degree to which relevant approaches and activities, linked to mental health and wellbeing, are promoted. Information and policies published on the websites of 45 secondary schools were explored using Content Analysis. Indicators were devised to measure the degree to which policies promoted mental health and wellbeing and respectful school communities. Behaviour

policies available from 43 schools comprised the majority of approaches and interventions employed to promote mental health and wellbeing, indicating that the emotional and psychological needs of pupils were being identified through their 'disruptive behaviour'. The research highlights that pupils' needs should be considered more holistically, with a greater understanding of potential risk factors surrounding mental illness, particularly where disruptive behaviour is less evident. The extent to which behaviour policies promoted mental health and wellbeing was identified as high in 27% of schools, medium in 16% and low in 57%. 18% of the schools were able to demonstrate evidence of providing support to promote mental health as part of a whole-school approach, in contrast to 56% of schools who provided no evidence within their policies. This indicates the need for opportunities to develop awareness, understanding and resources to provide mental health and wellbeing support at a whole-school level.

The role of school is often present in young people's perceptions surrounding their wellbeing. Vujčić et al. (2019) explored CYP's perspectives of wellbeing and found that school and education were identified as an important aspect, given the relationship between school achievements and the fostering of positive life outcomes. PHE (2015) has produced guidance on promoting CYP's emotional health and wellbeing within education, which includes the role of the school environment, curriculum teaching and learning and pupil voice. A statutory duty is placed upon schools to promote the welfare of all pupils, including taking steps to enable all pupils to have the best outcomes (DfE, 2020a). The Teachers' Standards (2012) further stipulates the need for teachers to safeguard pupils' wellbeing, in accordance with statutory provisions.

2.11 The role of educational psychologists

Roffey (2015) highlights there are opportunities that can be utilised by EPs to actively support and promote wellbeing, within their everyday practice, as both an advocate for CYP and as an agent for change. Further, acknowledging that EPs are well placed in their role, both individually and collectively to augment wellbeing. The role of EPs in working collaboratively with educational staff and settings to support wellbeing is acknowledged (Noble & McGrath, 2008). Given the practice of EPs being embedded across home, school

and community, they are well placed to support psychological understandings of mental health and wellbeing amongst CYP. Their unique contribution is further identified, in relation to "acting as a buffer" between educational and medical perspectives (Roffey et al., 2016, p.6).

Andrews (2017) explored the role of EPs in supporting mental health and wellbeing within schools, from their own perspective, as well as that of special educational needs co-ordinators (SENCos). EPs identified supporting the mental health and wellbeing of CYP and staff as an aspect of their role, with opportunities at an individual, group and whole-school level. Further, with EWB ingrained throughout different aspects of their work. SENCos were able to provide examples of EP practice which involved supporting wellbeing, however had not previously considered mental health and wellbeing support as an aspect of the EP role. This implies the need for further clarification surrounding the role of EPs in providing mental health and wellbeing support. Purewal (2020) explored the role of EPs, from their own perspective, in supporting CYP's social, emotional, mental health. EPs recognised their role in supporting mental health and wellbeing within educational settings, however acknowledged the need for wider recognition surrounding their role within this area; arguably leading to further opportunities for greater inclusion as a profession within mental health policy.

CYP's services, within local authorities, have a role in supporting and promoting the wellbeing of young people in education (NICE, 2020; UK Parliament, 2006). NICE (2020) provides guidance on the role of commissioners and providers of services to young people, recognising their part in supporting the social and emotional wellbeing of CYP, through ensuring educational settings have access to specialist skills, advice and support. Within the guidance, the contribution of educational psychology services (EPSs) is acknowledged. The DoH (2015) further recognises the role of targeted and specialist services in promoting positive mental health and wellbeing, including EPSs, whilst emphasising the notion mental health and wellbeing is everyone's business. The Transforming Children and Young People's Mental Health Provision: A Green Paper (DoH & DfE, 2017), further recognises the role of EPs in supporting educational settings, acting as a link between educational settings and the National Health Service (NHS), working alongside other professionals to provide mental

health support. Whilst EPs are recognised as providing specialist mental health support within educational settings (Sharpe et al., 2016), the need for the role of EPs to be recognised within policy and strategic developments is identified, given the positioning of their role and skills in providing schools with mental health services (Zafeiriou & Gulliford, 2020).

Exploring what young people perceive contributes to positive wellbeing in education aims to illuminate further opportunities and ways in which EPs can continue to actively support and promote wellbeing for CYP. CYP are well placed to contribute to developments within education, given their educational experiences (Boyle, 2012). Engaging in co-production techniques with CYP can empower them and help guide learning experiences (Campbell et al., 2019). Cook-Sather (2002) highlights the need to listen to and respond to pupil perspectives, in order to provide opportunities for them to influence education. The use of co-production to explore how wellbeing is perceived and facilitated within education is identified (Simmons et al., 2015). Co-production has the scope to be transformative, in eliciting new ways of thinking, through drawing on insights into everyday practices (Bergold & Thomas, 2012), enabling the facilitation and understanding of shared contributions (Clark et al., 2017). When considering the notion that EPs are well placed to offer a distinct contribution at varying levels to augment wellbeing and, given their role as both an advocate for CYP and as an agent for change, the importance of research which captures the voice of young people and seeks to inform practice is evident.

2.12 Systematic literature review

2.12.1 Introduction to the systematic literature review

SLRs aim to synthesise all available evidence pertaining to a topic (Charrios, 2015) deemed relevant to a review question (Petticrew & Roberts, 2006), to determine what is known about an area and to identify gaps within the research (Andrews, 2005). This is conducted in a transparent and reproducible way, while appraising the quality of included studies (Lame, 2019). SLRs are underpinned by systematic methods to increase transparency and reduce

the risk of bias at each stage of the review process (Petticrew & Roberts, 2006; Pati & Lorusso, 2018). They include comprehensively and systematically searching available literature (Siddaway et al., 2019) and critically evaluating, integrating and presenting findings across identified studies (Pati & Lorusso, 2018).

The purpose of this SLR was to review existing literature surrounding young people's perceptions of wellbeing within secondary education. Given the review question is exploratory in nature (Barnett-Page & Thomas, 2009), I have undertaken a qualitative review of existing literature.

2.12.2 Qualitative research synthesis

The purpose of a qualitative research synthesis is to develop an understanding of recurring concepts, categories and themes across a data set, enabling a comprehensive overview of findings to be developed. Here, findings from qualitative studies are integrated using qualitative methods (Major & Savin-Baden, 2010). New understandings of data can emerge through the qualitative synthesis of primary studies, enabling a greater understanding of a particular topic (Seers, 2012), through the generation of new knowledge, theory and applications (Drisko, 2020). There is a need to strive for transparency (Booth, 2016), while following a thorough, methodological process (Major & Savin-Baden, 2010).

Different methods exist for the synthesis of qualitative research, such as meta-narrative, critical interpretive synthesis, thematic synthesis, textual narrative synthesis and meta-ethnography (Barnett-Page & Thomas, 2009). A key distinction between different synthesis approaches is that some aim to aggregate (describe) findings and some interpret findings and "develop new conceptual understandings or 'theory'" (Toye et al., 2014, p. 4). Given the aim of this review was to develop conceptual understanding, I deemed meta-ethnography an appropriate method of synthesis (Noblit & Hare, 1988).

2.12.3 Meta-ethnographic methodology

Developed by Noblit and Hare (1988), meta-ethnography is an inductive, interpretive methodological approach to facilitate the synthesis of qualitative research. It aims to develop substantive interpretations that transcend findings from individual studies (Thorne, 2015). This process involves the systematic comparison of conceptual data from qualitative studies, for overarching themes and concepts to be identified and developed. A focus is placed on offering meaning to studies and interpreting them as texts (Noblit & Hare, 1988). Comprising seven iterative phases (see Appendix 1), meta-ethnography aims to go beyond a traditional narrative or literature review synthesis, through the comparison, interpretation and rendering of texts to synthesise identified studies.

A meta-ethnography was chosen to synthesise existing qualitative research surrounding the wellbeing of secondary school pupils in education, enabling the interpretation of meaning across selected studies and the creation of a new conceptual understanding of the phenomenon being studied. Each phase of the methodology will be outlined in relation to the current review.

2.12.4 Phase 1: Getting started

When deciding on a review question, there is a need to ensure it is not too narrow, with an insufficient number of studies identified, and generalisability therefore impacted. Further, that the review question is not too broad, so as to avoid difficulty in reaching conclusions for a given population (Wright et al., 2007).

This SLR aims to answer the following question:

- What does the literature tell us about young people's perceptions of wellbeing within education?

Further to this, the following questions were also considered during the review process:

- What is the quality of evidence presented?

- What similarities and differences are there in the perceptions of young people in relation to wellbeing within education?

2.12.5 Phase 2: Deciding what is relevant

2.12.5.1 Search strategy

Systematic searches were conducted across five electronic databases, namely: Web of Science, Scopus, PsycINFO (OVID), ERIC (EBSCO) and the British Library EThOS. Searches of grey literature were also completed using Google Scholar. Search terms were identified (see Table 1) which aimed to yield all relevant results, whilst being specific enough to ensure an abundance of studies not relevant to this review were excluded. Boolean operators were used to extend searches by including different search terms.

Table 1

The search terms used in the systemic search.

Concept	**Search Terms**
Young People	("young people*" OR adolescen* OR youth* OR pupil* OR student* OR teenage*)
Education	(school OR education OR "educational setting*")
Perceptions	(perception* OR perspective* OR view* OR perceive OR identify)
Wellbeing	(wellbeing OR well-being)

Following an exhaustive search of databases, 503 studies were retrieved (see Table 2). The search terms used are recorded in Appendix 2. Duplicates were removed and titles and abstracts were initially screened, prior to full copies being obtained. Following the removal of duplicates, 323 studies remained. During this initial screening phase, an inclusive as opposed to an exclusive approach was adopted to reduce the possibility of studies, which may be relevant to the literature search, being omitted. A further search of reference lists of studies screened was completed to extend the systematic literature base (Chandler et al.,

2013); however, no further studies were identified. Grey literature was also searched, which yielded a further three studies (see Table 3).

Table 2

The number of search results for each database searched.

Database	**Number of Search Results**
PsychINFO	75
Web of Science	169
Scopus	131
ERIC	55
EThOS	73

Table 3

The number of results from searching grey literature.

Grey Literature Search	**Number of Search Results**
Google Scholar	3

2.12.5.2 Eligibility criteria

To determine the studies that would be included within this review, eligibility criteria were established. Ensuring the inclusion and exclusion criteria for studies is clearly outlined increases the trustworthiness and credibility of findings (Pati & Lorusso, 2018). Inclusion and exclusion criteria as defined within Table 4 was applied during the systematic searches.

Table 4

Inclusion and exclusion criteria for the literature search.

Characteristic	**Inclusion Criteria**	**Exclusion Criteria**
Sample	-Pupil views. -Secondary aged pupils (aged 11-16 years in Key Stages 3-4). -Pupils accessing full-time education.	-Views of others (i.e., educational staff, parents and other professionals). -Primary aged pupils (aged 11 years and under in Key Stages 1-2). -Young people accessing post-16 education. -Pupils not accessing full-time education.
Setting	-Secondary educational settings.	-Primary and post-16 educational settings. -Non-educational settings.
Study Focus	-A focus on aspects of education which influence wellbeing.	-A focus on aspects of life outside of education which influence wellbeing.
Research Design	-Qualitative design.	-Quantitative design only.
Data Presentation	-Thick descriptions (quotations).	-Unsupported descriptions.
Research Type	-Research published in a peer-reviewed academic journal. -Grey literature (theses/dissertations). -Research undertaken from 2010 onwards.	-Other publications (i.e., books, book reviews, articles, systematic reviews). -Research undertaken prior to 2010.
Country	-UK studies.	-Studies outside of the UK.

2.12.5.3 Rationale for eligibility criteria

2.12.5.3.1 Participant sample and setting

The review was focussed on the perceptions of secondary school pupils aged 11-16 years (Key Stage 3-4). The views of young people were sought, given young people are able to provide unique contributions around school, learning and teaching (Cook-Sather, 2006) and gaining qualitative data directly from CYP can elicit detailed and pertinent contextual information surrounding their lives, needs and experiences (Vujčić et al., 2019).

This age range was selected, given that the wellbeing of young people declines during this period, with the secondary school years being a stage of adolescence whereby many physical, emotional and social adjustments are required (Chanfreau et al., 2013). Between the ages of 11-15 years, low levels of subjective wellbeing almost doubles (Young Minds, 2017). Subsequently, secondary school pupils will benefit from increased support during this period of their life.

2.12.5.3.2 Study focus

As the current review is focussed on aspects of school and education which contribute to the wellbeing of young people, studies which focus solely on influences outside of education will not be included. Only studies which explore influences, as perceived by young people, within educational settings will be included. Aspects of education which contribute both positively and negatively to the wellbeing of young people were sought for the purpose of this review.

2.12.5.3.3 Research design

Given the review is focussed on the perceptions and experiences of young people in education, only studies which include an element of qualitative design were included.

2.12.5.3.4 Data presentation

As noted within qualitative research guidance, there is a need to only include studies which present rich, qualitative data pertaining to the original study (Savin-Baden & Major, 2010), comprising thick descriptions and quotations (Noblit & Hare, 1988). Therefore, within this review, only studies which present original qualitative data were included.

2.12.5.3.5 Research type

In addition to peer-reviewed published articles, grey literature was included. Whilst within qualitative research, publication bias is not as prominent in comparison to quantitative research, it is acknowledged that restricting searches to known databases may fail to include information useful to the review question (Booth, 2016). Given the review was focussed on including thick descriptions, only studies which comprised original, raw data were included.

2.12.5.3.6 Country

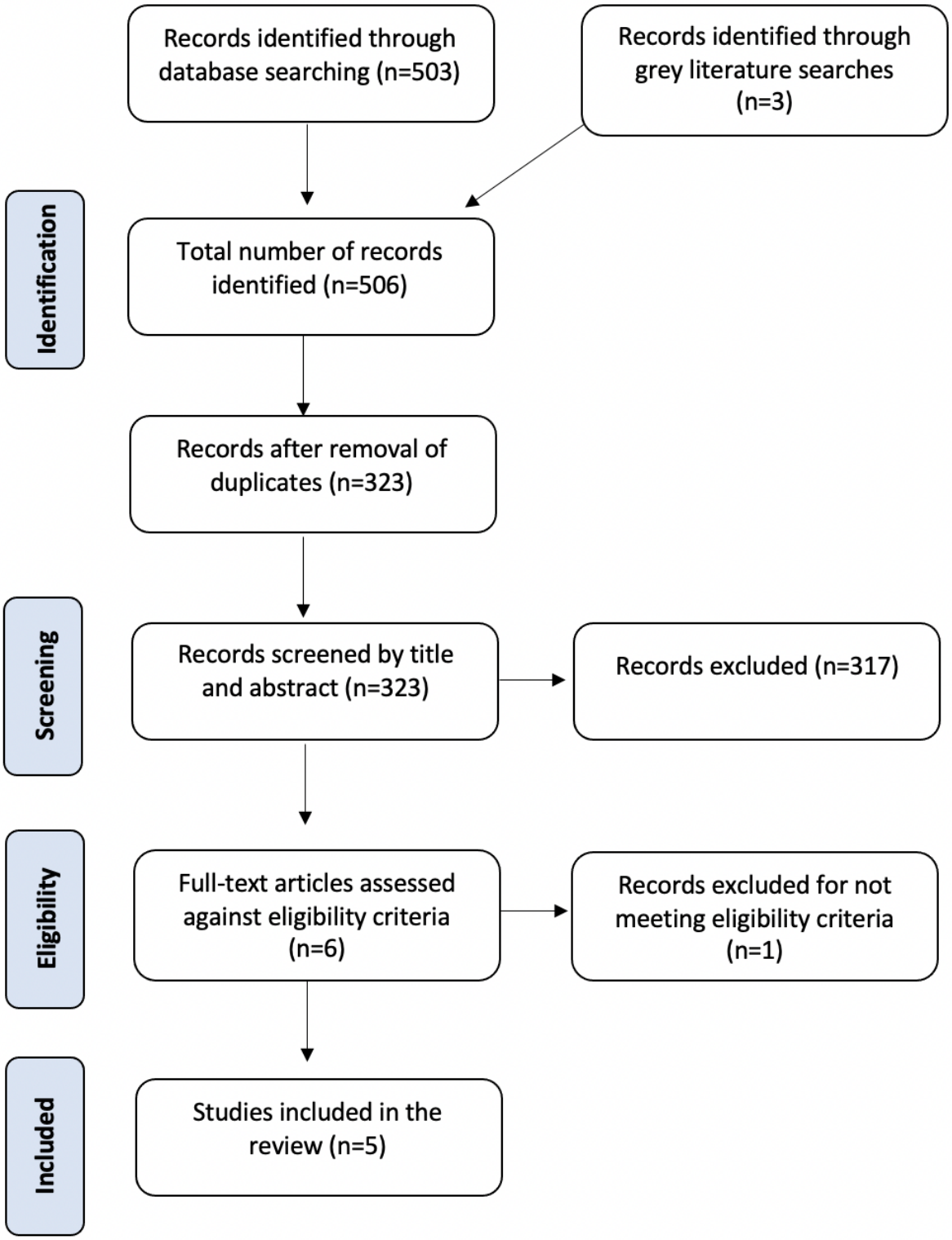
Only studies completed in the UK were included in this review. Whilst studies conducted outside of the UK which explore pupil wellbeing in education exist (Oyarzún-Gómez & de la Pava, 2019; Graham et al., 2014), there are differences in the education system across countries, when compared to the UK. Therefore, the educational experiences of pupils in other countries may not be directly comparable to those of pupils within the UK education system.

2.12.5.4 Study selection

A flow diagram, following PRISMA procedures (Moher et al., 2009), illustrates the screening process used to identify relevant studies which fulfil the inclusion criteria outlined, and the outcome of this process (see Figure 2). Six studies were identified for full-text screening, with five of these being included in the overall review (see Appendix 3). One study was excluded, due to the full text not being available.

Figure 2

Flow diagram illustrating the search and selection process.



2.12.6 Phase 3 and 4: Data extraction and relationship between studies

2.12.6.1 Results of the screening process

The five studies included within this review have been outlined (Table 5), with key information being extracted from each, including an overview of the study and its aims, details pertaining to the sample, the methodology and approach to data collection (Appendix 3). The relationship between studies is identified through creating a list of themes within each account and juxtaposing them (Noblit & Hare, 1988). A tabulated summary of the studies, including key themes and concepts, to enable comparison, has been produced (Appendix 3).

Table 5

The five studies included within the review.

Author and Date	Title	Research Type
Coombes et al. (2013)	*Emotional Health and Well-being in Schools: Involving Young People.*	Journal Article
Copp (2011)	*Pupil Voices: How Schools can Support Pupils' Emotional Wellbeing.*	Thesis
Langford (2016)	*Exploring the Perspectives of Children and Young People; How Children and Young People View Secondary School Staff to Support Pupil Wellbeing.*	Thesis
Littlecott et al. (2016)	*Student Health and Well-being in Secondary Schools: The Role of School Support Staff Alongside Teaching Staff.*	Journal Article
Salter (2010)	*The Promotion of Emotional Well Being in Secondary Schools.*	Thesis

2.12.6.2 Characteristics of included studies

Familiarisation of the included studies was achieved through their repeated reading, with data being extracted and tabulated, as noted above. All of the studies were undertaken in the UK: one in Wales (Littlecott et al., 2016) and four in England (Coombes et al., 2013; Copp, 2011; Salter, 2010; Langford, 2016). All studies included an element of qualitative data from the perspective of young people, either through the use of focus groups (Coombes et al., 2013; Salter, 2010) or SSIs (Littlecott et al., 2016; Langford, 2016; Copp, 2011), although some of the studies did draw on multiple approaches to data collection (Langford, 2016; Copp, 2011).

Whilst all studies focussed on the wellbeing of young people, different components of wellbeing were explored. Two studies focussed on 'emotional wellbeing' (EWB) (Salter, 2010; Copp, 2011), one on 'emotional health and wellbeing' (EHWB) (Coombes et al., 2013), one on 'health and wellbeing' (Littlecott et al., 2016) and another on wellbeing more broadly (Langford, 2016).

2.12.6.3 Appraisal of studies

The Critical Appraisal Skills Programme for Qualitative Research Checklist (CASP, 2018) has been used to appraise the quality of studies for meta-ethnography (Appendix 4) (Atkins et al., 2008). The tool comprises ten questions which focus on different methodological aspects of a qualitative study and encourages the careful and systematic reading of studies (Campbell et al., 2011). A numerical value was attributed to each study to indicate whether each CASP question had been addressed (3), had been partially addressed (2), was unclear (1) or had not been addressed (0). Detailed CASP guidance is located in Appendix 5.

2.12.7 Phase 5 and 6: Translation and synthesising translations

Translation comprises the systematic comparison of themes or concepts across studies. A key aspect of translation is the interpretation of meaning, with translation being idiomatic as opposed to literal and consideration afforded to the context of studies (Noblit & Hare,

1988). Depending on the relationships between studies, different approaches to translation can be utilised. Reciprocal translation, employed within this review, concerns studies in which key concepts can be incorporated into other studies, or "added together" (p. 47).

The synthesis of translations entails further comparison of translations from phase 5, whereby common or overarching concepts are identified, and new interpretations developed. This is referred to as "a second level of synthesis", extending beyond the findings of individual studies (Noblit & Hare, 1988, p. 28). This is outlined in the following section.

2.12.8 Phase 7: Expressing the synthesis

Synthesis findings will now be considered in turn.

2.12.8.1 Teacher-pupil relationships

Identified across all five studies, teacher-pupil relationships were most commonly cited as influential to pupil wellbeing. Commonalities existed across studies pertaining to the relational behaviour of teachers. The importance of teachers providing academic support to pupils was acknowledged through the providing of clarity, supporting problem-solving and feelings of preparedness and understanding in lessons (Copp, 2011) and the use of motivational and optimistic messages (Langford, 2016; Coombes et al., 2013), with positive teacher attitudes and teachers demonstrating they care being valued by young people (Coombes et al., 2013; Littlecott et al., 2018). How teachers communicate with pupils, and the importance pupils place on this, was evident across a number of studies (Copp, 2011; Salter, 2010; Langford, 2016; Coombes et al., 2013). More specifically, pupils viewed positive verbal interactions with teachers as supportive to wellbeing (Copp, 2011; Langford, 2016; Littlecott et al., 2018): influenced by factors such as how well they knew their teacher; the length of time they have known them; frequency of contact with them and feelings of trust (Copp, 2011; Coombes et al., 2013). Stressors experienced by teachers were also seen to influence teacher-pupil interactions (Salter, 2010). Teachers providing support when needed, such as when pupils are not feeling positive about their life, and instilling confidence in them (Coombes et al., 2013) was also evident, with teacher feedback and

encouragement (Copp, 2011; Salter, 2010) and the acknowledgement of positive behaviour (Salter, 2010) valued by young people. Teacher availability, as a factor of time pressures and varying commitments, and the impact of these on their capacity to provide support to pupils, was however raised (Coombes et al., 2013; Littlecott et al., 2018).

The role of teachers in contributing to a more positive learning environment was also identified, in providing fun and enjoyable lessons (Copp, 2011; Coombes et al., 2013) and effectively managing negative behaviours, such as bullying (Salter, 2010; Langford, 2016; Coombes et al., 2013; Littlecott et al., 2018). Therefore, the role of teachers in promoting feelings of safety (Salter, 2010; Langford, 2016) was identified. Also evident across two studies was the role of teachers in supporting wellbeing through promoting pupil engagement in different aspects of school (Copp, 2011; Langford, 2016), such as learning tasks and access to school clubs.

2.12.8.2 Peer relationships and support

Peer relationships were a noted commonality across four studies (Copp, 2011; Langford, 2016; Coombes et al., 2013; Salter, 2010). Opportunities for pupils to interact with one another were valued: peers tended to be viewed as a preferred source of support in comparison to adults, due to a higher level of perceived empathy, and the increased likelihood they will have experienced similar, relatable issues (Coombes et al., 2013). Opportunities to connect with friends and develop trusting and honest relationships were regarded by young people (Copp, 2011), in conjunction with an absence of negative peer interactions, i.e., bullying and racism (Coombes et al., 2013). Peer support and collaboration, related to learning, was viewed as contributing to the development of friendships (Salter, 2010). Talking was also seen as supportive in fostering a sense of belonging and inclusion: where there is an absence of friends with whom young people can connect, EWB may be impacted (Copp, 2011).

2.12.8.3 The school environment

The school environment was identified across all studies as contributing to pupil wellbeing. Pupils having access to specific places within school was seen as supportive, for example,

when needing to access a quiet space or when socialising with peers (Copp, 2011). Also raised by pupils were opportunities to attend school clubs (Copp, 2011; Langford, 2016), these were viewed positively: enabling young people to pursue interests and experience feelings of success and a positive sense of self. Opportunities to engage in sport and exercise were found to be important to the wellbeing of male participants (Langford, 2016). The structure of the school environment was seen as influencing feelings of safety (Langford, 2016), with the physical layout considered influential to the accessibility and confidentiality of support (Copp, 2011). Another physical aspect identified as contributing to positive perceptions of the school environment was the school's cleanliness (Salter, 2010).

An identified contributor to a poor school environment was bullying (Copp, 2011; Salter, 2010; Langford, 2016). School's commitment to supporting the EHWB of pupils was raised, with attention afforded to associated policies, including bullying and behaviour (Coombes et al., 2013). The role of teachers in contributing to a positive school environment and being proactive in addressing such incidences was noted (Copp, 2011; Coombes et al., 2013).

2.12.8.4 Academic pressures and success

Pressure from exams was identified as negatively impacting wellbeing (Copp, 2011; Salter, 2010; Coombes et al., 2013). Opportunities for success within school were also identified (Copp, 2011; Langford, 2016), including academic success (Copp, 2011) and in other areas, such as school clubs (Langford, 2016). The acknowledgement of success was identified across four studies (Copp, 2011; Salter, 2010; Langford, 2016; Coombes et al., 2013); however, higher teacher expectations were associated with increased academic pressure (Copp, 2011). Homework was identified as a potentially negative contributor towards wellbeing, with young people associating homework with feelings of stress (Copp, 2011).

2.12.8.5 Access to support

A commonality across four studies was pupils being able to access different means of support within school and perceiving this to be beneficial (Copp, 2011; Langford, 2016; Coombes et al., 2013; Littlecott et al., 2018). A noted barrier to accessing support was a lack of clarity surrounding accessibility and associated procedures (Coombes et al., 2013): in

terms of confidentiality, shared understandings between staff and pupils (Copp, 2011; Coombes et al., 2013) and being able to confide in educational staff (Copp, 2011; Coombes et al., 2013; Littlecott et al., 2018) were deemed important.

Young people valued having access to alternative support within school, such as school counsellors and specialist teachers (Copp, 2011; Coombes et al., 2013; Littlecott et al., 2018). Opportunities to feel heard by staff were also viewed as important to wellbeing (Copp, 2011; Langford, 2016; Coombes et al., 2013), with the benefits of early intervention acknowledged by young people (Littlecott et al., 2018).

Having access to support from adults with specialist skills in school was cited as being supportive to young people's wellbeing (Copp, 2011; Littlecott et al., 2018). Teacher skills in providing support to pupils relating to a specific issue was also raised, with some teachers having the skills to provide such support (Littlecott et al., 2018), but others requiring opportunities to develop their understanding and skills relating to specific areas (Coombes et al., 2013). Access to specific physical spaces within school, in which such support can be accessed, and pupil's knowledge of systems in place, were viewed as beneficial to young people (Littlecott et al., 2018).

2.12.8.6 Learning opportunities

The relationship between learning and wellbeing was apparent in four studies (Copp, 2011; Coombes et al., 2013; Langford, 2016; Salter, 2010). Young people regarded the inclusion of topics linked to EWB within the taught curriculum, including those which focus upon 'real-life' issues and possible solutions, such as bullying, racism (Copp, 2011) and self-harm (Coombes et al., 2013), with young people valuing the EHWB curriculum (Coombes, et al., 2013; Salter, 2010). Teacher attitudes were cited as influencing the delivery of such topics, with young people valuing teachers who demonstrate a genuine interest in their delivery (Coombes et al., 2013). Young people voiced a preference for fun lessons which draw on interactive and creative methods of teaching (Copp, 2011; Coombes et al., 2013), with the skills of teachers impacting on pupil interest and engagement (Coombes et al., 2013). Access to opportunities within school was identified as supportive to EWB. Providing further opportunities for pupils within school was also recognised, such as opportunities to engage

in activities with family members (Langford, 2016) and to learn about themselves (Copp, 2011).

2.12.9 Summary

Relationships within school were most commonly identified by young people as influencing pupil wellbeing, with teacher skills, relational behaviour, support and the role of teachers in providing both learning and social opportunities for young people identified and valued. As well as relationships with teachers, peer relationships and support were viewed as influential to pupil wellbeing in school, contributing to feelings of belonging. Academic pressures and opportunities for success were found to have a bearing on levels of pupil wellbeing, as well as the school environment more broadly, including available opportunities, the implementation of policies and whole-school approaches and the physical aspects of the school environment: increasing feelings of safety for young people. School's commitment to providing learning opportunities pertaining to EHWB topics were cited, as well as opportunities to access alternative forms of support within school.

2.12.10 Review of the methodology

The criteria proposed by Lincoln and Guba (1985) which spans four dimensions: credibility, dependability, confirmability and transferability, has been drawn upon for the purpose of critiquing the current review. To increase the trustworthiness and credibility of findings, inclusion and exclusion criteria were explicitly outlined (Pati & Lorusso, 2018). Careful adherence to the defined stages of the review process has increased transparency, while reducing the risk of bias (Petticrew & Roberts, 2006; Pati & Lorusso, 2018). The transparent presentation of findings from multiple studies attempts to increase credibility and, by clearly outlining the context of included studies and critically appraising them, attempts have been made to increase dependability. Given the interpretive nature of the synthesis, consideration was also afforded to issues surrounding confirmability. Further, when considering the transferability of findings, commonalities across studies were apparent when comparisons were made; however, given only five studies were included within the review, limitations exist.

2.13 Rationale

Whilst the focus placed on wellbeing has increased over recent years, research focussed on exploring children's wellbeing, as opposed to wellbeing in adulthood, is arguably underrepresented (Patalay & Fitzsimmons, 2016; Holder, 2012). The experiences and challenges CYP encounter can often be overlooked by adults when making decisions surrounding how best to support their wellbeing, given they can lack the necessary insight into the lives of CYP (Checkoway, 2011), and decisions are often made without their involvement (Halliday et al., 2019). It is important for young people to share their views on issues which are important to and impact on them (Lansdown et al., 2014), given they are well-placed to consider varying factors, including what will and will not work in practice, in addition to potential responses to practice (Boyle, 2012).

Whilst there is now an increasing focus on wellbeing and its importance, many CYP continue to report not being happy with their lives (DfE, 2019a). The wellbeing of CYP in the UK has been declining and it is argued significant results could be achieved by prioritising the wellbeing of CYP, in both policy and service delivery (The Children's Society, 2019b). Both school and EPs have a role in promoting the wellbeing of CYP (Noble & McGrath, 2008). The need to explore how educational settings can support positive health and wellbeing is further identified (Jamal et al., 2013). Including young people in decision making processes which will impact them can be supportive to their EHWB, reinforcing feelings of school and wider community belonging (PHE, 2015).

Levels of wellbeing decline amongst young people during their secondary school years, whereby many physical, emotional and social adjustments are required, representing a critical stage in an individual's life (Chanfreau et al., 2013). Available evidence surrounding the wellbeing of CYP recognises the multifaceted and varied influences on their wellbeing as they grow and develop (DfE, 2019a).

Whilst the wellbeing of CYP is explored within research, opportunities to gain young people's perceptions of what they feel contributes to positive wellbeing within education is identified as an area for further research. Whilst some studies have explored aspects of education which can support the wellbeing of young people, there is a need for further

research which considers more generally what young people perceive to contribute to wellbeing, within education.

Given the increasing focus placed on wellbeing, both respective and irrespective of COVID-19, the steady decline in the wellbeing of young people (The Children's Society, 2020b) and the importance of wellbeing on development, research within this area appears timely. Exploring what young people perceive contributes to wellbeing, within education, will hopefully illuminate ways in which educational settings and professionals can further support and promote wellbeing, from the perspective of young people.

2.14 Research aims and questions

The aim of this research is to explore what young people perceive contributes to positive wellbeing within education. By utilising a qualitative methodology and capturing the voice of young people within education, this research aims to provide a distinct contribution to existing literature. It is hoped ways of positively influencing the wellbeing of young people can be identified, in turn highlighting ways in which educational staff can support and promote wellbeing, while informing the practice of EPs in working with educational settings to augment pupil wellbeing.

The following research questions have been developed:

1. What do young people, aged 15-16 years, perceive to contribute to positive wellbeing within education?
2. What do educational settings and professionals need to consider when promoting and supporting the wellbeing of young people within education?

Chapter 3: Methodology

This chapter provides an overview of and rationale for the methodology for the current study, detailing the procedures and methodological, including ethical, considerations. The chapter begins by discussing the epistemological position underpinning the current study. The rationale for TA is then presented, with the implications for the use of alternative approaches considered. The nature of TA as employed in this study is presented. Details pertaining to stakeholder involvement and sampling are then outlined, followed by a detailed account of data gathering and analysis. The chapter concludes with consideration given to the quality of the research and ethics in relation to the study.

3.1 Epistemological and ontological orientation

A research paradigm represents beliefs and principles which influence a researcher's world view, in terms of guiding what should be studied within research, how it should be studied and how findings should be interpreted (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). In order for research to be evaluated meaningfully, the assumptions of a research question should be identified, such that the researcher's ontological and epistemological position is established (Willig, 2013). Epistemology is concerned with how knowledge is acquired, how it is understood and the relationship between the knower and what is known (Ponterotto, 2005). In turn, ontology is concerned with "the nature of our beliefs about reality" (Richards, 2003, p. 33): a fundamental aspect of a paradigm, as it aids the development of an understanding of what constitutes the world as it is known by the researcher (Scott & Usher, 2004). Guba and Lincoln (1994) and Allison and Pomeroy (2000) outline epistemological and ontological positions employed within research. Four key research paradigms are summarised in Table 6.

Table 6

Four key research paradigms and their associated epistemological and ontological positions (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Allison & Pomeroy, 2000).

Paradigm	Ontology	Epistemology
Positivism	*Naïve realism:* a reality exists which can be identified and accurately understood.	*Dualism/Objectivism:* knowledge gained through research is a true representation of reality.
Post-Positivism	*Critical realism:* whilst a reality exists, it cannot be measured accurately, and can only be interpreted in probabilistic terms.	*Modified dualist/Objectivist:* research findings are probably true and may form 'facts' although are not absolute.
Critical Theory	*Historical realism:* a perceived reality is influenced by individual factors, including social, political, cultural, economic, ethnic and gender.	*Subjectivist:* knowledge gained is linked directly to interpersonal factors, such as relationships.
Constructivism	*Relativism:* reality is individually constructed and differs between individuals, depending on their understanding of the world.	*Subjectivism:* research findings are deemed significant when they stem from the convergence and overlap of ideas/themes from multiple accounts of individuals' realities.

Constructivism argues that knowledge and meaning are generated by individuals through interactions between their experiences and ideas (Mogashoa, 2014), with individuals playing an active role in the construction of meaning (Rob & Rob, 2018). Constructionism differs from constructivism in that it argues that whilst knowledge is constructed through an individual's interactions with their world or through experience, it is also co-created through interactions with others, within an identified social group (Jha, 2012). "Social constructionism describes our way of understanding the world as the product of social processes and interactions" (Burr, 1995, p. 3). Therefore, within the social constructionist perspective, both meaning and knowledge are constructed through shared assumptions within social contexts (Galbin, 2014). Social constructionism places an emphasis on the role of language in the lived experiences in which social realities are constructed, and how these experiences and perceptions are mediated socially, historically and linguistically (Willig, 2013). Given the present study aimed to explore young people's perceptions of what contributes to positive wellbeing within education, a social constructionist epistemology was adopted. A focus was therefore placed on the socially constructed perceptions and shared understandings of the influence of educational settings on the wellbeing of young people, which aligned with the study's social constructionist epistemology.

3.2 Qualitative research methods

There are varying approaches to data collection and analysis within qualitative research, spanning various epistemological, theoretical, and disciplinary perspectives (Guest et al., 2012). Qualitative methods are utilised to answer questions pertaining to experience, meaning and perspective, generally from the viewpoint of participants (Hammarberg et al., 2016). The selection of methods for data collection and analysis is impacted by decisions relating to the research question, research design and strategy, determined by the researcher (Willig, 2013). Given the exploratory nature of the research questions, I felt qualitative methods were most suited to the current study and aligned with the epistemological position.

3.3 Thematic analysis

TA is a qualitative method which systematically examines, organises and offers an insight into themes across data, enabling researchers to identify and make sense of meanings and experiences held collectively by participants (Braun & Clarke, 2012). This form of analysis can support researchers in understanding how participants make meaning from their experiences and in exploring the social context of these meanings (Braun & Clarke, 2006). TA can offer a comprehensive analysis of qualitative data, through identifying patterns concerning the lived experiences, views and practices of participants (Braun & Clarke, 2012). Codes and themes from the data are generated through a series of systematic procedures (Clarke & Braun, 2017). TA can be used to capture themes at a semantic level, which are explicit, or at a latent level which reflect the researcher's interpretation of what has been said by the participant (Willig, 2013). A semantic and latent coding focus was adopted, with the coding process being fundamental to the development of themes. Transcripts were initially read and coded at a semantic level, then re-read to consider a latent level of analysis, recommended by Braun and Clarke (2013). Whilst it is recognised higher levels of interpretation can enhance research through the generation of new insights and understanding, it is possible that meaning can be imposed, potentially inhibiting the true voice of participants within research (Willig, 2012). Given this, steps were taken to enhance the trustworthiness and validity of findings and to maintain researcher reflexivity (see section 3.9).

The flexibility of TA means an inductive or deductive approach can be adopted (Clarke & Braun, 2017). An inductive approach, which is data-driven, means the analysis is grounded within the data, with the researcher not approaching the data with an a priori, theoretically informed coding frame. In contrast, a deductive approach is theory driven, therefore theoretically informed (Willig, 2013). The present study adopted an inductive analytic process, with findings being "grounded in" the data (Braun & Clarke, 2020, p. 4). Given a strong theoretical foundation was not adopted in order to analyse data, the analysis was guided by the accounts of participants. Braun and Clarke state that it is not possible to "enter a theoretical vacuum" (2020, p. 4). Given I had a prior interest in the area of study

and conducted a review of existing literature, steps were taken to maintain researcher reflexivity (see section 3.9.3), with care taken to set aside any preconceived notions.

Given TA is a flexible approach, not bound by a theoretical framework, it can be employed across a range of epistemologies (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Nowell et al., 2017). TA is suited to research questions focussed on people's conceptualisations or exploring how people think about a social phenomenon (Willig, 2013). TA was deemed most suited to the exploratory nature of the study, given its inductive and flexible aims, enabling an in-depth understanding of experiences and meanings, through the identification and reporting of themes and the rich, systematic analysis of data (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Whilst varying TA approaches are focussed on the identification and meaning making of patterns across a dataset (Braun & Clarke, 2020), a reflexive TA approach was adopted for the present study (Braun & Clarke, 2019a; 2019b). Reflexive TA places a focus on the subjectivity of the researcher in the analysis process, acknowledging the researcher's "reflexive engagement with theory data and interpretation" (Braun & Clarke, 2020. p. 3), with knowledge being contextual (Braun & Clarke, 2019a). The use of reflexive TA is consistent with an inductive analytic process and with the social constructionist paradigm (Braun & Clarke, 2013).

3.3.1 Limitations of thematic analysis

Whilst the flexibility of TA can be viewed as an advantage, this flexibility can lead to inconsistencies and a lack of coherence during the development of themes from the data (Holloway & Todres, 2003). Given this, the epistemological position adopted has been explicitly outlined and applied, to clearly support the study's empirical claims. If not used within an existing theoretical framework, TA can have limited interpretative power extending beyond a descriptive account of the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

There has been criticism surrounding TA lacking the rigour of other established, theoretically driven approaches. In response to this, Braun and Clarke (2006) provide a detailed and widely cited description of TA procedures, providing the researcher with

guidance on conducting a systematic analysis to a good standard. Given TA cannot make claims about the effects of language use (Braun & Clarke, 2013) and the detailed mechanisms of verbal communication (Nowell et al., 2017), some consider it to be disadvantaged in comparison to other methods, such as Discourse Analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006; 2013).

The flexibility of TA can also be critiqued as a weakness, contributing to the view that it is not a rigorous method (Braun & Clarke, 2013; Nowell et al., 2017). To enhance rigour, Braun and Clarke (2006) provide a checklist of criteria pertaining to a good TA (see Appendix 6). Given the increasing use of qualitative research, Nowell et al. (2017) recognise the continuing need for guidance and protocols to support researchers to critically evaluate TA and ensure trustworthiness.

3.4 Other approaches considered

Whilst alternative approaches were considered, both Grounded Theory (GT) and Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), TA was deemed to be the most appropriate approach in answering the research question. Considerations around GT and IPA are outlined below, clarifying my decision to adopt TA.

3.4.1 Grounded theory

GT is an approach, often inductive, which seeks to generate theory grounded in empirical data (Vollstedt & Rezat, 2019). Different variants of GT exist, with each being an extension of that developed by Glaser and Stauss (1967) (Chun Tie et al., 2019). These methods comprise systematic guidelines for the collection and analysis of data, with the objective of constructing theory (Charmaz, 2014). The building of theory is an ongoing, recursive process, whereby the researcher needs to remain close to the data (Howitt, 2010), with new data continuously being gathered, given the possible contribution of new cases to both "the development and refinement of the evolving theory" (Vollstedt & Rezat, 2019, p. 83). It involves repetitive strategies of moving back and forth between data and analysis, utilising

comparative methods, thereby fostering interaction between the researcher, data and progressive analysis (Charmaz, 2014).

The current study is focussed on exploring the views of young people in education, with the aim of identifying patterns within participants' constructions of how they perceive educational experiences to be associated with wellbeing, rather than of generating theory. Therefore, GT was not used for this study.

3.4.2 Interpretative phenomenological analysis

IPA is focussed on exploring how an individual makes sense of their lived experiences, and draws on the key principles of phenomenology, hermeneutics and idiography (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2014). The researcher adopts an interpretive role, with the analytical process often described as double hermeneutic, in that participants attempt to make meaning of their world and the researcher subsequently attempts to make sense of the participant's experience and their meaning-making. This is grounded within the words of the participant and from their own perspective (Smith & Osborn, 2008). IPA typically focuses on the generation of detailed descriptions about participant's lived experiences; however, tends not to extend beyond this, in terms of understanding why these experiences occur and why these may differ between individuals, therefore not attempting to explain opinions surrounding a phenomenon (Willig, 2013).

Both IPA and TA are focussed on making sense of the lived experiences of people (Guest et al., 2012) and have similar analytical processes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The focus of IPA is on subjective human experience, whilst TA can enable broader phenomena across cases to be considered (Huxley et al., 2011). IPA focuses on the idiographic experience of an individual. However, the researcher's own view of the world, and the nature of researcher-participant interaction are implicated in exploring participants' individual experiences from their own perspective (Willig, 2013), to develop a narrative account (Brocki & Wearden, 2006). Given the aim of the current study is to explore young people's perceptions of what contributes to positive wellbeing in education, through the identification of recurrent themes across young people's accounts, TA was deemed most appropriate.

3.5 Stakeholder engagement

Within research, stakeholder engagement includes identifying and involving stakeholders in the research process. They may inform the design of the study or its implementation (Huzzard, 2020) or be impacted by research findings (Robson & McCarten, 2016). Within the present study, stakeholders include the University of Nottingham, the Local Authority (LA), the LA EPS, educational staff located within the secondary schools and the young people who participated in the research.

Discussions were held with key stakeholders, including the LA EPS and educational staff, where information related to the study was shared to support engagement and investment in the research (see Appendix 7). The timing, potential contribution and value of the research were considered. Stakeholders were guided to understand that following study completion, overall research findings, including conclusions drawn and professional implications, were to be shared with the EPS. They were informed of the dissemination plan, to share overall findings with the educational setting that the participants attend and to support staff reflection upon these findings.

3.6 Participants and recruitment

3.6.1 Sampling of participants

Purposive sampling was used to identify participants for the current study. Widely used within qualitative research, purposive sampling is a technique whereby information-rich cases are identified and selected for comprehensive study (Patton, 2002). The researcher's knowledge of the target population influences sample selection (Bernard, 2002). Sometimes referred to as judgement sampling, researchers aim for a sample ultimately representative of the specific variables under consideration, for example age and gender (Galloway, 2005). Within the current study, both the willingness and availability of young people to participate were considered (Spradley, 1979; 2016). Inclusion criteria were applied when recruiting participants for the study. When identifying participants, consideration was given to variables such as gender and ethnicity.

In order to take part in the study, participants had to meet the following inclusion criteria:

- Be aged 15-16 years and in Year 11.
- Be on roll at a secondary educational setting.

Given the aims of the research and reported levels of low wellbeing amongst secondary school pupils, aged 11-16 years (Chanfreau et al., 2013), and with the middle teenage years specifically identified as a point of risk whereby wellbeing declines (Young Minds, 2017), the perceptions of Year 11 pupils were sought. This also enabled young people to reflect retrospectively on different phases of their secondary education.

As previously noted within section 2.4, pupil voice can play an important role in both developing and shaping educational practice (Weare, 2015; Lansdown, 2001), with pupil involvement also associated with increased levels of wellbeing (PHE, 2015). The importance of gaining the views of young people is reflected within both educational policy and legislation (*Children and Families Act*, 2014; DfE, 2015a), with all young people having the right to be heard on matters that affect them (UNCRC, 1989).

3.6.2 Recruitment of participants

The recruitment of participants was initiated by emailing EPs within the EPS, to identify any secondary schools who may be interested in and committed to taking part in research focussed on exploring young people's perceptions of what contributes to positive wellbeing within education. An information sheet explaining the research (Appendix 7) was shared with EPs within the EPS to forward on to any identified secondary school settings within the LA. Schools who expressed an interest were encouraged to contact me to discuss details of the study and their potential involvement, including recruitment procedures and ethical considerations. Three schools initially expressed interest in the research in November 2020, which was communicated by the SENCo within each school; from here, two schools were recruited to take part. One of these schools, following the recruitment of participants, but prior to completion of the SSIs, withdrew from the research through COVID-19 related pressures. The research was subsequently shared with four additional secondary schools,

with three expressing an interest. Despite further participants being recruited within one school, interviews were not able to be completed due to decisions made by the school in response to government advice surrounding Year 11 examinations during the pandemic. Participants were then recruited from a third school, however since the activation of this request by school occurred very late in the study's schedule, interviews were not possible. A discussion was held with the school to explain time restrictions associated with the study and potential participants were subsequently informed, by the school, that their involvement would not be required at this time, due to time constraints. Schools who expressed an active interest in the study were invited to be included in the dissemination of findings, enabling them to reflect on pupil wellbeing within their own educational setting.

Participant recruitment throughout was heavily impacted by school closures and the restrictions imposed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Since the study occurred during the pandemic, consideration was given to potential online interview arrangements. Ethical approval was obtained from the University of Nottingham's Ethics Committee, for both face-to-face and online interviews (see section 3.8).

I created a video where I introduced and explained the research and outlined what involvement in the research would comprise which was shared with Year 11 pupils, prior to the dissemination of participant and parent/carer information sheets and the consent form (see Appendix 8 and 9). Completed consent forms were forwarded to me by the school, and a suitable date and time identified with the school's SENCo for SSIs to be undertaken.

3.6.3 Participant characteristics and sample size

Seven participants, attending one secondary school, were recruited to the final sample. TA is suitable for small sample sizes (Joffe & Yardley, 2004), with 6-10 participants being appropriate for interviews (Fugard & Potts, 2015).

All participants attending the same school impacted the generalisability of findings; however, given both participant and school characteristics are detailed, it is hoped direct comparisons can be drawn to other educational contexts, with a view to augmenting

understanding and awareness of pupil wellbeing in education. The implications of all participants being located in one secondary school within the study are further considered in section 5.8.1. It may have been possible to adopt a case study approach, however the study has been conceived of as a fully exploratory, qualitative investigation of pupil perceptions and experiences, and the individuality of these experiences, which is the focus of this study.

To ensure the anonymity of participants, numerical identifiers have been used. Key information pertaining to each participant is not detailed, in order to protect individual participants from the risk of identification, and to ensure privacy. The characteristics of the sample are noted in Table 7, described as a group in order to minimise risk of identification.

Table 7

Sample characteristics.

Participant Characteristics	
Gender	Two males, four females and a young person who identifies as non-binary took part in the study.
Ethnicity	Six of the young people were White British and one from an Ethnic Minority.
Free School Meals	One young person was eligible for Free School Meals.
Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)	No young people in the study were identified as having SEND.

3.6.4 School characteristics

The school that participants attend is part of a multi-academy trust, a medium-sized school[1], with approximately 19% of pupils being eligible for Free School Meals. The school's vision and ethos are focussed on the achievement of pupils, ensuring all pupils receive a good

[1] Pupil numbers on roll are not disclosed, in order to ensure anonymity.

education and go on to achieve their future aspirations. Information externally available pertaining to the mental health and wellbeing of pupils and staff acknowledges the relationship between pupil and staff wellbeing and the achievement of pupils. A clear and detailed behaviour system is noted within the school's behaviour policy, which embeds a progressive four-phase classroom consequence system, noting the implications for staff, pupils and parents/carers within this. The role of educational staff, pupils and parents/carers is also detailed within the school's anti-bullying policy, which notes the importance of fostering an environment beneficial to learning, enabling pupils to reach their academic potential. It is identified within the school's anti-bullying policy that a zero-tolerance approach is adopted.

3.7 Procedure

3.7.1 Semi-structured interviews

SSIs include the interviewer devising and drawing upon an interview guide, which comprises a list of questions and topics to be explored flexibly during the course of the interview. Whilst this guide is drawn upon, opportunities to explore other appropriate trajectories, within the scope of the interview, may arise through conversation with the interviewee (Cohen & Crabtree, 2006). SSIs are a flexible and interactive approach to gathering qualitative data (Adams, 2015), enabling adjustments to be made in the order of questions asked and in eliciting further information through the use of probing questions (Robson & McCartan, 2016). Within qualitative research, open communication (Bartkowiak, 2012) and interpersonal relations are fundamental in gathering rich and meaningful data within interviews (Guillemin & Heggen, 2009). SSIs provide the opportunity to produce rich data and an individual's use of language has been recognised as an important factor in developing an insight into perceptions and values (Newton, 2010).

Adams (2015) recognises the advantages of SSIs in exploring the thoughts of individuals and in asking open-ended questions surrounding topics, which participants may not be as open about when part of a focus group. The individual views of participants were sought;

therefore, the use of focus groups was dismissed. It is acknowledged that within focus groups some individuals may dominate the group, with others not contributing as much, or with less authenticity (Sim & Waterfield, 2019).

It is noted that interview effectiveness is largely influenced by the skills of the interviewer, such as the ability to listen attentively (Clough & Nutbrown, 2012) and appropriately question the interviewee (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). Where the depth of meaning is important and insight and understanding is hoped to be gained from individuals, the appropriateness of face-to-face interviews is recognised (Gillman, 2000).

Whilst ethical approval was granted for both face-to-face and online interviews, staff within the secondary school in which participants were interviewed felt that face-to-face interviews were more appropriate and feasible, providing COVID-19 risk assessments were adhered to. Had interviews been completed online, issues may have arisen in relation to internet connectivity and video/audio quality (Deakin & Wakefield, 2013). Misinterpretations may have subsequently occurred, and key information may have been omitted; restrictions may also have arisen by not being able to observe participant body language (Cater, 2011). O'Connor et al. (2008) acknowledge the potential difficulties surrounding the building of rapport and the associated ethical issues pertaining to online interviews. It was felt the use of online interviews could have posed a barrier to providing direct and immediate support to participants relating to their emotional needs, and effectively identifying and responding to non-verbal cues. Conducting interviews within the participants' educational setting also enabled immediate contact with a designated member of staff, should any issues arise.

Adams (2015) recognises the casual and conversational approach required during SSIs, which was adopted with each participant. Communication is likely to be more open and accounts more detailed where a level of trust and understanding has been established, eliciting data which is rich and meaningful (Zakaria & Musta'amal, 2014).

3.7.2 Pilot and development of interview schedule

I developed a SSI schedule (Appendix 10) comprising broad and open-ended questions, with further prompting questions also presented to support the gathering of rich and meaningful data. Development of the SSI schedule was aided by the completion of a pilot study in December 2020, with one participant. Formative pilot testing is important within qualitative studies in enabling the review and development of frameworks and questions, whilst providing an opportunity for the skills of the interviewer to be reflected upon (Robson & McCartan, 2016).

Piloting of the interview schedule was completed with a Year 11 pupil aged 15 years. Upon reflection of the use of interview schedule, some considerations were made to inform both its development and use:

- The flexible nature of the interview schedule was emphasised, in relation to the order of the questions asked and the need to omit certain questions where they had already been answered within the information shared. The use of the interview schedule in this way was supportive to both the fluency and conversational nature of the interview.
- Ensuring questions were clear and not repetitive. Careful consideration was given to the revision and rewording of questions, as well as their contribution within the interview schedule.

3.7.3 Completion of semi-structured interviews

SSIs were completed individually with participants, in a private and quiet room within their school, whilst adhering to the school's and EPS's COVID-19 risk assessments. Interviews were completed individually and were audio recorded, using a laptop computer and an audio recording device. Recordings were anonymised and stored securely. Robson and McCartan (2016) state that interviews which are less than 30 minutes are unlikely to be valuable and those which exceed an hour may place increasing demands on participants, which may influence their willingness to participate. Adams (2015) states that an

appropriate maximum length for SSIs is an hour. Interviews for the present study lasted between 30-55 minutes. Interviews were completed in December 2020 and March 2021.

3.7.4 Transcription of semi-structured interviews

Each SSI was audio-recorded and then transcribed. Audio-recording interviews enables the researcher to focus on the content of the interview and enables verbatim transcriptions to be produced (Jamshed, 2014). Interviews were read aloud and automatically transcribed using the dictate function of Microsoft Word. I listened to each interview several times to ensure I was fully immersed in the data, whilst ensuring all transcriptions were accurate, and any necessary amendments made. Given a focus was placed on what was said as opposed to how it was said, an 'orthographic' style of transcription was drawn upon (Braun & Clarke, 2013). Subtle utterances were included in transcriptions, as well as punctuation to allow for ease of reading.

3.8 Ethical considerations

Careful consideration was given to the British Psychological Society's (BPS) Code of Ethics and Conduct (2009), the BPS Code of Human Research Ethics (2014) and the Health and Care Professions Council's Standards of Conduct Performance and Ethics (2016), as well as the University of Nottingham's Code of Research Conduct and Ethics (University of Nottingham, 2020). Further to this, approval from the University of Nottingham's Ethics Committee was obtained in October 2020 (Appendix 11). In response to the UK Government's mandated school closures in January 2021, an application was submitted to the chair of the University of Nottingham's Ethics Committee, requesting minor amendments to the existing ethical approval, enabling SSIs to be conducted online. This approval was subsequently granted; however, following a discussion with the prospective school, face-to-face interviews were completed, as originally proposed. The importance of valid consent, confidentiality, debriefing and the right to withdraw are considered.

3.8.1 Valid consent

Valid and voluntary consent was obtained in writing from parents/carers and both verbally and in writing from participants, prior to participation. As noted above, I created a video introducing myself and explaining the research and what involvement would comprise which was shared with Year 11 pupils, prior to the dissemination of information sheets (Appendix 8 and 9) and the consent form (Appendix 12). An information sheet was shared with potential participants and parents/carers prior to consent being obtained, which included information about the purpose and aims of the research, as well as what involvement in the research would comprise (Appendix 8 and 9). Both participants and parents/carers were given the option to contact me with any questions or queries throughout the course of the research. Information surrounding confidentiality, data protection and the right to withdraw was communicated. Prior to engagement in SSIs, I further briefed participants about the purpose and nature of the research to ensure they had a clear understanding of the process (Appendix 10). Throughout the study, I ensured participants were fully informed about the purpose and nature of the research.

3.8.2 Confidentiality

All participants were informed of their right to confidentiality and anonymity. This was communicated verbally, firstly through the aforementioned video, and again individually, prior to and following each SSI, as part of the introduction and debrief (Appendix 13). Participants' right to confidentiality and anonymity was also communicated through participant information sheets and debrief forms (see Appendix 8 and 13).

Transcripts were anonymised, with numerical identifiers used and the name of the educational setting remaining undisclosed. All data was stored securely in a password encrypted folder, in line with the Data Protection Act (2018). Participants were made aware that if they alluded to potential danger or harm to either themselves or another individual, an exception would be applied to the confidentiality rule. Here, information would be shared with the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead and LA safeguarding procedures would be followed. To further protect the identity of participants, full interview

transcriptions have not been included in this thesis, but excerpts only (Appendix 16). All interviews were undertaken in a private room, within the young person's educational setting.

3.8.3 Debriefing

Following each interview, all participants were verbally debriefed and a debrief form was provided, which included information surrounding the purpose of the research, participant involvement and how data will be used (Appendix 13). A list of organisations who provide mental health and wellbeing support to young people was shared with participants. Further, a member of staff within school was identified to provide any additional support to participants, following their involvement in the study. Participants were encouraged to share any questions or reflections and were given the opportunity to contact me following their involvement, however no participants made contact.

3.8.4 Right to withdraw

All participants were informed of their right to withdraw from the study without explanation: this was communicated in participant information sheets and consent forms (Appendix 8 and 12), as well as verbally, prior to and following involvement. A date was shared with participants, both verbally and on the debrief form, whereby data would be processed, and should participants wish to withdraw from the study, it would need to be prior to the date specified. Participants were reminded that should they wish to withdraw, they would not be expected to provide a reason, and no negative consequences would be incurred, with all of their data being destroyed.

3.8.5 Minimising harm

Given data was to be gathered through face-to-face interviews, it was recognised participants may experience some anxiety, therefore steps were taken to build rapport with each participant prior to their interview, through engaging in free-flow conversation, not focussed on the research. Participants were interviewed in a quiet room, situated within

their school. Should a participant have appeared distressed at any point, their interview would have been terminated. Whilst two participants did experience some difficulty when sharing their personal perceptions of what contributes to wellbeing in education, as influenced by their own experiences, the option to terminate the SSI at any point was emphasised. Further to this, participant wellbeing was carefully monitored throughout the course of the interview. Both participants chose to continue with the interview, given it was a topic important to them.

As noted within section 3.7.1, had interviews been completed online, difficulties in identifying non-verbal cues and body language may have occurred, and key information may have been missed due to technological issues (Deakin & Wakefield, 2013). This may have subsequently constituted a barrier to the identification of the needs of each participant.

Following interviews, participants were given the option to contact me to review their interview. Prior to each interview, a familiar member of staff was identified to provide support to each participant should it be required. Organisations providing support to young people in relation to mental health and wellbeing were shared with participants in the debrief form. My contact details were also shared with participants on the participant information sheet, consent and debrief form. Participants were encouraged to contact me at any given point with any questions or concerns.

3.9 Validity and trustworthiness of qualitative research

3.9.1 Validity of qualitative research

To support the evaluation of qualitative research validity, Yardley (2015) outlines four broad principles.

3.9.1.1 Sensitivity to context

Yardley (2015) asserts that a good quality study demonstrates sensitivity to context, and qualitative researchers should be mindful of existing literature surrounding their research

area and chosen methodology. This study commenced with an extensive review of the literature, leading to the development of a distinct research focus. Consideration was also given to sociocultural influences for this topic, through the identification and reading of policies within the UK, relating to pupil wellbeing in education (see Chapter 2).

Sensitivity to context was demonstrated by considering the setting in which the SSIs took place and the potential influence this may have had on participants' discourse. SSIs were undertaken in a setting with which participants were familiar, within a private room in their school, with a focus placed on the building of rapport.

Throughout the research process, researcher reflexivity was maintained, with consideration afforded to my own values and beliefs and the impact these may have had on interpretation. An inductive analytic process was adopted to analyse data, with the analysis being guided by the accounts of participants.

3.9.1.2 Commitment and rigour

'Commitment' includes the demonstration of prolonged engagement with a research topic, and 'rigour' the completeness of data collection and analysis (Yardley, 2015). Commitment and rigour were demonstrated through carefully following the processes of TA, as detailed by Braun and Clarke (2006; 2012). Consideration was also given to Braun and Clarke's (2006) devised checklist to evaluate the analysis process, ensuring interpretations and the development of themes were thorough and an accurate reflection of participant responses (Appendix 6). Rigour was further enhanced through the reading and re-reading of transcripts and access to regular research supervision to explore and discuss interpretations of the data.

3.9.1.3 Transparency and coherence

Yardley (2015) states the need for transparency at each stage of the research process and a clear, comprehensible account of the overall study. Within the current study transparency has been maintained through the reporting of recruitment procedures, participant

characteristics and the use of explicit data collection and analysis procedures. Excerpts from participant transcripts are included to support interpretations and to illustrate developed themes. The steps adhered to when undertaking the TA are detailed in section 3.10. Reflexivity was demonstrated throughout the research process through the use of a reflexive journal (see section 3.9.3) and an audit trail was also maintained.

3.9.1.4 Impact and importance

Yardley (2015) asserts that research can have a theoretical, practical and socio-cultural impact, which should enrich the research base. The current study aims to gain a greater understanding of the perspectives of young people, in terms of what contributes to positive wellbeing within education, with the aim of highlighting ways in which educational settings and professionals can further support the wellbeing of young people. Given the identification of low levels of wellbeing (DfE, 2019a) and of increased mental health difficulties amongst young people (Vizard et al., 2020), the increasing focus on the wellbeing of young people in government policy, initiatives and guidance (DoH & DfE, 2017; DfE & DfH, 2015; Dfe 2019b; *Children and Families Act*, 2014) highlights the importance of directly gaining the views of young people, which are currently underrepresented. Study dissemination, including to identified stakeholders within the research, supports its practical utility and value.

3.9.2 Ensuring trustworthiness in qualitative research

Mirroring the notions of reliability and validity in positivist research, to establish trustworthiness in qualitative research, Lincoln and Guba (1985) introduced criteria spanning four dimensions: confirmability, dependability, credibility and transferability, already noted in section 2.12.10. For qualitative research to be deemed trustworthy, it is imperative that researchers analyse data in a “precise, consistent, and exhaustive manner”, and that the process is explicitly demonstrated, enabling its credibility to be determined (Nowell et al, 2017, p. 1). Trustworthy and insightful findings can be produced through the completion of a rigorous TA, which can provide a rich and detailed account of data (Braun &

Clarke, 2006). Steps taken to establish trustworthiness at each phase of the TA within the present study are outlined in Appendix 14.

3.9.2.1 Confirmability

Confirmability is the extent to which research findings can be confirmed by other researchers and that the data represents participant responses as opposed to potential biases and viewpoints held by the researcher. Findings and interpretations should be clearly derived from the data (Tobin & Begley, 2004). To increase confirmability, the research process has been explicitly outlined, with the inclusion of rich descriptions and quotations from participants to illustrate developed themes within the data (Cope, 2014), outlining how interpretations and conclusions have been drawn (Tobin & Begley, 2004), with an account of researcher reflexivity (Creswell & Miller, 2000). Guba and Lincoln (1989) assert that when credibility, transferability and dependability are achieved, confirmability can be established.

3.9.2.2 Dependability

Dependability concerns the constancy of the data across similar conditions (Tobin & Begley, 2004) and is the criterion assessing reliability (Hammarberg et al., 2016). Throughout the research process, regular supervision has been sought in relation to key decision points, with regular opportunities for reflection. To increase the dependability of the study, key information pertaining to the research process and decisions made are documented, with participant and setting information included. The keeping of an audit trail is important to dependability in ensuring transparency in the process (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Korstjens & Moser, 2018).

3.9.2.3 Credibility

Credibility is focussed on truth-value, the equivalent of internal validity within quantitative research (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). It is focussed on the truth of the data and is concerned with the researcher's interpretation and presentation of data. To enhance research

credibility, I maintained a comprehensive research journal throughout the course of the research to promote reflection on factors which may have influenced the research process, including reflexivity (Creswell & Miller, 2000). A detailed description of the data analysis process is provided, with verbatim quotations to support and illustrate interpretations drawn (Sandelowski, 1986).

I also maintained an audit trail to further increase research credibility (Ryan-Nicholls & Will, 2009), by providing evidence in relation to decisions made throughout the research process. This includes records of interview transcriptions, notes relating to the data analysis and process and the continued use of a reflexive journal. Whilst steps can be taken to illustrate coding reliability, within reflexive TA "meaning and knowledge are understood as situated and contextual", with the subjectivity of the researcher considered important in the production and shaping of knowledge, with researcher subjectivity being drawn upon, rather than viewed as a threat to credibility which must be mitigated (Braun & Clarke, 2020, p. 7).

3.9.2.4 Transferability

Transferability concerns the application/generalisability of findings to other settings or groups (Houghton et al., 2013). To enhance the transferability of the study, details pertaining to each participant are provided, whilst ensuring participant anonymity. Information related to the research context is also provided, in order for the transferability of findings to be further considered (Cope, 2014). Detailed procedural description has been provided, with decisions made being explicit and transparent throughout the research process (Hammarberg et al., 2016).

3.9.3 Reflexivity

Reflexivity is an important aspect of qualitative research (Willig, 2013), whereby the researcher is aware of their values, background and prior experiences in relation to a phenomenon and considers the influence of these on the research process (Cope, 2014). Throughout the research process, a comprehensive reflexive journal was maintained, to

capture reflections and thoughts relating to the research, including decisions made. Excerpts of this are included in Appendix 15. I considered personal reflexivity (how the values, experiences, beliefs and interests of the researcher influence the research and the influence of the research on the researcher) and epistemological reflexivity (how the research process is impacted by assumptions of the nature and orientation of the world and beliefs and understanding of knowledge) (Willig, 2013).

3.10 Data analysis process

TA is both an iterative and reflective process, requiring the researcher to move back and forth between phases (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Braun and Clarke (2006; 2021) outline six phases of TA, and these and their implementation in this study are outlined below (Table 8).

Table 8

Braun and Clarke's (2006) six phases of TA and the process used within the study.

Phase	Processes used in this study
1. Familiarisation with the data	• Some initial thoughts were documented within a reflexive journal, following SSIs. Initial familiarisation with the data was experiential during the completion of each interview. • Prior to the transcribing of interviews, interview audio-recordings were listened to at least twice, with initial noting of code ideas. • Interviews were transcribed verbatim. • Audio-recordings were listened to again, alongside the reading and re-reading of transcripts in an active way (Braun & Clarke, 2006), both to check for accuracy and to further note initial code ideas. • Interview transcriptions were then transferred to a table, enabling line numbers to be inserted for each data item and line-by-line inspection of the transcript. • Coding ideas/notes were reviewed.

2. Coding	• Tables comprised three columns, line numbers, raw data, and initial codes. • Initial codes were generated in a systematic, data-driven way (Braun & Clarke, 2006), whilst drawing on notes completed within Stage 1, which informed initial code development. • Coding was completed manually, with as many potential themes as possible coded (Braun & Clarke, 2006). • In some instances, multiple codes were given to a single data extract.
3. Generating initial themes	• Following the generation of initial codes across the data set, codes were clustered for themes to be generated (Braun & Clarke, 2006). • Each initial code was recorded on post-it notes and grouped into potential subordinate themes, with all coded data extracts being collated within these themes. • Consideration was given to the relationship between codes, themes and different levels of themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). • Subordinate themes were combined to generate overarching themes, using the process detailed above to generate the subordinate themes. • Draft names were given to overarching themes, most suited to the combined subordinate themes. • Themes were discussed during supervision, throughout the analytical process, to ensure they accurately reflected participant responses.
4. Reviewing and developing themes	• Overarching and subordinate themes were reviewed and refined, with collated data extractions also reviewed to ensure sufficient evidence to validate each theme. • Upon reviewing themes, some were merged and draft names for overarching and subordinate themes reflected upon.

5. Refining, defining and naming themes	• Final theme names were generated based on the reviewing of draft names of subordinate and overarching themes. • Thematic maps were generated based on overarching and subordinate themes, supporting the process of theme defining and naming.
6. Writing-up	• Final themes are outlined and discussed, with data excerpts drawn upon (See Chapter 4).

3.11 Summary

This chapter has outlined the methodology chosen for the current study, with a rationale for the use of TA and consideration given to its suitability in addressing the aims of the research, compared to other approaches. The study was informed by the social constructionist paradigm and data was gathered through the use of SSIs. The findings of the research are presented in the following chapter.

Chapter 4: Findings

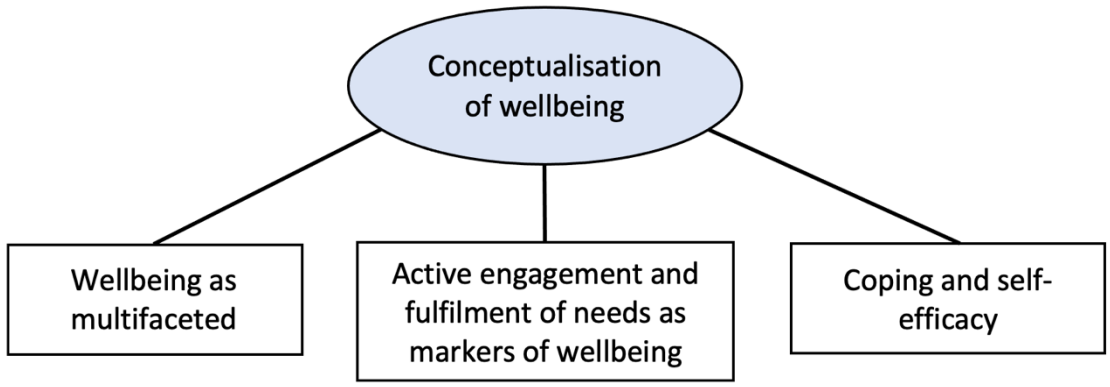
This chapter provides an account of the TA. Six overarching themes are presented, supported by subordinate themes in the form of narrative descriptions. Extracts from participant interview transcripts are included to illustrate the themes outlined.

4.1 Theme: Conceptualisation of wellbeing

This theme represents young people's understandings and perceptions of pupil wellbeing and how this may present within education. It includes the notion that wellbeing is multifaceted, comprising positive and negative emotions, and can impact on observable behaviours of pupils within education, including their active engagement in school life. This theme also addresses the relationship between wellbeing and mental health, as perceived by young people. Feeling able to cope with the varying demands of school life was also a component of pupil wellbeing within education.

Figure 3

Thematic map for theme 'Conceptualisation of wellbeing'.



4.1.1 Subtheme: Wellbeing as multifaceted

All participants described wellbeing in terms of feelings, encompassing both positive and negative emotions. Positive wellbeing was associated with feelings such as 'happiness',

'confidence' and 'being calm' and poor wellbeing associated with feelings such as 'sadness', 'anxiety' and 'stress'. Wellbeing was described by young people as being variable over time, whereby an individual can experience positive and poor wellbeing.

> *Interviewer: What kind of feelings do you associate with wellbeing?*
> *Participant 3: It can be a range, really; you've got your happiness, but there's always negative wellbeing, which is always sadness and stuff like that, but it's always best to talk about wellbeing and keeping yourself happy and that (Participant 3: 3.5; 3.6).*

Communication was closely associated with wellbeing by pupils: the importance of interacting and engaging with others and in communicating feelings and needs was highlighted in their talk. The relationship between individuals' thoughts, feelings and behaviours was identified, with positive wellbeing associated with both thinking and behaving in more positive ways, such as interacting with others and in engaging in self-care. Being empathetic towards others and their needs and actively caring for them was also linked with positive emotions and behaviours, contributing to levels of wellbeing.

> *It's all about being happy, and making sure you're safe and, you know, you don't think any negative thoughts and just taking care of yourself and others (Participant 4: 4.2).*

Feelings of emotional and physical security manifested in young people's conceptualisations. The importance of the fulfilment of basic needs was a component of pupils' active engagement and interaction in school life, explored further within the successive subtheme.

The notion that mental health and wellbeing are interrelated was raised by young people, with wellbeing comprising different dimensions; namely, physical, emotional, psychological, social and mental. The term 'health' was also used, with positive wellbeing perceived as a state of health and wellness and poor wellbeing as a state of ill-health. Rather than wellbeing constituting a single component of an individual's ability to function, young

people conceptualised wellbeing as an umbrella term: influential to individual functioning more broadly, and on different levels, given its multidimensionality.

> *It's like your... emotional and mental part of you. So aside from physical. Like the whole mental health. There's like... positive and negative sides of wellbeing (Participant 6: 6.2).*

> *It's all about, like, your physical, emotional, mental wellbeing and how they all work together to make sure that you stay healthy (Participant 5: 5.2).*

4.1.2 Subtheme: Active engagement and fulfilment of needs as markers of wellbeing

Engaging in school life was identified by all participants as an indicator of pupil wellbeing, with certain observable behaviours on the part of young people being a helpful marker of an individual's level of wellbeing. Positive wellbeing, for example, was associated with communicating with others, including the active seeking of support, and fulfilling the expectations of school and educational staff: being focussed and engaged in lessons, and managing academic workload. Responsibility and autonomy for learning were also perceived as indicators of pupil wellbeing. In contrast, negative wellbeing was associated with presenting as 'withdrawn' and not actively engaging in different aspects of school life. Participants 5 and 2 described the following as being an indicator of positive pupil wellbeing within school:

> *Getting homework done on time. Paying attention in lessons, not zoning out […] just getting on with it and not having to be told constantly to get on with it. Or, like, being able to ask for help when you're struggling with a bit of work (Participant 5: 5.19).*

> *In lessons contributing things like that. So, like, they'll put their hands up, they'll answer questions, they'll try more in a way rather than if someone had negative wellbeing, they might just not really care. Just sit back a bit, things like that (Participant 2: 2.10).*

Communication and interaction with others were identified as key features of positive pupil wellbeing, both within and outside of the classroom environment, contributing to feelings of social belonging and connectedness. As well as communicating and interacting with adults, interactions with peers were identified as a core component of pupil wellbeing (see theme 4.2).

> *Interviewer: Anything else that we might see?*
> *Participant 6: Erm, like, socialising and stuff within like friendship groups, rather than just in classrooms (Participant: 6.18-6.19)*
> *[…]*
> *Interviewer: And is there anything else that we might see in somebody who has poor wellbeing in school?*
> *Participant 6: Maybe things like... a lower self-esteem or, erm, like the opposite, like, not sort of socialising, like not being talkative (Participant 6: 6.34-6.35).*

A correlation was drawn by Participant 6 between poor wellbeing and lower levels of self-esteem: how young people value and perceive themselves, which was linked to pupil self-efficacy. This is consistent with young people conceptualising wellbeing as being focussed on how individuals think, feel, and subsequently behave (see subtheme 4.1.1). Consequently, aspects of education which contribute positively to wellbeing may also contribute to increased self-esteem and self-efficacy for pupils.

Participant 5 went on to explain that feelings of comfort, happiness and safety in attending school and pupil wellbeing are interrelated and, where these feelings are not present, pupil wellbeing can be impacted.

> *I suppose like, general... feeling happy to come to school in itself, because if you don't feel comfortable and happy and safe in school, that's going to affect you negatively. (Participant 5: 5.17).*

School as a means of fostering feelings of belonging, through friendships and social interactions, as well as promoting feelings of safety for pupils was highlighted, indicating the

importance of schools in considering the basic and social belonging needs of CYP, and the influence of these needs on wellbeing. Feelings of accomplishment were also evident in relation to learning, emphasising the importance of self-fulfilment needs for pupils.

> *I guess they'll have a positive attitude with it all […] towards coming to school, like, erm... like, not going into classrooms and immediately feeling deflated. Like, going in and hoping for... like... hoping that you're gonna be able to learn (Participant 6: 6.23-6.25).*

4.1.3 Subtheme: Coping and self-efficacy

Feeling able to cope, emotionally, physically and socially, with the demands of school life was described by all participants as a component of positive wellbeing for young people in education. Participant 5 also acknowledged the feeling of being able to cope with and manage factors external to school:

> *I view it as people being able to cope. 'Cause it's not something I see very often, people actually being able to, like, properly cope with exam stress, and the general stress of school, and other things at home. So, if they're able to cope, that sort of thing. [...] If they can get their homework in on time, they don't seem to be struggling with too much stuff; they know how to ask for help when they need it... That's kind of how I see that positive wellbeing (Participant 5: 5.10-5.12).*

Self-efficacy, and being able to respond effectively to varying demands, was associated with pupils actively seeking support and was a key component of increased levels of wellbeing. Therefore, in cases where an individual has lower levels of wellbeing, their ability to seek support may be impacted: prompting a negative cycle, whereby lower levels of wellbeing are compounded through a lack of support.

Positive wellbeing was associated with feeling able to access learning and being able to manage school workload, as well as different stressors within school:

I would think probably, like keeping-up with schoolwork and being able to have an understanding of what is being taught and what's going on (Participant 6: 6.17).

In turn, lower levels of wellbeing were associated with negative emotions and difficulty in accessing, and engaging with, learning:

Like being a lot more stressed-out, having worse grades. Not understanding what's going on or finding it more difficult to concentrate (Participant 6: 6.31).

Feelings of having some 'control' over workload management was present in young people's accounts. Participant 3 explained that being able to meet the demands of school workload enables time to engage in activities of personal choosing, while promoting positive feelings of knowing you are in control and progressing with learning. The importance of feeling you have more time and capacity, both mentally and physically, was associated with higher levels of wellbeing, also noted within theme 4.3.

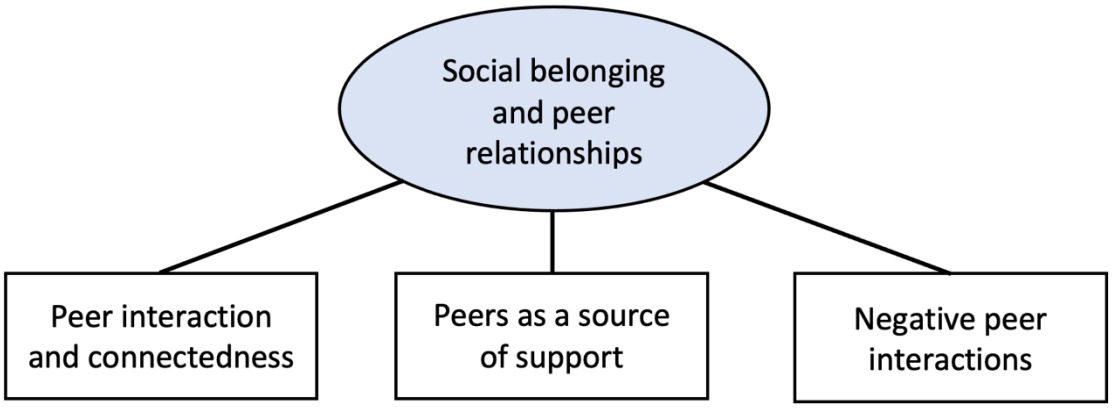
So, like… staying on track, you've always got to keep on top of your work at school. But if you're a kid that stays on top of your work, you're fine. You've got time to do what you want, your schoolwork's all intact, and you do what you want then (Participant 3: 3.12).

4.2 Theme: Social belonging and peer relationships

The theme 'Social belonging and peer relationships' comprises both positive and negative peer interactions. All participants identified relationships with peers to be influential to their wellbeing within education, including opportunities to socialise with peers; peer support; and negative peer relationships.

Figure 4

Thematic map for theme 'Social belonging and peer relationships'.



4.2.1 Subtheme: Peer interaction and connectedness

Opportunities to link with peers, both within and outside of the classroom environment, was identified as important. Young people associated positive emotions and behaviours, such as cooperation, mutual understanding, laughter and confidence, with peer interactions. Opportunities to engage in group work and collaborate with peers aided the development of shared understandings, encouraged individuals to reflect on their own beliefs and values, and fostered feelings of social belonging.

> *Well, every week in PE [Physical Education], they do a wellbeing walk, so you just walk around the field and... you're just with friends, so you just... talk to them […] and you can have a laugh (Participant 7: 7.39; 7.57).*

> *A lot of, like... in classrooms, a lot of, like, group work. So, when we're doing things together, it's like a mutual understanding (Participant 6: 6.57).*

The social aspect of school was highly valued by young people. Participant 7 expressed interactions with and connections to friends, contributed to positive school experiences.

[Friends] just make you happier and just make you want to come to school and do well. Because, like, if they're positive, then it's going to make you want to feel positive and it just gives you motivation (Participant 7: 7.63).

Young people found COVID-19 to have impacted social opportunities in school (see subtheme 4.4.2), highlighting the importance of peer interaction and socialisation for pupils, and the role of schools in providing such opportunities.

So, with friends like at the moment, you can only sit with, like, six people. With COVID restrictions and that. So, we know why that's got to happen, but with a limited amount of people does affect you sometimes, 'cause you've got more people on another table that you might want to speak to. But you don't have that opportunity (Participant 3: 3.143).

4.2.2 Subtheme: Peers as a source of support

Accessing support from peers was identified by all participants as being a key contributor to positive wellbeing within school. Experiences such as not feeling judged, feeling heard and being able to trust and confide in friends were identified as positive features of peer support.

For me it's mostly friendship because I like to talk to specific friends... when I feel down or something or stressed because they just listen… and it will just help a lot. I found out that talking to friends helps me so I went from feeling negative wellbeing to really positive (Participant 1: 1.92).

The importance of friendships, along with the characteristics and qualities of such relationships when accessing support and the reciprocal nature of this, was apparent in participant discourse. Not feeling judged and being trusted as a source of support for peers was also a feature of quality relationships, influential to pupil wellbeing.

Talking to friends who you feel like… they're your true friends… erm… you feel open to them like you can tell them anything. Erm…. and they can tell you anything and know that you won't judge them, and you feel like you know that they won't judge you so you can… you will happily just go and talk to them if there is something wrong (Participant 1: 1.38).

Mostly I talked to my friends because obviously they're the same age and it's more comfortable talking to people your age (Participant 1: 1.173).

Peers were perceived as being more attuned to the difficulties experienced by young people, contributing to feelings of security and ease with sharing personal information. When accessing peer support, the importance of shared information remaining confidential was seen as an important contributory factor in sharing personal information and confiding in friends. The level of trust young people place in their friends appeared to be greater than that placed in adults, seemingly a product of the quality and frequency of social interactions, with adults viewed more as authority figures within school.

My first port of call is calling my friends. Because I trust them with pretty much everything now, I trust them a lot more than I do the adults in the school (Participant 5: 5.67).

This indicates that valuable support is accessed from peers. Peers being a means of more accessible support, away from the classroom environment, can also contribute to the uptake and preference of such support.

Interviewer: If you had a difficulty or wanted to speak to somebody within school, who would you generally go to?
Participant 7: Probably my friends first and see what they say. Then go to my Head of Year.
Interviewer: Yeah. Why do you think you'd speak to your friends first?
Participant 7: To find what their opinions are on it, or if they could help me (Participant 7: 7.191-7.194).

Having a supportive friendship group within school was important to young people. The reassurance of having friends to turn to appeared to reinforce feelings of social belonging and positive wellbeing and mitigate feelings of isolation or not being supported.

> *I feel like your friends are mainly your support network (Participant 2: 2.57).*

4.2.3 Subtheme: Negative interactions with peers

Negative interactions with peers were raised by five participants as contributing to lower levels of pupil wellbeing within school. This included verbal comments from peers and peer interactions more generally. Being valued and accepted by peers was significant for young people: promoting positive feelings, including peer and school connectedness and social belonging, impacting on pupil wellbeing.

> *I think the idea, from pupils to pupils, the way people treat each other in education, you're gonna get that. People don't treat each other nicely sometimes, and I think that can have a massive impact on people's wellbeing (Participant 3: 3.86).*

> *Just probably other people in your class that make little jokes or that just aren't nice (Participant 7: 7.131).*

Negative peer interactions were associated with undesirable emotions and young people discussed the potential impact of these interactions on an individual's school attendance, self-esteem and wellbeing. Feelings of insecurity also manifested in young people's discourse, with the perceived views of others influencing self-perception.

> *I do think it puts them on edge because they feel threatened. And it affects them- it's sad, in a way, because it's devastating to have it done to you (Participant 3: 3.92).*

> *Like more insecure about yourself because, you know, people laughed at you (Participant 4: 4.133).*
> *Rubbish, not want to come to school, just upset (Participant 7: 7.133).*

The active role of school in providing support to pupils surrounding negative peer interactions was emphasised by Participant 5. The profile of bullying in school and the systems in place to tackle bullying prompted negative feelings for Participant 5, who considered more could be done to actively discourage bullying and negative peer interactions. The need to feel heard by adults, in response to negative peer interactions, was raised:

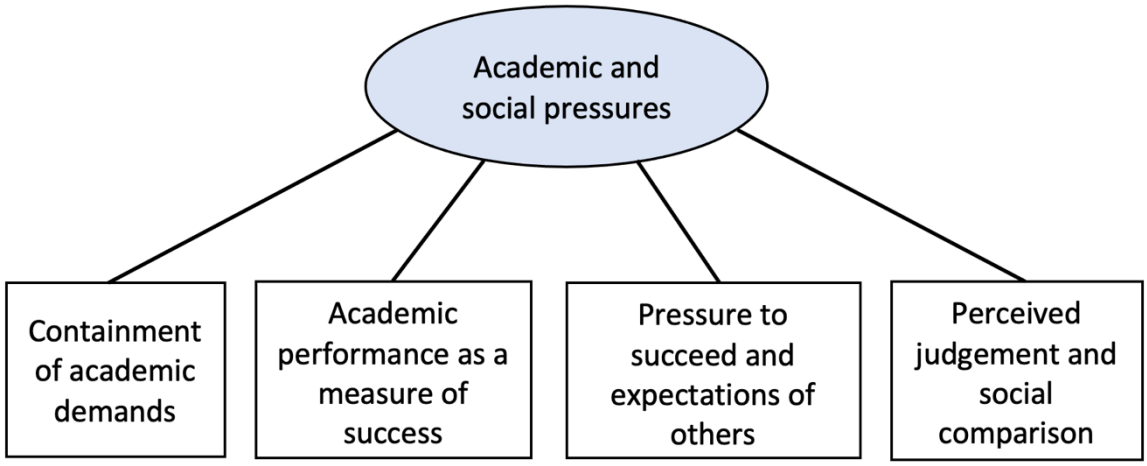
> *Definitely bullying and stuff because it never seems like they do anything about it. There's been incidences already this past week or so around different types of, like, discrimination […] but they don't seem to be doing much about it, and it just does, again, feel like we're invalidated because they're not doing anything about what we feel angry about (Participant 5: 5.43).*

4.3 Theme: Academic and social pressures

This overarching theme relates to academic and social pressures, identified by all participants as impacting on pupil wellbeing. The pressure placed on pupils to succeed, and the perceived expectations of others, as well as feelings of judgement, were found to contribute negatively to wellbeing. Pupils perceived academic demands placed on them, characterised by feelings of stress and pressure, to be a driving force for lower levels of wellbeing.

Figure 5

Thematic map for theme 'Academic and social pressures'.



4.3.1 Subtheme: Containment of academic demands

The pressure and demands surrounding homework and the associated containment of learning expectations and tasks outside of the school environment, and the impact of these on pupil wellbeing, was raised by six participants. Expectations concerning homework and the amount set by teachers created a conflict for pupils, associated with less time for self-care and for accessing other opportunities outside of school, contributing to lower levels of wellbeing. As previously noted, (see subtheme 4.1.3) pupils' capacity to manage and effectively respond to academic demands and associated pressures, including those extending beyond the school environment, can be viewed as a function of positive wellbeing.

> *Because teachers say that we need to do all our lessons, "You need to do all your work, but remember you need to have time to yourself", but I don't. How do you have time to yourself if I have to do, like, so many hours at home to study and do homework? (Participant 1: 1.345).*

The containment of academic demands and a viable balance between learning and self-directed opportunities was important to young people. Participant 2 noted the associated

physical and/or emotional impact that homework demands can pose, combined with the learning demands within school.

> *So, the hours of homework results in all night, every night… I feel like it could get them drained a bit, because you do work when you get home then you come to school, then you do work when you go home. You're never really spending time for yourself (Participant 2: 2.141).*

The expectations surrounding homework were perceived to increase as young people transition through school, underpinned by increased pressures associated with exam revision, teacher expectations and the amount of homework set. The importance of having time to adjust to change, such as an increase in academic expectations and pressures, and being adequately prepared for such changes, was noted. Feeling informed about homework demands and expectations in advance was also valued, with feelings of preparedness being supportive to pupils.

> *In Years 7 and 8, we didn't have very much, because they weren't strict about it. And as long as we got it done, to some extent, it was fine… I think it was either Year 9 or Year 10 that we started a weekly rota for homework […] So, it was that transition. It wasn't too bad in Year 9, but going into Year 10, the second year of my GCSE subjects, there was more… but, because it takes me a good while to do a decent page of coursework, it just... it stressed me out and it wouldn't be as good as it could have been (Participant 5: 5.81).*

4.3.2 Subtheme: Academic performance as a measure of success

Exams were identified by all participants as contributing negatively towards pupil wellbeing within education, with academic performance viewed as a determinant of success, in turn provoking increased feelings of stress and pressure. Such feelings relating to academic demands, including the completion of GCSEs, were found to increase as young people transitioned through school and were key contributors to lower levels of pupil wellbeing in Years 9-11.

I feel like this is specific to like, Year 10, Year 11, all through my year. Year 9 as well, because we had to pick our options early. So, I feel like when it starts to get a bit more, "These are what your grades should've been, this is what you're taking, you need to do well in it". Then I feel that's when it starts to impact (Participant 2: 2.121).

Exams were identified as affecting most young people, characterised by prolonged periods of study, reduced sleep and feelings of pressure. The expectations placed on young people, (as noted within the subtheme 4.3.3) can exacerbate such feelings, with academic attainment viewed as a measure of individual success.

Well, there's exams obviously… especially in my year. Stressing and feeling down because of exams it's a big thing to most people (Participant 1: 1.132).

We just imagine ourselves studying for hours and hours, sleeping less, being under pressure from school, the pressure from home, doing homework and stuff (Participant 4: 4.217).

Participant 4 explained pressure associated with exams and academic achievement can arise both within and outside of the school environment, with young people feeling compelled to achieve and academic attainment subsequently associated with pupil self-efficacy and self-esteem. Such pressure can reside internally: through a desire to succeed, and externally: through the attitudes and expectations of others, which in turn is projected onto young people (see subtheme 4.3.3).

If some people revise, they feel like they should get better, but they have high expectations of themselves… which makes them more stressed because they feel like they need to do lots more things than teachers tell them to do (Participant 1: 1.143).

You feel like it's not- it's not the end of the world, but you feel like a bit down about it. It might make you think, "Oh, what's the point in trying? I've tried really hard, and I've just barely passed" (Participant 2: 2.103).

Not achieving expected grades can reinforce negative feelings. For some young people, performance in exams was seen as an inaccurate reflection of an individual's ability, due to various contributory factors: for example, increased levels of stress and impaired sleep, reinforcing these feelings. Success was viewed not in relation to effort, but in terms of attainment outcomes, impacting on self-perception. School's role in providing attuned support to pupils, in relation to revision techniques and the completion of exams to ensure young people are appropriately equipped, was emphasised.

> *I put a lot of pressure on myself, because I want to do my best, and I know there's nothing wrong with that, but it's just... I go about it the wrong way. And then anything, like, below, like, a 6, I absolutely hate it. I don't think I've, like, I did well in my mocks. My lowest was a 5, in like maths and science, but... getting that... below that 6 in stuff really frustrates me. And... I tried to see it as all motivation, and I know I'm good... it's just... that, all the same, it's still disappointing. Even though I know I can do better, but at the same time, I don't know how to do that (Participant 5: 5.141).*

4.3.3 Subtheme: Pressure to succeed and expectations of self and others

Pressure to succeed and do well in school was identified by all participants. The source of this pressure appeared to be located externally to individuals, rooted within the expectations of others and the demands of education, impacting on pupils' own perceptions of their ability and desire to succeed (as noted already within the subtheme 4.3.2). There was an element of emotional accountability in pupils' discourse, in relation to the fulfilment of their own and others' expectations. An environment of peer competition was also portrayed, reinforcing the notion that academic attainment is a marker of success.

> *They would drill into us that we needed the best grades, and we need to be better than everyone else. There's a lot of pressure... Yeah, it's a lot of stress. You've been told from the beginning that we've got to be the best. If you're less... it just makes you feel worse; you feel like you've let people down (Participant 6: 6.110).*

It's... just getting more stressed and scared. Because they don't ease any of that pressure by saying that you're competing against every other person in Year 11, which is something they remind us of all the time (Participant 5: 5.145).

The expectations of others and self-comparison to peers also impacts on what pupils think they should do and how they should behave. Participant 5 reflected on a personal experience where the expectations and assumed perceptions of others placed an added pressure, impacting on the ability to seek support, and diminishing pupil confidence.

I know myself that I tend to struggle a bit sometimes and I don't feel comfortable enough to ask for help. Because being in top sets... just that label, it makes you feel really, really uncomfortable to ask for help when others seem to be getting it and... you don't feel as safe. You don't feel comfortable and what not, so you're just generally struggling a lot more it does knock your confidence a lot.... and then that you see other kids getting it right (Participant 5: 5.21).

Pressure to succeed was also associated with future aspirations and opportunities for young people, located both within and outside of school. A feeling of responsibility to achieve academically was identified, with attainment levels in GCSEs being a perceived determinant of future opportunities, provoking increased feelings of pressure amongst young people.

Yeah, they actually keep reminding us that it's not just the GCSEs, "We're pressuring you because GCSEs are part of your future, like your career. Every single job you apply for, they ask for your GCSE grades" … It's... it's kind of pressuring because... you're... you're 16 and you need to make a choice for your whole life (Participant 4: 4.167).

External pressure placed on schools, and the associated impact this can have on academic expectations, was perceived by pupils to be filtered down to them via educational staff, rooted within a culture of learning and academic success, as noted by Participant 6:

It's just... grades, grades, grades. And sometimes we do feel like it's just so they can move up on the leader boards... like Oftsed (Participant 6: 6.163).

The importance of educational staff recognising the demands of education on pupils was also identified. Participant 1 emphasised the importance of teachers being aware of the varying demands of the school curriculum, and of teachers seeing pupils as individuals.

Some teachers talk like we only have one lesson when we have like six or seven different subjects so like I'd like teachers to consider that we do have other subjects and that we could be stressing over other subjects and sometimes it'd just be nice if a teacher asked how you were or something (Participant 1: 1.325).

4.3.4 Subtheme: Perceived judgement and social comparison

This theme was evident amongst all participants' responses and relates to the perceived beliefs of others, and the possibility of being judged in different ways, such as in terms of ability, not understanding learning or based on emotional responses to situations. Fear of being judged by others is an identified barrier to young people seeking support. As already noted within the subtheme 4.3.2, performance in exams may not accurately represent an individual's capabilities but can contribute to how abilities are perceived by others. Where an individual's abilities are underestimated, negative feelings on the part of the individual may emerge.

If it's at school, I just hold it back and just wait until I'm on my own. I don't like crying because then there's questions and stuff and then you don't wanna tell anyone, because… all of a sudden, it sounds very silly about why you're crying (Participant 5: 5.71).

There's any way to get judgmental, like... there won't be a way that you won't get judged… sometimes, people always think, like, just because you got a low grade, that means you can't really like... you don't have the ability (Participant 4: 4.159).

Peer comparison was identified by young people as impacting on pupil wellbeing and self-efficacy. Participant 4 spoke about being compared against peers socially, physically and academically, and drew attention to the associated pressure this can place on young people, with the school environment, and interactions embedded within, contributing to an individual's social identity.

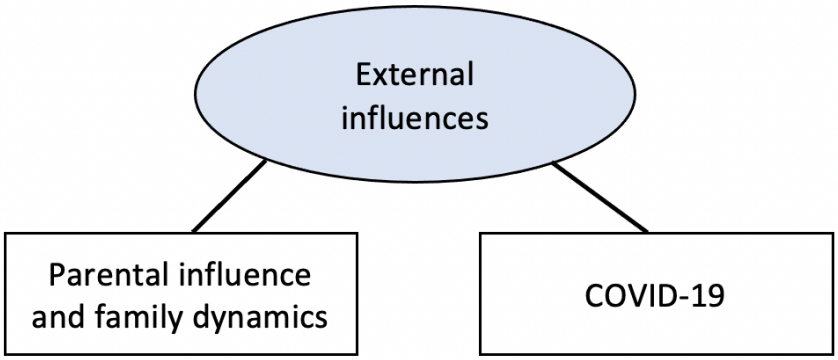
> *Interviewer: What do you think contributes most to negative wellbeing for you in school?*
> *Participant 4: I would say students. It's the competition. Yeah, in every single part it's a competition, like, you would say... if you compare the grades, there's competition. […] in every way there's a competition: if you compare looks, if you compare attitudes, there's competition. There's competition to be the first, to be the centre of attention. So, that competition makes you feel more pressure (Participant 4: 4.183-4.184).*

4.4 Theme: External influences

This overarching theme relates to 'external influences', which includes the influence of parents, in terms of providing support and encouragement, and the influence of personal factors at home on pupil wellbeing in school. The impact of COVID-19 on pupil wellbeing in school, and the associated restrictions imposed on different aspects of school life, were also identified.

Figure 6

Thematic map for theme 'External influences'.



4.4.1 Subtheme: Parental influence and family dynamics

Parental influence was raised by six participants. Home factors, independent from school, were identified by Participant 1 as having a bearing on wellbeing and interactions with others, including peers. Participants also conveyed the role of school in recognising the interplay between home factors and school life and the impact this may have upon pupils.

> *Some people go through things at home what makes them, erm, stressed or have a negative wellbeing at school… like my parents split up when I was in Year 9 which made me completely go from really positive to really negative… all through Year 9 I got really bad, in Year 9, distancing myself off from everybody else (Participant 1: 1.167).*

> *It's not just the stuff in school, like there could be stuff going on at home that you might not want to mention to school... and they just don't seem to consider any of it (Participant 5: 5.163).*

Access to familial support was also found to be impacted by levels of caregiver wellbeing and mental health, as perceived by young people. Empathy towards the needs and emotional capacity of others in turn influenced their own access to support. The need for

educational settings to be aware of factors external to school and the impact this may have on pupil wellbeing, and on different aspects of school life, was raised.

> *[…] when I'm at home I don't like speaking to my mum, because she struggles with her mental health (Participant 5, 5.173).*

Parents who are supportive and encouraging were found to contribute to increased levels of pupil wellbeing, with young people feeling supported by family members who believe in their abilities and have confidence in them to achieve.

> *Participant 7: Well, if you've got a supportive family, they want you to do well, and they're gonna encourage you to revise more, they'll want you to do well at school and... they'll just... they want to help you out.*
> *Interviewer: And how does that make you make you feel?*
> *Participant 7: Happy that you've got the support there, and you've got people to help you (Participant 7: 7.69-7.71).*

> *That's what's been said to me throughout my whole school life by my parents. The idea that you need to do well in this, this will help you in the future and that idea of future goals is what's going to get you there, really (Participant 3: 3.157).*

4.4.2 Subtheme: COVID-19

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on school life was identified by six participants as influential to pupil wellbeing: imposed restrictions were associated with negative emotions and viewed as hindering opportunities to interact with others.

> *Well, because of COVID, we all had to be restricted to a certain area… So, all you see is the same things… and the same people… which makes you feel… down or upset (Participant 1: 1.211).*

Young people valued being able to move freely around school and opportunities to access different areas of provision, with variation in the learning environment. Opportunities to move, as part of transitions between lessons within school, were also valued.

> *It's just nice to get out of class, 'cause we're in the same classroom all day. So, just being able to have a walk is just nice (Participant 7: 7.125).*

Being able to physically attend school and interact with friends was felt to be supportive to pupil wellbeing. Teachers placing trust in pupils to adhere to procedures and systems in place: thereby facilitating peer interaction, was noted by Participant 2.

> *Teachers move about, they're giving you like the responsibility to do the one-way system, masks, wash your hands, things like that. So, you can still talk to your mates. (Participant 2: 2.94).*

The level of uncertainty for pupils with regard to their GCSEs was also identified as impacting on pupil wellbeing. Pupils valued being informed of decisions which directly impact them and for key information to be appropriately disseminated, once available. This was associated with positive emotions, including reinforcing feelings of being part of the school community.

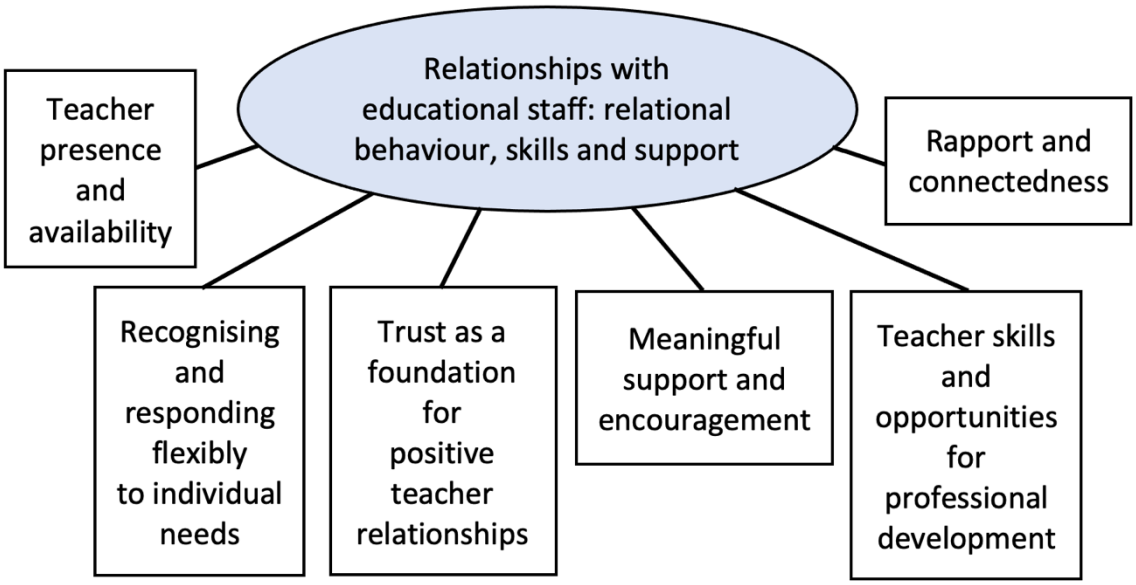
> *Nobody's really got any idea about what's happening with our GCSEs. Teachers are genuinely quite... like, they don't know what's going on either, so they can't tell us otherwise. But when they do know what's going on, they do communicate it to us. But there's uncertainty, because we don't know what to expect […] like, with one of my marks, I don't know, 'cause we're doing a lot of work on it now, but in a week's time, it might all just be dropped, and then it might all be for nothing (Participant 6: 6.189; 6.191).*

4.5 Theme: Relationships with educational staff: relational behaviour, skills and support

This theme is focussed on relationships with educational staff, identified by all participants as impacting on their wellbeing within school. The importance of teacher presence and availability for pupils accessing support was noted: being able to trust teachers and establish rapport were features of positive teacher-pupil relationships. The role of teachers in recognising and responding flexibly to individual needs and providing support and encouragement to pupils was identified, in addition to the skills of teachers.

Figure 7

Thematic map for theme 'Relationships with educational staff: relational behaviour, skills and support'.



4.5.1 Subtheme: Teacher presence and availability

The presence and availability of teachers was identified by five participants as a contributor to pupil wellbeing. The demands and pressures placed on teachers and the impact of these on their physical presence and emotional availability were acknowledged by young people. Participants expressed that the limited presence and availability of teachers was a barrier to accessing support: this, coupled with a lack of flexibility in the structure of the school day, has made accessing support from teachers outside of lessons difficult.

The only adult I really approach in school is just, like, [name] for our year group. But otherwise, I won't talk to teachers at school; they've got enough on themselves and I know they care... but, at the same time, it does feel really, really silly trying talk to them. Especially because they're running about between lessons or in like previous years, it's like... you're all leaving lessons really quickly; there's no time to sit and talk to anyone about anything. It's just, there's no breaks, apart from like breaktime and lunchtime, to like properly sit and talk to someone about anything (Participant 5: 5.75).

The perceived accessibility and consistency of support were valued. All participants were able to identify who they would turn to for support within school, however acknowledged that this was influenced by familiarity and relationship quality. Investing time was important in developing positive and trusting relationships with adults: enhancing feelings of familiarity, and augmenting pupil confidence in accessing support.

You can always go to some teachers but, really, in Year 7 it was your form tutor that helped you the most. Like, you didn't know where to go, he'd help you; you needed something, they were there for you, and I think the use of form tutors is very effective (Participant 3: 3.52).

The quality and breadth of support that teachers can provide to pupils, and their perceived approachability by young people, may be a factor of their emotional availability and levels of wellbeing: impacting on pupil attitudes and engagement.

I know a lot of people go into class with like a positive attitude and then that's crushed by a teacher being in a bad mood, or just not being supportive.
[…]
A lot of teachers have bad days, and they just can't be bothered (Participant 6: 6.172; 6.224).

4.5.2 Subtheme: Recognising and responding flexibly to individual needs

The majority of participants discussed material that could be seen to emphasise the importance of teachers recognising the individual needs of young people and responding flexibly to them. Young people acknowledged that not everyone learns in the same way and that teachers responding flexibly to needs and differentiating learning impacts not only on the learning and progress of individuals, but also on their emotional needs and outcomes. Where learning is not differentiated and individual needs not acknowledged, pupils can feel an added pressure and can compare themselves against peers, impacting wellbeing (see theme 4.2.1).

> *I think it's important for people to know that... especially with like teaching, that everyone learns differently. It takes a lot longer for some people to understand, because they kind of expect everyone to be at the same level all the time, which just isn't possible. And everyone... like, people feel like they've been left behind or they don't know what's going on (Participant 6: 6.218).*

Pupils valued teachers knowing them at an individual level (see subtheme 4.3.3): young people placed a level of accountability on teachers being proactive in identifying and responding to pupil needs. The importance of opportunities to interact with teachers and for pupils to be able to communicate any academic difficulties was also raised.

> *Yeah, it's all well and good knowing our names. But actually knowing stuff about who the person is, what they like, what they don't like. Do they need more help than others? Do they struggle in lessons? What are they struggling with? What kind of things do they enjoy doing and stuff? Just generally knowing stuff about them, in making them feel safe with them... is generally important (Participant 5: 5.116).*

Pupils also valued teachers' abilities to work flexibly, providing attuned support and promoting the development of positive relationships, augmented by their interpersonal skills: participants viewed such skills as inherent to the role of teachers, in providing support conducive to pupil development.

I think every teacher's supportive to wellbeing. They just know how to connect with different pupils, because different pupils have different ways of working, and they're able to meet the needs of each child (Participant 3: 3.46).

4.5.3 Subtheme: Trust as a foundation for positive teacher relationships

Trust was mentioned by all participants in relation to accessing support from educational staff, a key feature of the development of positive pupil-staff relationships. Pupils being informed that information will be shared with others, and that only pertinent information will be disclosed, was important to young people. If this does not occur, feelings of trust may be diminished.

[…] like, going to somebody and saying that you're worried about something... and then you've got a load of different teachers coming to you and asking you about it. That's not important to share with everyone else […] I feel like I can't trust them […] it's stopped me and a lot of other people from going to them for that help (Participant 6: 6.195; 6.197; 6.199).

Trust was closely associated with confidentiality. Being able to place confidence in adults within school to respond appropriately to situations and difficulties, and adults having the knowledge and skills to effectively signpost young people to support, as required, was valued. Educational staff being aware of the remit of their role, in providing certain levels of support, also arose in young people's discourse (see subthemes 4.5.6 and 4.6.2).

But you don't want every adult knowing, it has to remain between you and someone that you trust in speaking to and trust that they'll hand it on to the right people, and only them people like your parents, or another mental health advisor who could help you with something that a school advisor couldn't (Participant 5: 5.101).

Trust was also associated with positive feelings and behaviours such as feeling happy, engagement in learning, and more open dialogue: impacting on learning and interactions.

More secure teacher relationships were underpinned by feelings of trust and characterised by teachers actively responding to pupil needs.

> *Knowing that you can trust teachers and you feel happy with teachers, you feel like you can learn more from them and you feel like you can talk openly, and you feel more happy cause you know that you feel like you can trust them (Participant 1: 1.36).*

4.5.4 Subtheme: Meaningful support and encouragement

Teacher support and encouragement was valued by all participants. Participants identified that feeling valued and staff believing in them is important in shaping their own attitudes and approaches to learning and in promoting feelings of school connectedness.

> *I'd say the teachers are a massive part to it, they've always got the confidence, "You can do better with your work", "You can get better grades". I always think that confidence from them gives you the confidence to keep going (Participant 3: 3.40).*

Participants commented on the qualities and relational behaviour of teachers, including their attitudes towards pupils and learning. Where teachers are positive and encouraging, this can be projected onto young people and subsequently internalised, giving them the confidence and encouragement they need, and contributing positively to pupil wellbeing.

The role of teachers in providing support to pupils in relation to learning was also raised in pupils' talk. Teachers allocating time to support individual pupils and being flexible in their approaches to teaching was viewed as important to young people (see section 4.5.2), as well as equipping them with problem-solving skills.

> *Interviewer: What do you think is the most important thing about a teacher being helpful?*
> *Participant 6: Being supportive and like, especially finding different ways to teach you, if you're struggling […] I was really struggling the other day to just read the*

information and then transfer it to my own work. And then my teacher immediately came in helped me figure out a new way to... erm... for me to get the information down. And I did manage to do it... by just breaking it up. But other teachers would've just come to me and said, "Oh, well, just try harder" (Participant 6: 6.76-6.79).

4.5.5 Subtheme: Rapport and connectedness

Participant discourse indicated that rapport is an important aspect of teacher-pupil relationships and is influential to pupils accessing support. Young people associated rapport with positive relationships, impacting on emotions and interactions, such as the initiation of support, and the degree and quality of support provided, harnessing feelings of school connectedness.

Students that have a better connection with the teachers, they can ask them questions, they get more resources from that teacher, and it's more helpful to them (Participant 3: 3.42).

I remember that I could speak to my form tutor, she's gone now, she left the school… I could speak to her and I felt okay speaking to her, 'cause I had a close relationship with my form tutor. Yeah, so... I suppose it depends on who it is, like, if you have... if you're comfortable with them, and they know you as a person (Participant 5: 5.115).

As noted within subtheme 4.5.1, teacher familiarity and consistency in support were associated with positive relationships and pupils accessing support or sharing any difficulties or concerns. The quality of relationships was a key determinant for pupils accessing support. Teachers actively demonstrating they care about individual pupils and taking time to acknowledge and explore how pupils are feeling was explicitly valued by young people. This could be through a simple act of asking how pupils are at a personal level and reciprocating pupil interactions, promoting feelings of emotional validation and school connectedness. These types of interactions were seen as supportive in encouraging pupils to share how they are feeling with teachers.

So, I just feel like teachers should like ask how we are more, like some students say to them how are they and then they ask us. I feel like teachers should ask us how we are… I would feel that that person actually wants to know how I feel. So, I can feel like I can actually open up to them, even if it's just to say, "Oh, I'm okay" or, "I'm not too okay" or, "I'm stressed". It'd still help a lot (Participant 1: 1.341).

Engaging in interactions surrounding personal interests with teachers, unrelated to learning tasks, was also seen by young people as fostering positive relationships and increasing feelings of connectedness. This was linked to pupils, in turn, developing respect for their teachers and wanting to actively engage in their lessons. Finding an appropriate balance between learning and opportunities to interact more informally with their teacher, to build and maintain positive relationships, was noted.

I feel like everyone will have that one teacher or a few teachers they can talk to or just have like a laugh about maybe football, the weekend and things like that, "Oh your team lost" or stuff like that. Like you can have a bit of banter, kind of thing, which I think makes you want to try harder in lessons for them as well. Because if they're giving you their time and you're giving your time, your effort, you know, that kind of thing. You feel like, well, they've listened, they've talked about football, I should probably do the work, not sit around (Participant 2: 2.99).

4.5.6 Subtheme: Teacher skills and opportunities for professional development

This theme was identified through information from all participants. An increasing awareness around the topic of mental health and its significance was viewed as augmenting opportunities for the development of teacher skills and understanding: access to training was considered beneficial in effectively supporting pupil mental health and wellbeing. This, in turn, has been associated with young people placing increased confidence in the skills of teachers surrounding the provision of support.

I think the idea of awareness of mental health is still increasing and I think that is a positive for the teachers. Because I think they're getting trained more often with how

to handle situations like that, and that's better for the students who need that support (Participant 3: 3.147-49).

If there's something that you can't talk about with your parents or friends, yeah, I would say teachers. Like, approaching someone professional (Participant 4: 4.73).

Young people identified the need for all teachers to have access to training opportunities to support pupil mental health and wellbeing. Whilst pupils acknowledged that there are staff members in school who can provide necessary support to pupils, this was not apparent for all staff members, with some perceived gaps in knowledge, leading to inconsistencies and variations in the degree and quality of support: impacting on pupil uptake of such support.

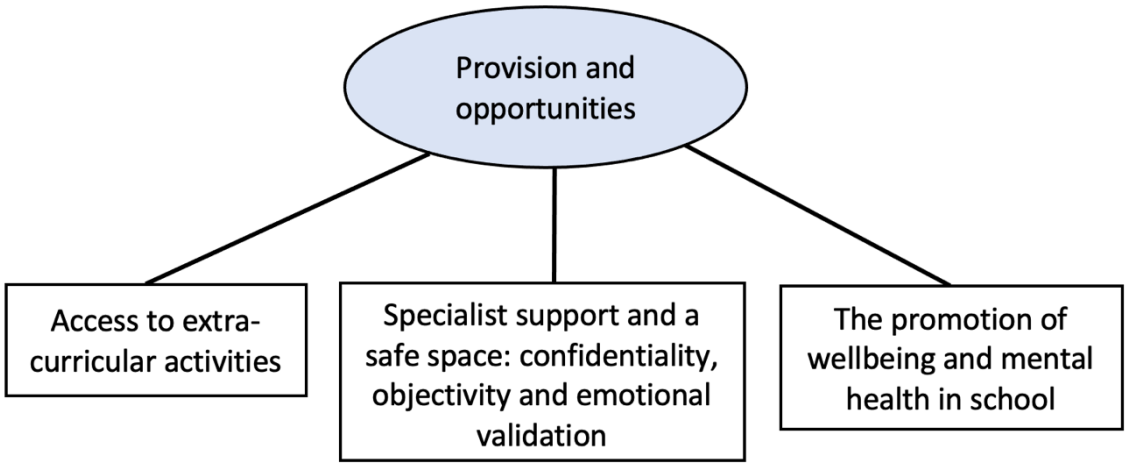
I do think that most staff would benefit from having, like... being more qualified on how to help students and their wellbeing, because there aren't very many who know, like, what's going on, or how to help students.
[…]
So, it's either I just... I go to my friends, or I keep it, like, to myself (Participant 6: 6.226; 6.96).

4.6 Theme: Provision and opportunities

This overarching theme relates to provision and opportunities associated with mental health and wellbeing for pupils within school. Access to school clubs and activities were viewed as contributing towards pupil wellbeing, through providing opportunities to interact with teachers outside of the classroom environment, socialise with friends, pursue areas of interest, and engage in physical activity. The profile and provision surrounding mental health and wellbeing within school was also deemed important. Access to an identified safe space, focussed support from external professionals, and opportunities for young people to develop their understanding of and ways to actively promote and maintain their mental health and wellbeing, were raised.

Figure 8

Thematic map for theme 'Provision and opportunities'.



4.6.1 Subtheme: Access to extra-curricular activities

Opportunities to engage in school clubs were identified as supportive to wellbeing, through providing opportunities to pursue areas of interest, interact with teachers (see theme 4.5), socialise with friends (see subtheme 4.2) and engage in physical activity.

> *I would say engaging in other activities. You know, when you say 'school', the word school doesn't just mean books. So… yeah, I would say, like, engaging in hobbies, like, we've got many activities here, like sports and stuff (Participant 4: 4.118).*

The breadth and accessibility of school clubs was valued, with young people perceiving school not only as a place of learning and academic development, but also as a place of social opportunity, with activities extending beyond the classroom environment. School clubs were viewed as a safe, rewarding environment, where new relationships can be established, and existing relationships developed: harnessing feelings of pupil relatedness and belonging, through shared interests and goals. Participant 3 acknowledged the benefits of attending school clubs on wellbeing, and the impact of COVID-19 on pupils' access to them:

I'd say the idea when school clubs were running, you had that place to go after school for something that you've enjoyed. So, you didn't have to go back home, do your homework, because you had nothing to do. You had something to do at school that you enjoyed. I think that helped a lot (Participant 3: 3.48).

Participant 2 associated attending school clubs with a qualitative difference in relationships with teachers. Both access to school clubs and positive relationships with teachers (see theme 4.5) were felt to be supportive to pupil wellbeing, with access to school clubs being a means of fostering and developing these relationships.

After school [clubs] stuff like that, when it was on. Like playing football, even if it's just after school like playing with your mates for an hour. Playing football, it's fun. I think that's like the biggest factor, kind of thing, because you'd be with your mates, but you'd also have that one teacher and after school, they wouldn't be as strict or things like that, they could… like, you have a bit of fun (Participant 2: 2.38).

Young people felt that opportunities to engage in activities outside the classroom environment were supportive to wellbeing: enabling time away from perceived pressures and demands within school, while providing an opportunity to interact with friends. Just as peer socialisation was valued at a wellbeing level, how this was facilitated by school provision was noted through access to school clubs and other activities.

4.6.2 Subtheme: Specialist support and a safe space: confidentiality, objectivity and emotional validation

Young people appeared to feel reassured by being able to access support from external professionals within school. While the skills of external professionals, relating to mental health and wellbeing, were acknowledged by young people, the confidential nature and objectivity of this support also appeared to be valued. Participant 5 noted that further supportive measures towards pupil wellbeing include opportunities for reassurance and for individuals to feel heard and emotionally validated:

I would like to see, like, a professional mental health provider in school, being able to go and actually be able to speak to someone trained in mental health, who will keep the things you say confidential, unless absolutely necessary. Who can give you the support you need, who can tell you that it's okay to scream and cry if you feel like it… because that's, sometimes, it's how we feel, and telling you, "It's not silly". That's something I need people to say to me sometimes, but no one ever does (Participant 5: 5.97).

Access to external support was felt to be beneficial to both pupils and teachers: listening and engaging with pupils and raising the awareness and profile of mental health, and how this may present within school. Speaking to a skilled professional, external to the school system, and the associated objectivity and confidentiality of this support appeared to promote feelings of ease, thereby facilitating discourse.

If there were more people to come in, who knew what they were talking about, to teach students about mental health or what to look for, I think both students and teachers would benefit from that (Participant 6: 6.234).

The reassurance of having access to an identified safe space, when needed, along with the opportunity to seek support from a trained member of staff, was identified. The attributes of what would constitute a 'safe space' include a quiet, private, and nurturing area, separate from the classroom environment, with access to skilled adults who can offer support around mental health and wellbeing. The benefits of flexibility and early intervention surrounding pupil support were evident in participant talk.

I've said, "Why don't we have a safe space?" A room that kids can go to that's calming, it's got like chairs and soft music. It's just there for you to have a timeout and relax and talk to someone about something, who's either trained in mental health or wellbeing or something, so you can get the help you need when you need it (Participant 5: 5.65).

Participant 6 shared a previous experience of accessing an identified safe space and noted the positive effect this had on wellbeing. A level of autonomy around pupils' self-directed and intrinsically motivated access to support was noted, with young people valuing support that is readily available to them and easily accessible.

> *I felt like I was less worried because if I was in class, and I was having, like, a really hard time, that was a place to go (Participant 6, 6.94).*

4.6.3 Subtheme: The promotion of wellbeing and mental health in school

The active promotion of wellbeing and mental health was identified by all participants as having an influence on pupil wellbeing. Activities supportive to mental health and wellbeing included, being outdoors and engaging in physical exercise, planned time out of the classroom environment with peers, and opportunities to learn more about ways young people can promote and maintain their wellbeing and mental health.

> *So, there'd be, obviously in the 'mental health week', you'd have a full day about that […] you just stop things like normal subjects, and you'd go and spend time doing that. I think that helps some students (Participant 3: 3.61).*

Opportunities for young people to increase their knowledge around identifying and responding to difficulties were important: equipping them with skills and strategies to contribute positively to their own wellbeing and mental health. Young people placed value in school being actively committed to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of pupils: motivated by an intrinsic desire to support their pupils, as opposed to a product of pressures external to the school system and, subsequently, a 'box-ticking' exercise.

> *When I said they remind us about mental health, like mental health and wellbeing once every month, they just do a PowerPoint and show it... like, they just keep reading the PowerPoint. You know? It's not really practical. I would say something more active than showing the PowerPoint would be helpful (Participant 4: 4.11).*

We had like a mental health week, but the only advice they gave us was to talk to people. So… I think it would be important to, like, teach us about the signs and what to look for instead of just helping us by saying there are other people who can deal with it (Participant 6: 6.209).

The need for schools to both recognise the complexity of mental health when providing support to young people, and for a greater level of support to be provided, was raised: enabling young people to develop an increased awareness of their needs and ways of responding to them. A core feature of this support was pupils feeling validated.

We do have assemblies and stuff about mental health, but they make it sound so simple. Like, it's not that big of an issue like, "Hey, go and exercise or go read a book, it's really good for you". And like, yeah, we do understand that, but it's not helpful when you're so far into your habits and the way that you're thinking. They just make it sound too simple for what it actually is. So, it does, again… just make you feel really invalid and scared and anxious (Participant 5: 5.95).

Participant 7 valued the role of adults external to school in promoting mental health and wellbeing: providing information to pupils as part of wider school provision, by sharing their own stories and experiences. The notion that mental health and wellbeing are universal, and that other individuals are faced with difficulties appeared to be supportive to some young people.

Before COVID, they had like these people come in and they used to talk about their mental health and their journey, and I feel like that helped a lot of people because they knew the other people were going through stuff as well (Participant 7: 7.101).

4.7 Individuality in findings

Some aspects of school which were perceived to contribute to young people's wellbeing in education were only present in individual accounts: as such, they did not form overarching

or subthemes. It was, however, felt pertinent to capture and acknowledge individualities within pupil discourse.

The perceived equitability of teachers regarding the use of praise and sanctions was associated with feelings of invalidation and being 'overlooked', linked to lower levels of pupil wellbeing. Consistent positive behaviour was not felt to be acknowledged by educational staff in the same way as positive behaviour exhibited by individuals who do not consistently adhere to school rules and expectations.

Ethnicity and gender identity also featured in individual accounts. Both pupil and teacher sensitivity to the needs of individuals was raised, with the need for an awareness and understanding in education of the potential challenges individuals may face. The importance of attuned support and provision being implemented to promote the wellbeing of all pupils was emphasised.

4.8 Summary

This chapter has presented six overarching themes surrounding what young people perceive to contribute to positive wellbeing within education. Findings illustrate the fundamental role of the education system and school culture in promoting and maintaining the wellbeing of young people. Academic, social and external pressures were linked to levels of pupil wellbeing. The importance of interpersonal relationships and social opportunities for young people in education were also raised, in addition to the awareness and profile of mental health and wellbeing. The subsequent chapter will consider the implications of these findings, alongside existing literature and theory.

Chapter 5: Discussion

This chapter provides an interpretation and exploration of findings in relation to the study's research questions. The exploratory nature of this study aimed to provide an insight into the perceptions of what young people, aged 15-16 years, perceive to contribute to positive wellbeing in education, with a view to highlighting aspects of education which schools and professionals should consider, in order to promote and support wellbeing. Themes are reviewed and discussed in relation to existing literature and theory. Limitations of the study, as well as implications for EPs, schools and educational professionals, are then considered. Opportunities for further research are also identified.

5.1 Conceptualisation of wellbeing

5.1.1 Medical and social models of wellbeing

Young people conceptualised wellbeing as being variable, encompassing both positive and negative feelings; and as being multifaceted, with the term 'wellbeing' comprising different dimensions, namely: physical, emotional, psychological and social. Links were also drawn between wellbeing and mental health. Wellbeing has been conceptualised as how individuals feel and function on a personal and social level (The New Economics Foundation, 2012); this was consistent with young people's understandings, with the relationship between an individual's thoughts, feelings and behaviours acknowledged within young people's discourse.

Whilst the medical model views wellbeing and mental health as being affected by biological or neurological factors, which are within-child (Thompson, 2018), young people in the present study viewed wellbeing as being affected by social and environmental factors. This is consistent with viewing wellbeing through the social model, whereby wellbeing is a fluid, changeable concept, which can be influenced by social factors (Coppock & Dunn, 2010). Here, a more interactionist perspective is adopted which recognises the importance of interactions within a social context (Beresford, 2002), such as the school environment.

Advocates of the social model would assert that mental health policy and practice, founded solely on a medicalised view, is insufficient, therefore there is a need to reframe discourse within education from a more medicalised, within-child model of mental health and wellbeing, towards a social understanding, which recognises the interplay between social interactions and environmental factors.

5.1.2 Ecological systems theory

Ecological Systems Theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979), positioning an individual at the centre of interrelated and interacting systems, with familial relationships and school located in the immediate environment and extending outward to the wider community, contributes to understandings of how an individual grows and develops, and how the interplay between innate characteristics in an individual's environment influences development. The systems within this framework encompass those within an individual's immediate environment (microsystem), the interactions between microsystems, such as parents and a child's educational setting (mesosystem), and social structures which have an indirect influence on the individual (exosystem). Also, the influence of cultural and societal beliefs, values and ideas (macrosystem), and environmental changes and transitions across an individual's life-course (chronosystem). Adopting this holistic view of the systems to which an individual belongs and considering the relations between these, and their associated impact on an individual, is postulated within this framework. Whilst within an educational context, this framework can be utilised in an ecological and contextual analysis of wellbeing (Carter & Andersen, 2019), it is asserted that care should be employed when drawing on a single framework or approach; rather, there should be utilisation of hybrid approaches and "innovative combinations of social and ecological theory" to comprehend "complexity and change" (Armitage et al., 2012, p.12) within the context of education (Carter & Andersen, 2019).

5.1.3 Hedonic and eudaimonic wellbeing and self-determination theory

Young people's conceptualisation of wellbeing spanned the two theoretical perspectives of hedonic (subjective) and eudaimonic (psychological) wellbeing (Deci & Ryan, 2001), with

young people recognising the influence of positive affect, autonomy, positive relationships, environmental mastery and personal growth on wellbeing. Young people considered positive relationships, including communication and interaction with others, to be influential to levels of wellbeing and functioning. A sense of social connectedness and belonging with others can increase feelings of emotional security for individuals in exploring and responding to their social environment, concerned with an individual's sense of relatedness (Martin & Dowson, 2009): with teacher-pupil relationships being key (Wilding, 2015). Young people's perceptions of what contributes to pupil wellbeing in education can be viewed through the lens of Self-determination Theory (SDT) (Ryan & Deci, 2000). SDT asserts that adolescent development, including individual identity, is associated with the extent to which the social environment is able to satiate three basic needs: autonomy, competence and relatedness. The extent to which these needs are fulfilled has a direct bearing upon levels of wellbeing (Boncquet et al., 2020), with feelings of autonomy, rooted in the school environment, influential to pupil motivation and wellbeing (Chirkov & Ryan, 2001). Where these needs are not fulfilled, pupils may become disaffected (Wilding, 2015) with young people in the present study drawing links between these three basic needs and pupil behaviour, motivation and wellbeing.

5.1.4 Environmental mastery and support-seeking

Environmental mastery: that is, the management of life situations (Ryff, 2014), also featured within pupil talk. Feeling able to cope and manage demands and stressors within school and having a sense of control and autonomy for learning (as noted above) were identified as indicators of pupil wellbeing. A relationship was drawn between feeling able to cope, and actively seeking support. Young people voiced the need for educational staff to be attuned and sensitive to the needs of individuals, such that appropriate support can be provided. It is important to acknowledge that, where an individual is experiencing lower levels of wellbeing, their ability to actively seek support may be impacted (Ratnayake & Hyde, 2019), further contributing to lower levels of pupil wellbeing. The perceptions of others, self-reliance, and lower levels of mental health literacy have been found to be a barrier to the accessing of support. Relations with others, through the use of support and encouragement,

and previous positive experiences around accessing support, were viewed as facilitating the support-seeking process for young people (Gulliver et al., 2010).

5.1.5 Maslow's hierarchy of needs

The fulfilment of basic needs was seen as a component of pupil wellbeing, engagement, and interaction in school life, in turn highlighting the importance of social and belonging needs for young people in education. Feelings of emotional and physical security manifested in young people's conceptualisation of wellbeing, with an individual's safety needs being a core feature of an environment conducive to development and growth. The significance of self-esteem needs, feelings of belonging and self-fulfilment needs (feelings of accomplishment) were also evident in young people's discourse, with there being an identified link between these needs and pupil wellbeing. The fulfilment of basic needs as a prerequisite to higher order needs reflects Maslow's (1943; 1954) Theory of Human Motivation. It is proposed that individuals progress through a hierarchy of motivation, whereby physiological, safety, belonging and esteem needs take precedence over growth needs (self-actualisation). As such, where an individual's lower-level needs are not met, wellbeing will be impacted (Gorman, 2010). In the context of education, Maslow (1970) asserts that both the basic and psychological needs of young people must be met, and that pupils must be rooted within a supportive environment, where they feel valued and respected. Here, schools have a role in acknowledging and addressing such needs, as highlighted by young people in the study: thereby fostering higher levels of pupil wellbeing.

5.2 Social belonging and peer relationships

5.2.1 School as a place of social opportunity: peer influence and belonging

Relationships with peers were identified as a key contributor to positive pupil wellbeing. Young people valued opportunities to socialise with their friends and peers both within and outside of the classroom, emphasising the importance of the social environment for young people at school (see section 5.1.1). These perceptions were echoed by Gristy (2012) who, when interviewing secondary school pupils, found their experience of school to be

predominantly social, and primarily with peers. School as a place of social opportunity and experience, whereby feelings of belonging and connectedness are fostered, is viewed by young people as important for individual development and growth, with the social environment of school being a focal point of educational experiences: an influential component of pupil wellbeing.

School is one of the primary environments for the formation and development of peer relationships (Ladd, 1990). Educational settings therefore have a fundamental role in providing structured and unstructured social opportunities for young people. Where opportunities are provided to engage in verbal interactions, support each other emotionally and engage in shared learning experiences, feelings of belonging and peer understanding are more likely to occur (Furrer et al., 2014). Friendship has been found to play a key role in fostering feelings of school belonging (Law et al., 2013), with such feelings in turn, being associated with higher levels of pupil wellbeing, both within the current study and wider literature (Uslu & Gizir, 2017; Cemalcilar, 2010). Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs views belonging as a basic psychological need (Maslow, 1954), with peer group belonging associated with the emotional development of adolescents and school engagement (Van Ryzin et al., 2009; Faircloth & Hamm, 2011). Where peer relationships are compromised, as noted by young people within the study, feelings of belonging and connectedness can be impacted: thereby leading to lower levels of pupil wellbeing and reduced school engagement.

Both the physical and emotional presence of friends were identified by young people as influential to pupil wellbeing. Participant 7 described explicit opportunities, incorporated into each week, enabling peer socialisation away from the classroom environment, and Participant 6 valued opportunities to engage in group work, highlighting the added benefit of developing a shared understanding of tasks with peers. Peer cooperation and negotiation can lead to individuals exploring and reflecting on their own beliefs and in turn co-creating a context supportive to autonomy (Deci et al., 2006). The influence of peers on personal attitudes and behaviours was identified, including shared feelings of positivity, as noted by Participant 7. Through processes of socialisation, over time, friends often become more alike to one another (Giletta et al., 2011), with there being a noted increase in the influence

of peers as young people enter adolescence (Woolley et al., 2009). Participant 7 also noted the impact friends can have on individuals wanting to attend school and on attitudes towards learning, suggesting that an absence of peer relationships, or negative relationships with peers, can impact on school attendance and engagement with learning (Gristy, 2012; Juvonen et al., 2012).

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on social opportunities for young people in school was identified, including opportunities to socialise with friends in lessons and other year groups, and access school clubs with friends. Adolescents have a heightened need for peer interaction (Orben et al., 2020) and are increasingly sensitive to their social environment (Crone & Dahl, 2013). This emphasises the importance of educational settings providing a range of social opportunities for young people, both within and outside of the classroom environment, to foster and promote positive peer relations which, in turn, are associated with increased mental health, resilience (van Harmelen et al., 2017) and wellbeing (Goswami, 2012).

5.2.2 Characteristics and implications of peer relationships

Research highlights the importance of the development of trusting and supportive interpersonal relationships for wellbeing (Ryff & Singer, 2000). All young people valued the role of friends in providing support: feeling able to trust and confide in friends were key features of accessing such support. Characteristics of these relationships included feeling listened to without judgement. The importance of not feeling judged during times of difficulty was identified by Participant 1 as a feature of accessing support from peers, feeling more comfortable in doing so, given the similarity in age. As noted in section 5.1.3, relatedness is a basic human need, fundamental to wellbeing (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Baumeister & Leary, 1995), with the quality of relatedness to peers (the quality and closeness of relationships) being a predictor of higher levels of wellbeing (Nezlek, 2000). Positive feelings and behaviours were associated with interacting with friends, including laughing with them, engaging in group learning, feelings of happiness, and motivation. Links have also been drawn between quality friendships and emotional security, increased levels of wellbeing, and feelings of self-worth (Rubin et al., 2011; Berndt, 2004). Young people

appeared to place a greater level of trust in their friends in comparison to adults within school, which was underpinned by the information shared remaining confidential.

Friends and peers as a means of support during times of difficulty has been identified by secondary school pupils (Gowing, 2019), with young people tending to seek support initially from their friends or peers (DoH, 2015). In the present study, having a friendship group appeared to be correlated with higher levels of pupil wellbeing: mitigating feelings of isolation, feeling unheard and being unsupported. In turn, negative peer interactions were found to contribute to lower levels of pupil wellbeing, having the potential to impact on peer interactions, self-esteem, school attendance and wellbeing. This is concordant with existing literature, with unfriendly peer interactions, or those of a rejecting nature, potentially diminishing feelings of belonging (Furrer et al., 2014) and reducing levels of wellbeing and adjustment, including academic performance (Bukowski et al., 2011; Ladd, 2009). The social element of school and friendships are viewed as fundamental in fostering an enjoyment of school amongst secondary school pupils (Gorard & See, 2011).

5.2.3 Anti-bullying approaches at individual and whole-school level

The profile of bullying within school and the systems in place to tackle bullying were felt to be important in reducing and responding to incidences. Schools have a fundamental role in ensuring a shared vision surrounding bullying, with staff members responding to occurrences in a fair and consistent manner, with a clear and accessible anti-bullying policy in place (UK Government, 2008; DfE, 2017). Anti-bullying interventions and approaches have been subject to meta-analyses (Gaffney et al., 2019) and overall evidence indicates bullying victimisation can be reduced, with key features being that educational staff are familiar with school polices and receive appropriate training, through whole-school approaches (Jones et al., 2012). Participant 5 felt that more could be done within school to actively discourage bullying and negative peer relations, according with the exploration of Side and Johnson (2014), who found young people considered staff may have little understanding of the social dynamic among peers or minimise reports of difficulties. Young people in the present study, alongside existing literature (DfE, 2017), assert the need for educational settings to have clear and explicit procedures and polices surrounding bullying, and for educational staff to

take an active role in responding to incidences at an individual level, and in promoting preventive work at a whole-school level. This, coupled with feeling heard at an individual level regarding incidences, was evident in Participant 5's discourse:

> *[…] they don't seem to be doing much about it, and it just does, again, feel like we're invalidated because they're not doing anything about what we feel angry about (Participant 5: 5.43).*

Opportunities for young people to take an active role in the development of anti-bullying polices and strategies can lead to pupils feeling empowered and more effectively able to respond to and report incidences of bullying, while enabling young people to feel heard (UK Government, 2008). It is, furthermore, of critical importance that such policies are informed by developmental patterns in adolescent peer interactions (Yeager et al., 2015).

5.3 Academic and social pressures

5.3.1 Pupil attainment and academic demands

The influence of both academic and social pressures on pupil wellbeing was emphasised by young people. Academic pressures were identified as encompassing the demands of homework, revision, exams and increased expectations surrounding academic attainment, with each being associated with feelings of 'pressure' and 'stress': contributing negatively towards pupil wellbeing. The focus placed on exams and academic attainment, within the education system, can have an adverse influence on the mental health and wellbeing of young people, with insufficient attention being afforded to the promotion of pupil wellbeing (Young Minds, 2017).

The associated demands and constraints of homework and revision were viewed to hinder opportunities outside of school for young people to pursue areas of interest and self-care, including socialising with friends and engaging in physical activity. This echoes the perceptions of young people in existing research: Zuzanek (2009) found a link between increased homework demands and less time spent pursuing other activities, including those

mentioned by young people in the present study. The need for teachers to consider the varying demands placed on young people across subjects, and the associated implications for pupils outside of school, was evident in participants' discourse. Homework demands, coupled with the demands of learning within school, were found by Participant 2 to have a physical and emotional impact on pupils:

> *[…] I feel like it could get them drained a bit, because you do work when you get home then you come to school, then you do work when you go home. You're never really spending time for yourself (Participant 2: 2.141).*

Young people described a shift in academic demands and the expectations of others surrounding homework and revision, concurrent with pupils' transition through school, and associated with the completion of GCSEs. Revision has been described as onerous and provoking increased levels of stress (Chamberlain et al., 2011), thereby contributing to lower levels of wellbeing. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) undertook a survey comprising 540,000 pupils, aged 15-16 years, across 72 countries and identified a relationship between increased self-reported levels of academic stress and lower levels of wellbeing (OECD, 2015). Young people associated feelings of 'stress', 'worry' and 'pressure' with the completion of GCSEs; these feelings manifested from Year 9 onwards and increased as young people transitioned through school. Young people appeared to value opportunities in Years 7 and 8 to focus on different aspects of school life, such as settling into secondary education and pursuing social opportunities, away from academic stressors.

5.3.2 An 'audit culture': pupil wellbeing and self-efficacy

Pressure appeared to be initially located externally to pupils, through increased expectations from others surrounding learning and success, rooted within an environment of increased focus on academic performance and attainment, driven by wider systems and a culture focussed on academic success. Torrance (2004) describes the UK education system as an audit culture, with an increased amount of pressure being placed on academic performance, including GCSEs, with an arguable trade-off between pupil wellbeing and

academic achievement (Heller-Sahlgren, 2018). This is subsequently reflected within young people's own attitudes and expectations around achievement, placing an increased amount of pressure on themselves to achieve academically. This increased pressure can, in turn, impact on pupil wellbeing, with not achieving anticipated or expected grades having the potential to reinforce negative feelings and, for some young people, exam performance being an inaccurate reflection of an individual's capabilities. Whilst exam stress can be attributed to external causes, internal causes can also contribute, with exam performance by some young people being perceived as a marker of self-identity (Denscombe, 2000) and comparison to others impacting on pupil self-efficacy (Putwain, 2008). Self-efficacy can be viewed as a regulatory factor in an individual's susceptibility to exam related stress (Putwain et al., 2016), with a lack of belief in personal abilities contributing to higher levels of stress and worry when faced with exams (Gallagher & Millar, 1996). Subsequently, opportunities for educational settings to enhance pupils' sense of self-efficacy may be supportive in reducing feelings of exam-related stress and pressure.

Young people associated the pressure of exams and revision with lower levels of wellbeing, characterised by prolonged periods of study, reduced sleep and feelings of increased pressure. The impact of academic-related stress on pupils' capacity to learn, academic performance, sleep duration and quality, and physical and mental health is widely acknowledged (Pascoe et al., 2020). During adolescence, new environmental challenges and stressors arise which can affect wellbeing (Zimmer-Gembeck & Skinner, 2008), including exam associated stress, however this period is also characterised by opportunities for the acquisition of new skills (Blakemore & Mills, 2014). Therefore, educational settings are well placed to provide support to pupils surrounding the management of stress and to equip young people with skills to respond to such stressors, whilst also considering the academic demands placed on pupils. Participant 5 raised the need for schools to provide support to pupils in relation to revision techniques and the completion of exams, to ensure young people feel appropriately equipped. This may, in turn, influence their attitude and response to exams: feeling adequately prepared for exams and reduced levels of exam-related stress, is further identified within existing literature (Howard, 2020). The need for educational staff to acknowledge the increasing and varying academic demands placed on pupils, and the impact this can have on wellbeing, was emphasised by young people. Whilst there is a

pressure on schools concerning academic attainment, there is also an expectation around supporting and promoting pupil wellbeing, resulting in a conflict regarding the enforcement of public examinations (Putwain, 2009b). A performative education system, revolving solely around increased academic achievement, can be viewed as compounding lower levels of pupil wellbeing (Thorley, 2016). Educational settings are well placed to provide exam support to pupils, both in relation to preparation and learning, and their wellbeing; given they have a fundamental role, extending beyond examinations, focussed on "educating the *whole* child" (Clarke, 2020, p. 267).

5.3.3 Perceived expectations of self and others

The views and expectations of others surrounding academic success and performance in exams were found to contribute to pressure felt by young people, with a perceived level of accountability for the feelings of others, should expected grades not be achieved. Many young people are negatively impacted by exam associated stress with many, in turn, underperforming (Putwain, 2007). Participant 5 considered being in top sets a barrier to the accessing of teacher support and help-seeking and associated this with increased pressure surrounding learning. As noted by Participant 5, self-imposed expectations associated with being placed in a top set, influenced by the perceived expectations of others, impacted negatively on behaviour: young people linked increased academic expectations to lower levels of pupil wellbeing.

Feelings of judgement in relation to the perceptions of others, including educational staff and peers, were evident amongst young people surrounding learning, ability, and individuals' emotional responses to difficulties they may encounter. Fear of being judged by others was identified as being a barrier to accessing support. Peer comparison can negatively influence self-perception, impacting on self-esteem and wellbeing (Harvey & Keyes, 2019). The way in which individuals perceive their own abilities through comparison to the abilities of others, and the potential impact of this on self-confidence, can be understood through Social Comparison Theory (Festinger, 1954). During adolescence, individuals become increasingly sensitive to their peer environment (Pfeifer & Peake, 2012; Nelson et al., 2005) and, given they spend a significant amount of time with peers, peer

feedback becomes increasingly prominent. As such, an individual's self-perception is informed through feedback and social comparison with peers (Sebastian et al., 2008).

5.3.4 Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation

Young people's accounts also drew links between academic achievement and future aspirations, associating grades with higher education and employment opportunities. As viewed by young people in this study, this association can pose an added element of exam-related stress for young people: impacting confidence and self-efficacy (Denscombe, 2000). A component of this perceived pressure was located externally for pupils, such as that projected by educational staff and parents (Putwain, 2009a). Teachers actively promoting competition amongst peers and drawing links between academic success and future prospects was raised by young people as eliciting feelings of stress and pressure. The use of 'fear appeals': teachers highlighting potential outcomes of failure in an attempt to increase pupil motivation (Putwain & Symes, 2011) prior to upcoming exams, rather than motivating and encouraging pupils to do well, can amplify feelings of anxiety (Putwain & Roberts, 2009). This phenomenon was verbalised by young people within the current study and can be linked to intrinsic and extrinsic models of motivation (Vansteenkiste et al., 2004). Given intrinsic motivation is both autonomous and self-determined, it is considered optimum. According to SDT (see section 5.1.3), autonomous motivation is promoted in educational settings through an environment which mediates the fulfilment of pupil's autonomy, competence and relatedness needs (Vansteenkiste et al., 2006). Therefore, learning activities focussed on the achievement of intrinsic goals are viewed as beneficial to pupil learning and wellbeing, given they are more in line with an individual's basic psychological needs (Vansteenkiste et al., 2004). The use of 'fear appeals', as noted above, can be considered a form of controlled motivation, where locus of causality is perceived as external (studying for reward, to satisfy external pressures or through 'fear' of sanction), rather than autonomous, whereby locus of causality is perceived as internal (studying for enjoyment, interest and curiosity) (deCharms, 1968; Vansteenkiste et al., 2009). Whilst the UK education system places a focus on academic achievement, how pupils achieve expected and desired goals should be linked explicitly to their wellbeing (Clarke, 2020).

5.4 External influences

As noted in section 5.1.2, individuals are centrally placed within a number of interconnecting systems, with familial relationships residing within the microsystem, and individuals being predisposed to wider socio-cultural influences (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2007). Whilst a focus was placed on pupil wellbeing in education (with school located in the microsystem), young people voiced the influence of factors external to school and how they can impact on pupil wellbeing, acknowledging the influence these systems may have on an individual. Young people therefore highlighted the need for schools to consider the varying systems to which they belong, the relationships between these systems, and the impact they may have on an individual.

5.4.1 Parental mental health, wellbeing and stress: family dynamics

Parental influence on the wellbeing of young people was raised, with home factors independent from school, seen by young people as contributing to levels of pupil wellbeing. Factors at home included, although were not limited to, parental separation and parent wellbeing and mental health.

> *Some people go through things at home what makes them erm stressed or have a negative wellbeing at school… like my parents split up when I was in Year 9 which made me completely go from really positive to really negative… (Participant 1: 1.167).*

The intergenerational transmission of stress from a parent to their child, can have both short- and long-term impacts on child wellbeing (Powdthavee & Vignoles, 2008), with children's wellbeing being a factor of parent-child relationships (Jones et al., 2013; Roffey, 2017). Throughout childhood and adolescence, and extending throughout an individual's life-course, the family context is a key determinant of levels of wellbeing (Diener & Diener McGavran, 2008). During adolescence, life satisfaction has been found to be closely correlated with parental relationships, in terms of attachment (Ma & Huebner, 2008). Within the present study, care-seeking behaviour was viewed as being influenced by perceived levels of parental mental health and wellbeing (Thorley, 2016), characterised by

young people being empathetic towards the needs and emotional capacity of others. Newland (2014) asserts that family wellbeing is one of the most prominent and consistent predictors of the wellbeing and resilience of CYP.

5.4.2 Home-school relationships

Educational settings may benefit from being informed of factors external to the school system, in considering the associated impact these may have on pupil wellbeing and consequently, upon how a pupil functions and experiences different aspects of school life, such as academic engagement and social interaction. Communication between home and school can therefore be perceived as an enabling factor in staff responding to individual pupils in appropriate ways and providing attuned support. Brown et al. (2012) show that educational settings are often a first port of call for parents when they are experiencing concerns, stress, or faced with difficulties at home, emphasising the need for positive home-school relationships to be promoted and maintained. However, within a secondary educational context, a number of barriers to home-school communication emerge, with parental involvement declining during secondary school years (Green et al., 2007; Seginer, 2006; Spera, 2005). Park and Holloway (2018) explored parental school involvement during adolescence and found inclusive school practices, including fostering a welcoming environment and facilitating communication between the home and school context, to be correlated with increased parental involvement, with such involvement enhancing educational practice. Providing such opportunities, combined with educational staff being attuned to the needs of pupils, and vigilant in recognising any changes in young people's behaviour, whilst promoting and maintaining positive teacher pupil-relationships, should facilitate awareness and understanding of the internal life of young people.

5.4.3 Parental beliefs and attitudes

Support and encouragement provided by parents, as well as teachers, was viewed as important to pupil wellbeing, and is associated with positive school outcomes (Rosenfield et al., 2000). The beliefs and attitudes of parents surrounding the importance of learning and education and acknowledging personal goals and future aspirations of their children was

valued by young people in the present study. Borgonovi and Mont (2012) recognise the influence of the actions and values of parents, including their own attitudes towards school and activities, and the impact these can have on pupils. While some young people can feel motivated by pressure and expectations placed on them by parents, unrealistic expectations can provoke feelings of stress (Fox et al., 2005).

5.4.4 Restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic and implications

Being able to physically attend school and engage in face-to-face learning and interact with friends was significantly important to young people and associated with increased levels of wellbeing. Educational settings were seen as a place of emotional support (Masonbrink & Hurley, 2020) and social opportunity (Brown & Evans, 2002), supportive to CYP's wellbeing, and mental and physical health (Scientific Pandemic Influenza Group on Behaviours (SPI-B) and DfE, 2020). Pupils discussed the impact of COVID-19 on different aspects of school life. Specifically, the restrictions imposed on social opportunities within school were perceived as contributing to lower levels of pupil wellbeing. The importance of being able to move freely around school and being able to learn in different environments was valued, with individuals being increasingly sensitive to their social environment (Crone & Dahl, 2013; Orben et al., 2020). Following initial uncertainty surrounding Year 11 examinations, the importance to pupils of being informed of decisions which directly impact them, and their valuing of information to be appropriately disseminated, once available, was evident. This highlights the need for pupils to feel included in educational decisions and agendas which impact them, and the role of educational settings in reassuring pupils and effectively disseminating key information. As noted in sections 2.4 and 3.6.1, pupil participation in decision-making processes can foster a number of benefits, including reinforcing feelings of being part of the school and wider community for young people (PHE, 2015) and in enhancing educational practice (Weare, 2015; Lansdown, 2001).

5.5 Relationships with educational staff: relational behaviour, skills and support

5.5.1 Relational behaviour of teachers

Both the physical presence and emotional availability of teachers were found to influence young people's access to support, with the demands and pressures placed on teachers (Ofsted, 2019) and lack of flexibility in the school day being a barrier to pupils accessing support outside of lessons. Where support is readily available to young people, and there is familiarity and trust, interaction is more likely to be initiated by pupils, with teacher support contributing positively to pupil wellbeing. Relationships develop through human interaction (Glazzard & Rose, 2019): quality relationships were found to be characterised by feelings of trust, familiarity and rapport, giving pupils the confidence to access support. Young people also associated being able to trust teachers with more open teacher-pupil relationships, and a higher degree and quality of support. Feelings of school connectedness (Harding et al., 2019) and, as already noted, pupil wellbeing (Aldridge & McChesney, 2018) can be enhanced through positive teacher-pupil relationships. Teachers can be viewed as secondary attachment figures (Beeke, 2021) and the use of attachment-aware approaches in educational settings can have a positive impact on both young people and staff (Little & Maunder, 2021). Little and Maunder (2020) explored the effect of early attachment training on staff empathy and found some change in teachers' appraisal of challenging behaviour (cognitive empathy): a positive link between teacher pupil-relationships and cognitive empathy is identified (Okonofua et al., 2016). Secure relationships are characterised by nurturing and responsive interactions where individual needs are fulfilled, enabling trust in others to be developed, alongside emotional coping strategies (Ranson & Uricheck, 2008).

The availability of attuned support for young people, and the interpersonal skills of teachers in developing teacher-pupil relationships, were also regarded by young people. A positive school environment is associated with teachers being attuned to the needs of pupils and is enhanced by the amount of time teachers spend with their pupils, as well as their teaching experience (Marucci et al., 2018). Teachers differentiating learning and acknowledging the influence that variability in approaches to teaching can have on pupils' learning and emotional outcomes is identified in young people's discourse: where pupils are unable to

access learning, their needs and behaviours, such as motivation and engagement, can be impacted. Young people acknowledged the benefits of teachers 'knowing' them at an individual level and being aware of their needs; through ensuring opportunities for pupils to communicate such needs, and teachers seeking to identify them.

Teachers also showing they care for pupils was raised. This can be demonstrated by teachers asking how pupils are and through the reciprocation of basic verbal or non-verbal interactions, such as smiling. Feelings of school connectedness and being cared for by educational staff are associated with increased levels of pupil wellbeing (McNeely et al., 2002), with teachers caring also positively affecting pupil self-efficacy (Morin et al., 2014). Opportunities to engage with teachers surrounding topics of personal interest, away from the demands of learning, was seen as a facilitator to positive teacher-pupil relationships and subsequently pupil wellbeing. Teachers taking time to explore these interests was associated with respecting teachers, and pupils wanting to actively engage in their lessons. Pupils feeling 'heard' can promote feelings of respect towards teachers (Johnson, 2008) and, where teachers show an active interest in pupils, feeling of school belonging ensue (Martin & Dowson, 2009).

Teachers providing support and encouragement to pupils was found to be important in shaping pupils' own attitudes and approaches to learning. The projection of teacher beliefs, values and attitudes on young people was identified; where they are positively underpinned, pupil confidence was increased, with support and encouragement from teachers contributing positively to pupil wellbeing. Research demonstrates that, within high-quality relationships, the beliefs and attitudes of significant others can be internalised by individuals, forming part of their own belief system (Wentzel, 1999). Through positive teacher-pupil interactions, educational staff play an important role in helping to shape pupils' aspirations (Gutman & Akerman, 2008).

5.5.2 Teacher wellbeing

The emotional availability of teachers, and the influence that teacher wellbeing can have on the quality of support provided to pupils was discussed. Whilst teacher wellbeing and the

demands placed on teachers are not the focus of this study, the relationship between teacher and pupil wellbeing is considered, given that it was present in young people's talk. As noted, pupils considered the emotional availability and wellbeing of teachers influential in their accessing of support, in terms of perceived approachability and capacity to offer support. Within existing research, there is a noted relationship between teacher and pupil wellbeing, with the wellbeing of teachers impacting pupils (Harding et al., 2019), and the quality of teacher-pupil relationships impacting teacher wellbeing (Milatz et al., 2015). The relationship between teacher-pupil wellbeing and the impact this can have on teacher-pupil relationships, indicates that targeted support to enhance teacher wellbeing, alongside opportunities to develop teacher-pupil relationships should be embedded into educational practice as a primary strategy to enhance pupil wellbeing.

5.5.3 Teacher skills and opportunities for development

Teachers being supported in managing educational demands and in meeting the needs of pupils, more broadly and at an individual level, was emphasised by young people, in concordance with existing literature, (DfE, 2014a; 2014b, DfE & DoH, 2015) as part of the increasing agenda surrounding wellbeing and mental health in education. Access to training opportunities for teachers was also viewed positively: enabling staff to develop their understanding and awareness of how best to support the mental health and wellbeing of all pupils and in recognising associated influences on other areas of development. Both the skills of teachers and the remit of their role in supporting pupil wellbeing and mental health was raised by young people. Ekornes (2015) recognises that challenges can arise around self-perceived levels of proficiency and competence, potentially eliciting feelings of stress. Support provided to educational staff may enable the internalisation of new skills and behaviours: harnessing a sense of adequate preparedness around offering effective support concerning the mental health and wellbeing of young people (Zafeiriou & Gulliford, 2020). Increasing the role of school in promoting mental health should ensure that teachers feel confident in their own skills and abilities and are able to recognise situations whereby support from health professionals should be accessed (Wyn et al., 2000). The increasing awareness being placed on mental health was viewed by young people as supportive in

instigating training opportunities for teachers to enhance their awareness of, and skills surrounding, pupil wellbeing and mental health.

5.6 Provision and opportunities

5.6.1 Extra-curricular activities

Access to provision and opportunities supportive to pupils' mental health and wellbeing was viewed as fundamental to pupil development and the fostering of a positive school culture. Young people valued opportunities to attend school clubs, enabling them to pursue areas of interest, socialise with friends, engage in physical activity, and establish positive teacher-pupil relationships, away from the more structured classroom environment. Participation in school clubs can enhance the social skills of adolescents, through promoting an increased sense of belonging: nurturing positive relationships with both peers and adults (Schaefer et al., 2011; Christison, 2013) and contributing to adolescent wellbeing (Mahoney et al., 2005). The opportunity to build rapport and develop relationships with teachers on a more personal level was valued by young people.

Participation in extra-curricular activities can have a positive impact on feelings of pupil belonging and school connectedness, as well as psychosocial and academic outcomes (Akos, 2006). Drawing on SDT (Deci & Ryan, 2000) (see section 5.1.3), participation in group extra-curricular activities can contribute to meeting an individual's basic needs around relatedness and belonging (Oberle et al., 2019). Opportunities to pursue areas of interest were valued by young people, with there being a link between engaging in activities of interest and positive wellbeing (Krnjaić, 2019). Young people also recognised the benefits that physical activity can have on mental health and wellbeing (Bailey et al., 2018; DoH & DoE, 2017). The notion that schools should not focus solely on learning and academic progress was emphasised by young people. Participant 4 discussed the importance of the wider aspect of school life in providing varied opportunities for young people, including access to extra-curricular activities linked to areas of interest. Opportunities to engage in extra-curricular activities can also play an important role in the development of positive self-perception (Daley & Leahy, 2003). Participation in extra-curricular activities can be

influenced by factors such as household income and gender, with household income being most influential and participation in certain activities being gender biased (Donnelly et al., 2019). It is important for schools to provide varied extra-curricular opportunities for young people which accommodate differing interests and needs, and for schools to acknowledge their role in actively supporting and promoting participation in such activities, while communicating the associated benefits to pupils.

5.6.2 A safe space: focussed support from trained professionals

Young people valued opportunities to access focussed support from trained adults, relating to mental health and wellbeing. Being able to talk to skilled professionals external to school promoted feelings of reassurance for young people, knowing support can be accessed when needed. The importance of feeling heard, and their emotions being validated was important to young people and seen as influential to their wellbeing. Pupils acknowledged the skills and expertise of external professionals trained in providing mental health and wellbeing support, with some young people feeling that access to external support within school was not only supportive to pupils, but also to teachers in raising awareness, identifying pupil needs and providing appropriate support. Opportunities to listen to the accounts and experiences of others surrounding mental health and wellbeing was valued by Participant 7, highlighting the notion that mental health and wellbeing is a universal concept, affecting everyone.

Whilst school-based counsellors were not present in the school that took part in the research, their implementation within schools is growing, with an importance being placed on the establishment of links between school-based counsellors and pastoral care (DfE, 2015b). Characteristics of such support, including access to support from trained professionals, the confidentiality of support and objectivity were important to young people in the current study. However, the characteristics of such support should arguably not be confined to the role of school counsellors, as noted above (see section 5.5.1): a good deal of incidental support can be offered through the relational aspects of student-teacher interactions.

Linked to focussed support from adults, having access to an identified 'safe space' within school was described as supportive to pupil wellbeing. Characteristics of this safe space included a quiet area which is both private and nurturing, away from the classroom environment. Having access to such a space, either for targeted or universal support, has been viewed as a fundamental component of school provision (DfE, 2017). Whilst the school environment more broadly can be considered a safe space for pupils, through the school climate and positive interactions between individuals (Butcher & Manning, 2005), opportunities to access support from trained adults and the availability of a safe space, separate from the learning environment, were highlighted. Access to trusted adults within school can constitute a 'safe space' for pupils, with the quality of these interpersonal relationships influencing feelings of safety. Positive relationships and school experiences, as well as increased feelings of safety and security at school, have been associated with the use of Attachment Aware School programmes (AAS). AAS programmes comprise aspects of provision, such as access to a designated safe space for pupils, and the identification of key adults to provide support (Kelly et al., 2020); both of which, as already noted, were emphasised in pupil discourse.

5.6.3 From simplification to normalisation: mental health literacy in schools

The implementation of a whole-organisational culture, through institution-wide approaches, has been identified by educational staff as normalising mental health issues, increasing awareness of how support can be accessed and nurturing pupil emotional literacy and resilience (Marshall et al., 2017), thereby diminishing any associated stigma and promoting pupil openness (DfE, 2015b). Despite this, there is a need for schools to acknowledge and communicate the complexity of mental health when providing support to young people, as communicated through pupils' discourse. Participant 5 commented on the simplistic portrayal of mental health in school by staff, which does not pay heed to the varying barriers individuals may face when responding to difficulties.

> *We do have assemblies and stuff about mental health […] they just make it sound too simple for what it actually is. So, it does, again… just make you feel really invalid and scared and anxious (Participant 5: 5.95).*

Communicating such complexities may be supportive to young people in accessing appropriate support, and in responding to personal difficulties. Foulkes (2021) argues that broader understandings of what constitutes mental illness are incomplete, with terminology being over-used and the distinction between typical challenges faced by individuals and emotions experienced such as stress and anxiety, and mental ill-health, being lost. This distinction is however important in ensuring people are appropriately equipped to respond to difficulties and that those who require medical treatment are appropriately identified, with support being provided to individuals that is reflective of their needs. It is asserted that to increase adolescent help-seeking behaviour, a focus should be placed on developing young people's mental health literacy, on diminishing associated stigma and acknowledging a desire for self-reliance in young people. Subsequently, educational settings should consider their role in the development of mental health literacy amongst pupils, including pupils' ability to identify mental ill-health, and in raising awareness of resources and support (Gulliver et al., 2010).

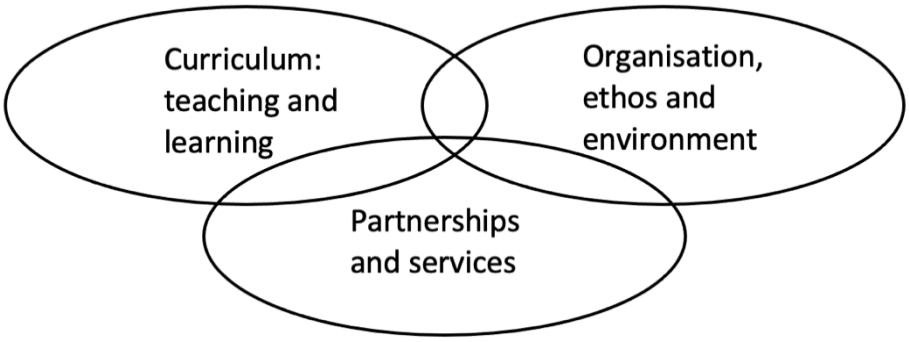
5.6.4 Psychoeducation for young people

As already noted, important to pupils was the profile of wellbeing and mental health in school. The active role of school in raising awareness and providing opportunities for pupils to learn about ways of both promoting and maintaining their wellbeing and mental health was identified, with the school environment being an exclusive place where pupil wellbeing can be fostered. Pupil skills can be augmented in non-curriculum focussed ways, such as through social relationships, organisational structure and polices, and regular activities focussed on building a positive school culture (Goldberg et al., 2019). Schools providing practical opportunities for pupils was deemed most effective, as opposed to information solely being presented to them. Enrichment activities for CYP within school are found to be supportive in developing understandings and raising awareness of mental health (DfE, 2015b). Participant 6 indicated the need for support around the development of pupil skills in responding to any difficulties, aside from solely being encouraged to access support from others. The importance of equipping pupils with the skills they need to identify and respond to difficulties and recognise when they may need to seek further support is raised.

Wyn et al. (2000), drawing on the framework proposed by the Health Promoting Schools movement, outline three areas of practice within schools (see Figure 9), which can interact to create 'health-promoting' environments. These enable schools to identify any strengths and reflect on any areas of development within their practice. Within the present study, young people made links to each of the three areas noted, with respect to pupil wellbeing in education. It is important for educational settings to consider each of these areas in turn, as well as how they interrelate: promoting an environment which augments the wellbeing of young people.

Figure 9

The interacting areas of a health-promoting whole-school environment (Wyn et al, 2000).



5.7 Summary

Findings of the current study have been reviewed and discussed in relation to existing literature and theory. Young people's conceptualisations of wellbeing have been considered within an educational context. The role of educational settings in providing opportunities conducive to adolescent development were discussed, with attention afforded to school as a place of social opportunity (Gristy, 2012; Ladd, 1990); nurturing positive relationships amongst peers and between peers and adults. These relationships are founded on trust, mutual understanding, and support and encouragement, with feelings of belonging and connectedness ensuing, and associations being drawn to increased levels of pupil wellbeing (Uslu & Gizir, 2017; Cemalcilar, 2010; Aldridge & McChesney, 2018). The demands and pressures placed on young people in education have also been considered from both academic and social perspectives, with the role of educational settings in promoting the

development of the whole child being prominent in pupil discourse. Given influences external to the school system were also voiced by young people, consideration was given to individuals being rooted centrally within a number of interrelating systems (Bronfenbrenner, 1979), with links being drawn to existing literature. The role of educational settings and professionals in supporting pupil development more broadly, and in providing support to pupils surrounding mental health and wellbeing has been discussed, with a focus placed on promoting the mental health and wellbeing agenda within an educational context.

5.8 Methodological issues and limitations of the research

5.8.1 Participant sample

The current study, in accordance with qualitative exploratory research (Sandelowski, 1995; 1996) had a small sample of seven participants, all of whom attended the same secondary school (see Chapter 3 for account of recruitment limitations). The aim of the current study was to explore the individual experiences and perceptions of young people, in order to identify themes across a data set (Braun & Clarke, 2020). Claims concerning the generalisability and representativeness of findings are therefore not made, consonant with qualitative research (Leung, 2015). All participants attending the same secondary school further limits the transferability of findings (Denzin & Lincoln, 2017). It is, however, hoped that by outlining the characteristics of the school and the participant sample, links can be drawn between the school involved in the study and other educational settings with similar characteristics to those outlined. The repeated attempts to recruit an additional secondary school to partake in the study were not successful, due to factors highlighted in section 3.6.2. This could have potentially enabled comparisons and contrasts to be drawn between young people's perceptions across settings.

Given the voluntary nature of participant recruitment, only young people who felt more confident to share their views may have opted to take part in the study. Whilst there was some variation in participant characteristics, as noted in section 3.6.3, conclusions cannot be drawn regarding the influence of such characteristics on pupil perceptions. The study

has, however, given voice to young people, enabling educational professionals to consider pupil wellbeing in education alongside their role (see section 5.9.2).

5.8.2 Semi-structured interviews

The use of SSIs enabled participants to share their perceptions and draw upon their experiences of what contributes to pupil wellbeing within education, while affording enough flexibility for participants to share information extending beyond the devised questions. The development of a SSI schedule, comprising broad and open-ended questions, along with question prompts, was felt to be supportive in gathering rich and meaningful data and in facilitating the tone and conversational flow of the interview.

Whilst the use of focus groups was considered, pupil views were sought individually (see section 3.7.1). Given some participants shared perceptions explicitly informed by personal experiences and appeared to feel confident enough to talk openly, I felt that the use of focus groups may have impacted upon this; therefore, the true voice of some participants may have been suppressed. As an interviewer, it also enabled me to respond sensitively to participants on an individual level.

Given this was the first time I had undertaken SSIs in a research context and that interview effectiveness is largely influenced by the skills of the interviewer, it is acknowledged that prior experience may have augmented my skills and enabled me to reflect more comprehensively on researcher reflexivity in the interview process. Whist steps were taken to uphold researcher reflexivity, it is recognised that prior experience of undertaking research-based SSIs could have been valuable. Nevertheless, I was able to draw upon my professional training in building rapport and consulting with young people.

5.8.3 Thematic analysis

The use of TA enabled the identification, analysis and reporting of patterns concerning the lived experiences, views and practices of participants across the data set (Braun & Clarke, 2017). It facilitated an in-depth understanding of meanings and experiences held collectively

by participants concerning pupil wellbeing. Given an inductive approach was adopted, identified themes were strongly rooted within the data set (Nowell et al., 2017; Patton, 1990). Whilst a more deductive approach may have enabled a more detailed analysis of some aspects of the data, a less rich description of the overall data would have likely been produced (Braun & Clarke, 2006). It is possible that increased commitment to themes informed by existing literature and theory may not allow new insights to develop from the data (Willig, 2013).

Given TA is suited to research questions focussed on people's conceptualisations or exploring how people think about a social phenomenon (Willig, 2013), TA was deemed most suited to the current study due to its exploratory nature. A clear, systematic framework was adopted, with the procedures outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006) closely followed to support my understanding of and familiarity with TA, due to being novice TA researcher, and to enhance the quality of interpretations. Braun and Clarke's (2006) 15-point checklist was also used to ensure a TA of a good standard had been produced (Appendix 6). Reflexivity was maintained throughout the research process, whereby my influence on the research was critically reflected upon, in relation to previous experiences, beliefs and values (see section 3.9.3). For the research to be evaluated meaningfully, the assumptions of the research questions have been identified with my theoretical positioning outlined, along with an explicit account of the TA conducted.

5.9 Implications of the current research

5.9.1 Implications for educational psychologists

The current research provides EPs with the opportunity to reflect on their role in offering support to educational settings surrounding the wellbeing and mental health of pupils, and in considering their application of psychological theory and understanding to support educational practice. EPSs have a role in disseminating key information around supporting pupil wellbeing and mental health in schools to educational settings, LA managers and other service commissioners. This may include providing broader support surrounding pupil wellbeing or considering the role of schools in fostering feelings of belonging, school

connectedness and promoting social interactions, informed by psychological knowledge and research. EPs may also play a role in reframing discourse within education surrounding wellbeing and mental health (Zafeiriou & Gulliford, 2020; Purewal, 2020) with a shift from medicalised, within-child narratives, towards more socially driven understandings which acknowledge socio-environmental factors (Roffey et al., 2016).

It is hoped that the current study, along with ongoing research, can prompt further discussions within EPSs, in considering the role of EPs surrounding pupil wellbeing and mental health, and what they are able to offer at different levels, including but not limited to LA, school and individual/group. This may include the role of EPs in the planning, delivery and evaluation of interventions, while considering the school system and educational staff (Dunsmuir & Cobbald, 2016) and the provision of support at a whole-school level through a process of assessment, action planning and review (Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council, n.d.). Opportunities to network with other EPSs, to further consider their role in fostering pupil wellbeing, and developing awareness of initiatives and ongoing projects, may be supportive to informing their own practice and in considering potential constraints.

It is further hoped that the study's findings can be drawn upon when considering aspects of education which influence pupil wellbeing, with EPs disseminating findings to educational staff. EPs are also well placed to encourage educational settings to seek the voice of CYP regarding decisions and practice which impact them, given the reported benefits surrounding obtaining the voice of CYP (Weare, 2015; Lansdown, 2001; Casas, 2016; Roffey, 2015; PHE, 2015). Opportunities for EPs to reflect on their role and how they can incorporate and augment aspects of education which foster positive school experiences and promote pupil wellbeing within practice, such as through the development of interpersonal relations with young people and increasing feelings of social belonging, should be identified.

Raising awareness and increasing understanding of development during adolescence and considering aspects of life which characterise this period (Hagell et al., 2012), may be supportive to educational settings in responding to the varying needs of young people, and in fostering positive educational experiences (Loschert, 2019). This study, in conjunction with ongoing research, may facilitate discussions in educational settings surrounding the

role of EPs, in terms of pupil wellbeing and mental health, and the evolving role of EPs in supporting and shaping educational practice, ensuring positive outcomes for all CYP.

5.9.2 Implications for educational settings and staff

CYP spend a significant amount of time in school, therefore educational settings have a fundamental role in supporting and promoting the wellbeing of CYP in their care (PHE, 2015; DfE, 2018; DfE, 2020a; NICE, 2020). The role of educational settings in fostering feelings of social belonging, school connectedness and interpersonal relationships has been shown, through the literature and this study, to be key to pupil wellbeing (Martin & Dowson, 2009; Harding et al., 2019; McNeely et al., 2002). The significance of teacher-pupil relationships (Aldridge & McChesney, 2018) and the need for teachers to have the requisite skills to provide support to pupils (DfE, 2014a, 2014b; 2015b; DfE & DoH, 2015), not only in relation to learning, but also to fundamental needs (Maslow, 1943) is emphasised by young people, including promoting feelings of safety and belonging and supporting self-esteem.

Schools have a role, arguably, in equipping pupils with the necessary skills to approach and respond to the varying demands and expectations placed on them during adolescence. This role encompasses the social, academic and developmental aspects of life, with the period of adolescence being characterised by cultural susceptibility (Choudhury, 2010) and individuals being increasingly sensitive to their social environment (Crone & Dahl, 2013). Whilst the period of adolescence is underpinned by new and varying challenges and stressors (Zimmer-Gembeck & Skinner, 2008), it also provides opportunities for the acquisition of new skills and the formation of adult identity (Blakemore & Mills, 2014), with this period being fundamental to individual functioning in later life (Sawyer et al., 2018; Patton, 2016). Given adolescents spend a significant amount of time in education, educational settings are well placed to provide support to pupils and facilitate the development of skills.

Gaining the voice of pupils can offer unique insights into adolescent development and experiences, to further support educational settings in providing support. The benefits of educational settings seeking the views of pupils surrounding topics and decisions which directly impact them is noted (Cook-Sather, 2006; Casas, 2016) and further identified within

the current study. The study highlights young people's ability to offer insights into their perceptions regarding wellbeing in education, informed by personal experiences, including what they feel supports or hinders pupil wellbeing.

The importance of clear and comprehensive school policies and procedures, for both pupils and educational staff, which include pupil wellbeing and mental health is acknowledged by young people in the current study and within wider literature (The Children's Society, 2019b; Brown, 2019; NICE, 2020), with both universal and targeted support available to pupils being explicit. Support and training opportunities for educational staff should also be considered, which may develop their skills and understanding concerning pupil wellbeing and mental health (Harland et al., 2015).

The school as a social environment for young people to develop, and the imperative role of relationships within school was identified (Ladd, 1990; Gristy; 2012; van Harmelen et al., 2017), accentuating the importance of educational settings in providing a range of social and extra-curricular opportunities for young people. Such opportunities harness feelings of positive wellbeing (Goswami, 2012) and support the development of trusting and meaningful relationships (Roffey, 2011), founded on mutual respect and understanding. Educational settings have a responsibility to cater and respond appropriately to the varying needs of pupils, to support development and ensure the learning and social environment is conducive to individual development as a whole (Clarke, 2020).

Following school closures, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, a 'catch-up' narrative has been emphasised by the UK Government, whereby a focus has been placed on education and lost learning (DfE, 2021). It is however asserted that the wellbeing and mental health of pupils should be prioritised (BPS, 2021). As noted by young people within the present study, the already salient demands and expectations surrounding education can impact on opportunities to pursue areas of interest and ensure time for self-care, leading to lower levels of pupil wellbeing; therefore, the need to consider such impacts within this narrative are noted (Hall, 2021). Consequently, the focus placed on educational settings under the proposed catch-up measures may further hinder such opportunities for young people and

elicit feelings of undue psychological pressure (BPS, 2021), which need to be acknowledged by educational staff.

5.10 Future research

The present study explored the perceptions of seven young people from one secondary school, regarding what contributes to pupil wellbeing within education. To date, the perceptions of secondary-aged pupils specifically, with regard to what they perceive to contribute to positive wellbeing within education, informed by their own educational experiences, has been limited and under-represented within the literature. Despite the increased focus surrounding the wellbeing and mental health of CYP (DfE, 2018, 2019b; DoH & DfE, 2017; NICE, 2020), further research from the perspectives of young people is required, to inform educational professionals and develop educational practice and provision in ethical and valid ways (DfE, 2019b; The Children's Society, 2019a). Current policy initiatives and wider societal imperatives indicate that developing and maintaining wellbeing and mental health in schools could be placed at the forefront of educational agendas (BPS, 2019).

Further research may therefore explore the perceptions of CYP across a range of educational settings, to increase the transferability of findings and contribute to and expand upon the current research base surrounding the role of educational professionals and settings in supporting and promoting pupil wellbeing. It may also be useful to draw comparisons between CYP in different phases of education to consider how the role of school and professionals may change over time, corresponding with the increase in educational demands (Klinger at al., 2015) and new social pressures (Zimmer-Gembeck & Skinner, 2008; Blakemore & Mills, 2014). Consideration should also be given to pupil demographics; including, but not limited to age, SEND, ethnically diverse groups, socio-economic status, sexual orientation and gender identity.

The role of educational settings in fostering positive relationships within school may also inform future research, given the focus young people have placed on interpersonal relationships in enhancing feelings of belonging, school connectedness and wellbeing within the present study. This may include developing an increasing awareness of trauma-informed

approaches within schools and the influence of such approaches in supporting young people. Key characteristics and fundamental qualities of teacher-pupil relationships may further be identified and explored, with consideration afforded to the identification of opportunities within educational settings and the provision in place to promote and maintain positive interpersonal relationships.

Future research may also consider the similarities and differences between the accounts and perceptions of CYP themselves on the one hand, and educational staff and parents/carers on the other, regarding what they feel contributes to pupil wellbeing in education. The experiences and challenges encountered by CYP can often be overlooked by adults in decision-making processes concerning pupil wellbeing (Checkoway, 2011), with decisions often being made for CYP without their involvement (Halliday et al., 2019). As such, research which considers how accounts may vary across groups may be valuable in offering a range of perspectives on how to support pupil wellbeing most effectively.

The COVID-19 pandemic has placed pupil wellbeing at the centre of educational agendas (Clarke, 2020) and, despite a growing body of research into the impact of the pandemic and school closures (Barnados, 2020; The Children's Society, 2020; Fegert et al., 2020; Mansfield et al., 2020), further research could explore the longer-term impact of the pandemic on the wellbeing of young people in schools. This may be in respect of ongoing discussions regarding approaches to learning recovery, potentially extending the school day, and increasing focus on achievement in ways that young people identify can be detrimental to their wellbeing.

5.11 Conclusion

The current study has explored the perceptions of young people surrounding what they feel contributes to pupil wellbeing in education. The study illuminates the influence and fundamental role of educational settings in providing a range of opportunities conducive to the wellbeing of young people, and in supporting adolescent development more broadly. The notion that adolescence is characterised by a period of cultural susceptibility (Choudhury, 2010), with individuals becoming increasingly sensitive to their social

environment (Crone & Dahl, 2013), is supported by the current study, given a number of challenges and stressors were present within young people's discourse. Young people discussed the influence of interpersonal relationships, academic demands, self-imposed and externally located pressures and expectations, influences external to school, and opportunities and provision in school to support and augment pupil wellbeing. Young people perceive school as a place of social opportunity, whereby feelings of belonging, self-efficacy and connectedness are nurtured, and where educational settings focus on individual development as a whole.

TA has facilitated adults' understanding of and provided an insight into pupil perceptions, informed by young people's own experiences of what contributes to their positive wellbeing in education. The school culture and the profile of wellbeing and mental health within school is an important aspect influencing how young people perceive their educational setting to recognise and support pupil wellbeing and mental health and facilitate opportunities for development.

The individual viewed as being influenced by varying and interconnecting systems is asserted within the present study, with parent, teacher and peer relationships playing a fundamental role in adolescent development and, more specifically, pupil wellbeing, beliefs, attitudes and behaviours. The role of educational staff in harnessing positive relationships with and between pupils, and in providing support and varied opportunities to build and maintain social relationships, thereby fostering feelings of belonging, is interwoven with positive emotional responses and increased levels of wellbeing.

Wider societal, environmental and cultural factors can also be viewed as significantly influential to young people, with the COVID-19 pandemic, respective school closures and discussions surrounding the 'catch-up' narrative further advancing the place and profile of pupil wellbeing and mental health towards the forefront of educational agendas. This, coupled with lower reported levels of wellbeing amongst CYP (The Children's Society, 2020), both respective and irrespective of the pandemic, illuminates the need for educational settings to equip young people with the skills they need to grow and develop, extending beyond academic attainment (Clarke, 2020).

The study has provided an insight into the perceptions and experiences of young people in education surrounding pupil wellbeing, from young people themselves; illustrating the importance of gaining the voice of CYP and the valuable contribution this can have in enabling further insights and understandings to evolve. Educational professionals including teaching staff and EPs are encouraged, through the discussion chapter, to consider their role in both supporting and promoting pupil wellbeing in education and the role of the school environment in fostering positive outcomes for all CYP. Consideration should be afforded to aspects of education which young people perceive to influence pupil wellbeing and the importance of gaining the voice of CYP in education.

Further research is encouraged, providing greater insights into pupil wellbeing and how it can be fostered within educational contexts. Consideration may be given to different phases of education, wider demographics, the role of interpersonal relationships and the longer-term impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, and respective school closures, on pupil wellbeing. The wellbeing of CYP is fundamental to development (PHE, 2014b) and, given the amount of time pupils spend in school, educational settings play an imperative role in not only providing learning opportunities, but also in harnessing opportunities for CYP to grow and develop as individuals, with a focus on the whole child.

References

Adams, W. C. (2015). Conducting Semi-Structured Interviews in Newcomer, K. E., Hatry, H. P., & Wholey, J. S. (2015). *Conducting semi-structured interviews. Handbook of practical program evaluation, 492.*

Akos, P. (2006). Extracurricular participation and the transition to middle school. *Rmle Online*, *29*(9), 1-9.

Aldridge, J. M., & McChesney, K. (2018). The relationships between school climate and adolescent mental health and wellbeing: a systematic literature review. *International Journal of Educational Research, 88*, 121–145.

Allison, P., & Pomeroy, E. (2000). How shall we "know?" Epistemological concerns in research in experiential education. *Journal of Experiential Education*, *23*(2), 91-98.

Andrews, R. (2005). The place of systematic reviews in education research. *British Journal of Educational Studies, 53(4),* 399-416.

Andrews, R. (2017). *Reaching for a shared understanding: Exploring the views of Educational Psychologists (Eps) and Special Educational Needs Coordinators (SENCos) about the role of the EP in supporting mental health and psychological well-being in schools* (Doctoral dissertation, University of East London). University of East London. https://repository.uel.ac.uk/item/84w7x

Armitage, D., Béné, C., Charles, A., Johnson, D., & Allison, E. (2012). The interplay of well-being and resilience in applying a social-ecological perspective. *Ecology and* Society, *17*(4).

Atkins, S., Lewin, S., Smith, H., Engel, M., Fretheim, A., & Volmink, J. (2008). Conducting a meta-ethnography of qualitative literature: lessons learnt. *BMC medical research methodology*, *8*(1), 1-10.

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW). (2012). *Social and Emotional Wellbeing: Development of a Children's Headline Indicator.* Canberra: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. https://www.aihw.gov.au/getmedia/b70d4d75-39fe-4fac-851c-07caaabdbdd7/11729.pdf.aspx?inline=true

Bahadur, G., & Hindmarsh, P. (2000). Age definitions, childhood and adolescent cancers in relation to reproductive issues. *Human Reproduction, 15*(1), 227-227.

Bailey, R., Howells, K. & Glibo, I. (2018). Physical activity and mental health of school-aged children and adolescents: A rapid review. *International Journal of Physical Education, 55*(1), 1-14.

Bandura, A. (2010). Self-efficacy. *The Corsini Encyclopedia of Psychology*, 1-3.

Barnados. (2020). *Mental Health and COVID-19: In Our Own Words*. Barnados. https://cms.barnardos.org.uk/sites/default/files/uploads/mental-health-covid19-in-our-own-words-report.pdf

Barnett-Page, E. & Thomas, J. (2009). Methods for the synthesis of qualitative research: a critical review. *BMC Medical Research Methodology, 9*(59).

Bartkowiak, J. (2012). NLP in qualitative research. *International Journal of Market Research, 54*(4), 451-453.

Baumeister, R. F., & Leary, M. R. (1995). The need to belong: Desire for interpersonal attachments as a fundamental human motivation. *Psychological Bulletin, 117*, 497–529.

Beeke, M. (2021). Towards a Co-Ordinated Framework for Critical Incident Response in School Communities: A Review of Current Evidence. *Educational & Child Psychology*, *38*(1), 75-86.

Benson, P. L., & Scales, P. C. (2009). The definition and preliminary measurement of thriving in adolescence. *The Journal of Positive Psychology, 4*, 85-104.

Beresford, P. (2002). Thinking about 'mental health': Towards a social model. *Journal of Mental Health, 11*(6), 581-584.

Bergold, J., & Thomas, S. (2012). Participatory research methods: A methodological approach in motion. *Qualitative Social Research, (13)*1, 30.

Bernard, H. R. (2002). *Research methods in anthropology: Qualitative and quantitative approaches* (3rd ed.). Alta Mira Press.

Berndt, T. J. (2004). Children's friendships: Shifts over a half-century in perspectives on their development and their effects. *Merrill-Palmer Quarterly, 50*, 206–223.

Black, L., Panayiotou, M., & Humphrey, N. (2019). The dimensionality and latent structure of mental health difficulties and wellbeing in early adolescence. *PloS one*, *14*(2)

Blakemore, S. J., & Mills, K. L. (2014). Is adolescence a sensitive period for sociocultural processing? *Annual review of psychology*, *65*, 187-207.

Blum, R. W. (2004). School connectedness-strengthening health and education outcomes for teenagers: Executive summary. *Journal of School Health, 74*, 231-232.

Boncquet, M., Soenens, B., Verschueren, K. (2020) Killing two birds with one stone: The role of motivational resources in predicting changes in achievement and school well-being beyond intelligence. *Contemporary Educational Psychology* 63: 101905.

Bond, L., Butler, H., Thomas, L., Carlin, J., Glover, S., Bowes, G., & Patton, G. (2007). Social and school connectedness in early secondary school as predictors of late teenage substance use, mental health, and academic outcomes. *Journal of Adolescent Health, 40*(4), 357-e9.

Booth, A. (2016). Searching for qualitative research for inclusion in systematic reviews: a structured methodological review. *Systematic reviews*, *5*(1), 1-23.

Borgonovi F., & Mont, G. (2012). Parental involvement in selected PISA countries and economies. *OECD Education Working Paper No 73*. OECD Publishing.

Boyle, M. (2012). *Research in Action: A Guide to Best Practice in Participatory Action Research*. Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs.

Bradshaw J., Rees G., Keung A., & Goswami, H. (2010). 'The subjective well-being of children' in McAuley C & Rose W (eds.) *Child Well-Being: Understanding Children's Lives*. Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

Bradshaw, J., & Rees, G. (2017). Exploring national variations in child subjective well-being. *Children and youth services review*, *80*, 3-14.

Bradshaw, J., Keung, A., Rees, G., & Goswami, H. (2011). Children's subjective well-being: International comparative perspectives. *Children and youth services review*, *33*(4), 548-556.

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

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2012). Thematic analysis. In C. Harris (Ed.), *APA handbook of research methods in psychology: Research designs: Quantitative, qualitative, neuropsychological, and biological,* (2), 57–71.

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2013). *Successful Qualitative Research: A practical guide for beginners*. Sage.

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2019a). Novel insights into patients' life-worlds: The value of qualitative research. *Lancet Psychiatry 6*:720–21.

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2019b). Reflecting on reflexive thematic analysis. *Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise & Health 11*(4) 589–97.

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2020). One size fits all? What counts as quality practice in (reflexive) thematic analysis?. *Qualitative research in psychology*, 1-25.

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2021). Can I use TA? Should I use TA? Should I not use TA? Comparing reflexive thematic analysis and other pattern-based qualitative analytic approaches. *Counselling and Psychotherapy Research, 21*(1), 37-47.

Braun, V., Clarke, V., Terry, G., & Hayfield, N. (2019). Thematic analysis. In *Handbook of research methods in health and social sciences*. Springer.

Brocki, J. & Wearden, A. (2006) A critical evaluation of the use of interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) in health psychology. Psychology and Health, 21: 87-108.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979). *The Ecology of Human Development*. Cambridge University Press.

Bronfenbrenner, U., & Morris, P. A. (2007). The bioecological model of human development. *Handbook of child psychology*, *1*.

Brown, E. R., Khan, L., & Parsonage, M. (2012). *A chance to change.* Centre for Mental Health.

Brown, R. (2019). Mental health and wellbeing provision in schools. UK Government. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/747709/Mental_health_and_wellbeing_provision_in_schools.pdf

Brown, R., & Evans, W. P. (2002). Extracurricular activity and ethnicity: Creating greater school connection among diverse student populations. *Urban Education, 37,* 41-58.

Bukowski, W. M., Buhrmester, D., & Underwood, M. K. (2011). Peer relations as a developmental context. In M. K. Underwood & L. H. Rosen (Eds.), *Social development: Relationships in infancy, childhood, and adolescence* (pp. 153–179). The Guilford.

Burr, V. (1995). *An Introduction to Social Constructionism*. Routledge.

Butcher, K.T., & Manning, M.E. (2005). Creating safe schools. *The Clearing House, 79*(1), 55-60.

Camfield, L., Crivello, G., & Woodhead, M. (2009). Wellbeing research in developing countries: Reviewing the role of qualitative methods. *Social Indicators Research, 90*(1), 5-31.

Campbell, S., Gazard, B., & Woodhead, C., Harber-Aschan, L., Beards, S., Harber-Aschan, J., Gazzard, M., & Hatch, S. (2019). Involving young people through co-production and widening participation approaches: Reflections from school-based engagement. *Research for All, 3*(1), 42-58.

Campbell, R., Pound, P., Morgan, M., Daker-White, G., Britten, N., Pill, R., Yardley, L., Pope, C. & Donovan, J. (2012). *Evaluating meta ethnography: systematic analysis and synthesis of qualitative research.*

Carter, S. & Andersen, C. (2019). Ecological and Contextual Analysis of Wellbeing in Your Context. In Carter S., & Andersen, C. (Eds.), *Wellbeing in educational contexts*. University of Southern Queensland.

Casas, F. (2016). Children participating in measuring what matters–why, when, how? *Learning for Wellbeing Magazine, 1*, 1–7.

Cater, J. K. (2011). Skype a cost-effective method for qualitative research. *Rehabilitation Counselors & Educators Journal, 4,* 10-17.

Cemalcilar, Z. (2010). Schools as socialisation contexts: Understanding the impact of school climate factors on students' sense of school belonging. *Applied psychology, 59*(2), 243-272.

Chamberlain, S., Daly, A. L., & Spalding, V. (2011). The fear factor: Students' experiences of test anxiety when taking A-level examinations. *Pastoral Care in Education, 29*(3), 193–205.

Chandler, J., Churchill, R., Higgins, J., Lasserson, T., & Tovey, D. (2013). *Methodological standards for the conduct of new Cochrane Intervention Reviews*. Cochrane Collaboration.

Chanfreau J., Lloyd C., Byron C., Roberts R., Craig, D., De Foe, D., & McManus, S. (2013). Predicting wellbeing. Prepared by NatCen Social Research for the Department of Health. https://www.natcen.ac.uk/media/205352/predictors-of-wellbeing.pdf

Charmaz, K. (2014). *Constructing grounded theory*. Sage.

Charrois, T. L. (2015). Systematic reviews: what do you need to know to get started?. *The Canadian journal of hospital pharmacy, 68*(2), 144.

Checkoway, B. (2011). "What is Youth Participation?" *Children and Youth Services Review, 33*(2): 340– 345.

Chenneville, T., & Schwartz-Mette, R. (2020). Ethical considerations for psychologists in the time of COVID-19. *American Psychologist*.

Chirkov, V. I. & Ryan, R. M. (2001). Parent and teacher autonomy-support in Russian and US adolescents: Common effects on well-being and academic motivation. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology 32*(5): 618–635.

Choudhury, S. (2010). Culturing the adolescent brain: what can neuroscience learn from anthropology? *Social cognitive and affective neuroscience*, *5*(2-3), 159-167.

Christison, C. (2013). The Benefits of Participating in Extracurricular Activities. *BU Journal of Graduate Studies in Education*, *5*(2), 17-20.

Chun Tie, Y., Birks, M., & Francis, K. (2019). Grounded theory research: A design framework for novice researchers. *SAGE open medicine*, *7*.

Clark, J., Laing, K., Leat, D., Lofthouse, R., Thomas, U., Tiplady, L. and Woolner, P. (2017). Transformation in interdisciplinary research methodology: the importance of shared experiences in landscapes of practice. *International Journal of Research and Method in Education, 40*(3), 243-256.

Clarke, T. (2020). Children's wellbeing and their academic achievement: The dangerous discourse of 'trade-offs' in education. *Theory and Research in Education*.

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

Clough, P., & Nutbrown, C. (2012). *A student's guide to methodology*. Sage.

Cohen, D. & Crabtree, B. (2006). *Qualitative Research Guidelines Project*. Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. http://www.qualres.org/HomeSemi-3629.htm

Cohen, J., McCabe, L., Michelli, N., & Pickeral, T. (2009). School climate: Research, policy, practice, and teacher education. *The Teachers College Record, 111*(1), 180–213.

Collishaw, S. (2015). Annual research review: secular trends in child and adolescent mental health. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry, 56*(3), 370-393.

Commonwealth d of Health and Family Services. (1996). *Promoting mental health and emotional well-being within a health promoting schools framework, draft guidelines*. Australian Government Printing Service.

Cook-Sather, A. (2002). Authorizing students' perspectives: Toward trust, dialogue, and change in education. *Educational Researcher, 31*(4), 3–14.

Cook-Sather, A. (2006). Sound, presence, and power: "Student Voice" in educational research and reform. *Curriculum Inquiry*, *36*, 359–390.

Coombes, L., Appleton, J. V., Allen, D., & Yerrell, P. (2013). Emotional Health and Well-being in Schools: Involving young people. *Children & Society*, *27*(3), 220-232.

Cope, D. G. (2014). Methods and meanings: Credibility and trustworthiness of qualitative research. In *Oncology nursing forum 41*(1), 89-91.

Copp, L. (2011). *Pupil voices: how schools can support pupils' emotional wellbeing* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Bristol).

Coppock, V. & Dunn, B. (2010). *Understanding social work practice in mental health*. Sage.

Creswell, J. W., & Miller, D. L. (2000). Determining validity in qualitative inquiry. *Theory into practice*, *39*(3), 124-130.

Crone, E. A., & Dahl, R. E. (2012). Understanding adolescence as a period of social–affective engagement and goal flexibility. *Nature Reviews Neuroscience*, *13*(9), 636-650.

Crosnoe, R., Johnson, M. K., & Elder, G. H., Jr. (2004). Intergenerational bonding in school: The behavioral and contextual correlates of student-teacher relationships. *Sociology of Education, 77*, 60-81.

Dahl, R. E., Allen, N. B., Wilbrecht, L., & Suleiman, A. B. (2018). Importance of investing in adolescence from a developmental science perspective. *Nature*, *554*(7693), 441-450.

Dahl, R. E., Suleiman, A., Luna, B., Choudhury, S., Noble, K., Lupien, S. J., & Uncapher, M. R. (2017). *The adolescent brain: A second window of opportunity*. UNICEF Office of Research.

Daley, A. J., & Leahy, J. (2003). Self-perceptions and participation in extra-curricular physical activities. *Physical Educator*, *60*(2), 13.

Deakin, H., & Wakefield, K. (2013). Skype interviewing: Reflections of two PhD researchers. *Qualitative research, 14*(5), 603-616.

deCharms, R. (1968). Personal causation: The internal affective determinants of behavior. Academic Press.

Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2000). The" what" and" why" of goal pursuits: Human needs and the self-determination of behavior. *Psychological inquiry*, *11*(4), 227-268.

Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2001). On happiness and human potentials: A review of research on hedonic and eudaimonic well-being. *Annual review of psychology, 52*(1), 141-166.

Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2008). 'Facilitating optimal motivation and psychological wellbeing across life's domains': Correction to Deci & Ryan (2008). *Canadian Psychology/Psychologie Canadienne, 49(*3), 262.

Deci, E. L., La Guardia, J. G., Moller, A., Scheiner, M. J., & Ryan, R. M. (2006). On the benefits of giving as well as receiving autonomy support: Mutuality in close friendships. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 32,* 313–327.

Denscombe, M. (2000). Social conditions for stress: Young people's experience of doing GCSEs. *British Educational Research Journal, 26*, 259–374.

Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (Eds.). (2017). *The Sage handbook of qualitative research*. Sage publications.

Department for Education. (2015a) Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years. UK Government. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/398815/SEND_Code_of_Practice_January_2015.pdf

Department for Education. (2015b). Counselling in schools: A blueprint for the future- Departmental advice for school leaders and counsellors. UK Government. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/497825/Counselling_in_schools.pdf

Department for Education. (2017). Preventing and tackling bullying: Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies. UK Government. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/623895/Preventing_and_tackling_bullying_advice.pdf

Department for Education. (2018). *Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools: Departmental Advice for School Staff*. UK Government. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/755135/Mental_health_and_behaviour_in_schools__.pdf

Department for Education. (2019a). *State of the Nation 2019: Children and Young People's Wellbeing*. UK Government. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/906693/State_of_the_Nation_2019_young_people_children_wellbeing.pdf

Department for Education. (2019b). *All Pupils Will Be Taught about Mental and Physical Wellbeing.* UK Government. https://www.gov.uk/government/news/all-pupils-will-be-taught-about-mental-and-physical-wellbeing

Department for Education. (2020a). *Keeping Children Safe in Education: Statutory Guidance for Schools and Colleges*. UK Government. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/835733/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2019.pdf

Department for Education. (2020b). *Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education*. UK Government. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/805781/Relationships_Education__Relationships_and_Sex_Education__RSE__and_Health_Education.pdf

Department for Education. (2021). Catch-up premium: coronavirus (COVID-19). UK Government. https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/catch-up-premium-coronavirus-covid-19/catch-up-premium.

Department for Education & Department of Health. (2015). Promoting the health and wellbeing of looked-after children: statutory guidance for local authorities, clinical commissioning groups and NHS England. UK Government. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/413368/Promoting_the_health_and_well-being_of_looked-after_children.pdf

Department for Education. (2014a). Mental health and behaviour in schools: Departmental advice for school staff. UK Government. https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/20290/1/Mental_health_and_behaviour_in_schools.pdf

Department for Education. (2014b). Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions: statutory guidance for governing bodies of maintained schools and proprietors of academies in England. UK Government. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/803956/supporting-pupils-at-school-with-medical-conditions.pdf

Department for Education. (2010). *The importance of teaching. The schools white paper 2010*. UK Government. www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/175429/CM-7980.pdf

Department of Health (DoH). (2014a). *Wellbeing and health policy. Wellbeing and why it matters to health.* UK Government. www.gov.uk/government/publications/wellbeing-and-health-policy

Department of Health (DoH). (2014b). *The Relationship between wellbeing and health.* UK Government. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/295474/The_relationship_between_wellbeing_and_health.pdf

Department of Health (DoH). (2015). *Future in mind: Promoting, protecting and improving our children and young people's mental health and wellbeing*. UK Government. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/414024/Childrens_Mental_Health.pdf

Department of Health & Department for Education (DoH & DfE). (2015). *Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0- 25 years*. UK Government. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/398815/SEND_Code_of_Practice_January_2015.pdf

Department of Health & Department for Education (DoH & DfE). (2017). *Transforming children and young people's mental health provision: A green paper.* UK Government. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/728892/government-response-to-consultation-on-transforming-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health.pdf

Diener, E., & Suh, E. (1997). Measuring quality of life: Economic, social and subjective indicators. *Social Indicators Research, 40*, 189-216.

Diener, M. L., & Diener McGavran, M. B. (2008). What makes people happy? A developmental approach to the literature on family relationships and well-being. In M. Eid & R. J. Larsen (Eds.), *The science of subjective well-being* (pp. 347–375). Guilford.

Dinisman, T., & Ben-Arieh, A. (2016). The characteristics of children's subjective well-being. *Social indicators research*, *126*(2), 555-569.

Dodge, R., Daly, A. P., Huyton, J., & Sanders, L. D. (2012). The challenge of defining wellbeing. *International Journal of Wellbeing*, *2*(3).

Dolan, P., Peasgood, T., & White, M. (2008). Do we really know what makes us happy? A review of the economic literature on the factors associated with subjective well-being. *Journal of economic psychology*, *29*(1), 94-122.

Donaldson, D., Prinstein, M.J., Danovsky, M., & Spirito, A. (2000). Patterns of children's coping with life stress: Implications for clinicians. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 70*, 351–359.

Drisko, J. W. (2020). Qualitative research synthesis: An appreciative and critical introduction. *Qualitative Social Work, 19(*4), 736-753.

Donnelly, M., Lazetic, P., Sandoval-Hernández, A., Kameshwara, K. K., & Whewall, S. (2019). An Unequal Playing Field: Extra-curricular activities, soft skills and social mobility. Social Mobility Commission.

Dunsmuir, S., & Cobbald, A. (2016). A framework for promoting child mental health in schools. In B. Kelly, L. M. Woolfson, & J. Boyle (Eds), *Frameworks for practice in educational psychology. A textbook for trainees and practitioners* (2nd ed.). Jessica Kingsley.

Durlak, J. A., Weissberg, R. P., Dymnicki, A. B., Taylor, R. D., & Schellinger, K. B. (2011). The impact of enhancing students' social and emotional learning: A meta-analysis of school-based universal interventions. *Child development, 82*(1), 405-432.

Ekornes, S. (2015). Teacher perspectives on their role and the challenges of inter-professional collaboration in mental health promotion. *School Mental Health*, *7*(3), 193–211.

Esteban-Gonzalo, S., Esteban-Gonzalo, L., Cabanas-Sánchez, V., Miret, M., & Veiga, O. L. (2020). The Investigation of Gender Differences in Subjective Wellbeing in Children and Adolescents: The UP&DOWN Study. *International journal of environmental research and public health*, *17*(8), 2732.

Faircloth, B. S., & Hamm, J. V. (2011). Dynamic quality of adolescent peer networks and belonging. *Merrill-Palmer Quarterly, 57*, 48–72.

Fattore, T., Mason, J., & Watson, E. (2007). Children's conceptualisation(s) of their well-being. *Social indicators research*, *80*(1), 5-29.

Fazel, M., Hoagwood, K., Stephan, S., & Ford, T. (2014). Mental health interventions in schools in high-income countries. *The Lancet Psychiatry, 1*(5), 377-387.

Fegert, J. M., Vitiello, B., Plener, P. L., & Clemens, V. (2020). Challenges and burden of the Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic for child and adolescent mental health: a narrative review to highlight clinical and research needs in the acute phase and the long return to normality. *Child and adolescent psychiatry and mental health*, *14*, 1-11.

Fegert, J. M., Vitiello, B., Plener, P. L., & Clemens, V. (2020). Challenges and burden of the Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic for child and adolescent mental health: a narrative review to highlight clinical and research needs in the acute phase and the long return to normality. *Child and adolescent psychiatry and mental health*, *14*, 1-11.

Festinger, L. (1954). A theory of social comparison process. *Human Relations, 7*, 177-140.

Fitzsimons, E., Goodman, A., Kelly, E., & Smith, J. P. (2017). Poverty dynamics and parental mental health: Determinants of childhood mental health in the UK. *Social Science & Medicine*, *175*, 43-51.

Foster, J. J., & Parker, I. (1995). *Carrying out investigations in psychology: Methods and statistics*. BPS Books.

Foulkes, L. (2021). *Losing Our Minds. What Mental Illness Really Is – and What It Isn't.* Penguin.

Fox, N., Henderson, H., Marshall, P., Nichols, K., & Ghera, M. (2005). Behavioural inhibition: Linking biology and behaviour within a developmental framework. *Annual Review Psychology, 56*, 235–262.

Freiberg, H. J. (Ed.). (1999). *School climate: Measuring, improving, and sustaining healthy learning environments*. Falmer Press.

Fugard, A. J., & Potts, H. W. (2015). Supporting thinking on sample sizes for thematic analyses: a quantitative tool. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, *18*(6), 669-684.

Furrer, C. J., Skinner, E. A., & Pitzer, J. R. (2014). The influence of teacher and peer relationships on students' classroom engagement and everyday motivational resilience. *National Society for the Study of Education*, *113*(1), 101-123.

Gaffney, H., Farrington, D. P., Espelage, D. L., & Ttofi, M. M. (2019). Are cyberbullying intervention and prevention programs effective? A systematic and meta-analytical review. *Aggression and violent behavior*, *45*, 134-153

Galbin, A. (2014). An introduction to social constructionism. *Social Research Reports, 6*(26), 82-92.

Gallagher, M., & Millar, R. (1996). A survey of adolescent worry in Northern Ireland. *Pastoral Care in Education*, *14*, 26–32.

Galloway, A. (2005). Non-probability sampling. In K. Kempf-Leonard (Ed.), *Encyclopaedia of social measurement* (pp. 859-864). Elsevier.

Giletta, M., Scholte, R. H. J., Burk, W. J., Engels, R. C. M. E., Larsen, J. K., Prinstein, M. J., & Ciairano, S. (2011). Similarity in depressive symptoms in adolescents' friendship dyads: Selection or socialization? *Developmental Psychology, 47*(6), 1804–1814.

Gillman, B. (2000). *The research interview*. Continuum.

Glaser, B., & Strauss, A. (1967). *The Discovery of Grounded Theory*. Aldine Publishing Company.

Glazzard, J., & Rose, A. (2019). The impact of teacher well-being and mental health on pupil progress in primary schools. *Journal of Public Mental Health*.

Goldberg, J., Sklad, M., Elfrink, T., Schreurs, K., Bohlmeijer, E., & Clarke, A. (2019). Effectiveness of interventions adopting a whole school approach to enhancing social and emotional development: a meta-analysis. *European Journal of Psychology of Education, 34,* 755- 782.

Golding, J. (2004). The Avon Longitudinal Study of Parents and Children (ALSPAC)--study design and collaborative opportunities. *European Journal of Endocrinology, 151*(3), 119-123.

Gorard, S. & See, B.H. (2011). How can we enhance enjoyment of secondary school? The student view. *British Educational Research Journal, 37*(4), 671–690.

Gorman, D. (2010). Maslow's hierarchy and social and emotional wellbeing. *Aboriginal and Islander Health Worker Journal, 34*(1), 27-29.

Goswami, H. (2012). Social relationships and children's subjective well-being. *Social Indicators Research, 107*(3), 575–588.

Gowing, A. (2019). Peer-peer relationships: A key factor in enhancing school connectedness and belonging. *Educational and Child Psychology*, *36*(2), 64-77.

Graham, A., Fitzgerald, R., Powell, M. A., Thomas, N., Anderson, D. L., White, N. E., & Simmons, C. A. (2014). Wellbeing in schools: research project: improving approaches to wellbeing in schools: what role does recognition play? Final report: volume two.

Green, C. L., Walker, J. M. T., Hoover-Dempsey, K. V., & Sandler, H. M. (2007). Parents' motivations for involvement in children's education: An empirical test of a theoretical model of parental involvement. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 99,* 532–544.

Greenspoon, P. J., & Saklofske, D. H. (2001). Toward an integration of subjective well-being and psychopathology. *Social Indicators Research, 54*(1), 81-108.

Gristy, C. (2012). The central importance of peer relationships for student engagement and well-being in a rural secondary school. *Pastoral Care in Education, 30*(3), 225–240.

Grühn, D., Rebucal, K., Diehl, M., Lumley, M., & Labouvie-Vief, G. (2008). Empathy across the adult lifespan: Longitudinal and experience-sampling findings. *Emotion, 8*(6), 753.

Guba, E. G., & Lincoln, Y. (1989). *Fourth generation evaluation*. Sage.

Guba, E. G., & Lincoln, Y. S. (1994). Competing paradigms in qualitative research. *Handbook of qualitative research*, *2*(163-194), 105.

Guest, G., MacQueen, K. M., & Namey, E. E. (2012). *Applied thematic analysis*. Sage.

Guillemin, M., & Heggen, K. (2009). Rapport and respect: negotiating ethical relations between researcher and participant. *Medicine, Health Care and Philosophy*, *12*(3), 291-299.

Gulliver, A., Griffiths, K. M., & Christensen, H. (2010). Perceived barriers and facilitators to mental health help-seeking in young people: a systematic review. *BMC psychiatry*, *10*(1), 1-9.

Gutman, L. M., & Vorhaus, J. (2012). *The impact of pupil behaviour and wellbeing on educational outcomes*. UK Government. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/219638/DFE-RR253.pdf

Gutman, L., & Akerman, R. (2008). *Determinants of aspirations [wider benefits of learning research report no. 27]*. Centre for Research on the Wider Benefits of Learning, Institute of Education, University of London.

Gutman, L., Brown, J., Akerman, R, et al. (2010). *Change in Wellbeing from Childhood to Adolescence: Risk and Resilience*, *34*. Centre for Research on the Wider Benefits of Learning.

Hagell, A., Sandberg, S., & MacDonald, R. (2012). Stress and mental health in adolescence: interrelationship and time trends. *Changing adolescence: Social trends and mental health*, 27-46.

Hall, R., A. (2021). Teaching unions criticise plan to extend school day in England: Covid catch-up proposals are underfunded and could do 'more harm than good'. *The Guardian.* https://www.theguardian.com/education/2021/jun/01/teaching-unions-criticise-plan-to-extend-school-day-in-england

Halliday, A. J., Kern, M. L., Garrett, D. K., & Turnbull, D. A. (2019). The student voice in well-being: A case study of participatory action research in positive education. *Educational Action Research, 27*(2), 173-196.

Hammarberg, K., Kirkman, M., & de Lacey, S. (2016). Qualitative research methods: when to use them and how to judge them. *Human reproduction*, *31*(3), 498-501.

Harding, S., Morris, R., Gunnell, D., Ford, T., Hollingworth, W., Tilling, K., Evans, R., Bell, S., Grey, J., Brockman, R., Campbell, R., Araya, R., Murphy, S., & Kidger, J. (2019). Is teachers' mental health and wellbeing associated with students' mental health and wellbeing?. *Journal of affective disorders*, *242*, 180-187.

Harland, J., Dawson, A., Rabiasz, A., & Sims, D. (2015). NFER teacher voice omnibus: questions for the Department for Education – June 2015. DfE. https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/483275/D FE-RR493_Teacher_voice_omnibus_questions_for_DfE_-_June_2015.pdf

Harvey, A. J., & Keyes, H. (2019). How do I compare thee? An evidence-based approach to the presentation of class comparison information to students using Dashboard. *Innovations in Education and Teaching International*, *56*(2), 163-174.

Haworth, C. M., Carter, K., Eley, T. C., & Plomin, R. (2017). Understanding the genetic and environmental specificity and overlap between well-being and internalizing symptoms in adolescence. *Developmental science*, *20*(2).

Health & Care Professions Council. (2016). *Standards of conduct, performance and ethics.* HCPC. https://www.hcpc-uk.org/globalassets/resources/standards/standards-of-conduct-performance-and-ethics.pdf

Heller-Sahlgren, G. (2018). The Achievement–Wellbeing Trade-Off in Education. *Centre for Education Economics*.

Hirsch, B. J., & DuBois, D. L. (1992). The relation of peer social support and psychological symptomatology during the transition to junior high school: A two-year longitudinal analysis. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 20,* 333-347.

Holder, M.D. (2012). *Happiness in children: Measurement, correlates and enhancement of positive subjective well-being*. Springer.

Holloway, I., & Todres, L. (2003). The status of method: Flexibility, consistency and coherence. *Qualitative Research, 3,* 345–357.

Houghton, C., Casey, D., Shaw, D., & Murphy, K. (2013). Rigour in qualitative case-study research. *Nurse Researcher, 20*(4), 12–17.

Howard, E. (2020). A review of the literature concerning anxiety for educational assessments. Ofqual. https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/35045/1/A_review_of_the_literature_concerning_anxiety_for_educational_assessment.pdf

Howitt, D. (2010). *Introduction to qualitative methods in psychology (2nd ed.)*. Pearson.

Huebner, E. S., Seligson, J. L., Valois, R. F., & Suldo, S. M. (2006). A review of the brief multidimensional students' life satisfaction scale. *Social Indicators Research*, *79*(3), 477-484.

Huppert, F. A., & So, T. T. C. (2013). Flourishing across Europe: Application of a new conceptual framework for defining well-being. *Social Indicators Research, 110*, 837–861.

Huxley, C. J., Clarke, V., & Halliwell, E. (2011). "It's a comparison thing, isn't it?" Lesbian and bisexual women's accounts of how partner relationships shape their feelings about their body and appearance. *Psychology of Women Quarterly, 35*(3), 415-427.

Huzzard, T. (2020). Achieving impact: Exploring the challenge of stakeholder engagement. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, 1-11.

International Planned Parenthood Federation. (2012). Understanding Young People's Right to Decide: What is Childhood and what do we mean by Young Person? International Planned Parenthood Federation. https://www.ippf.org/sites/default/files/ippf_right_to_decide_01.pdf

Jamal, F., Fletcher, A., Harden, A., Wells, H., Thomas, J., & Bonell, C. (2013). The school environment and student health: a systematic review and meta-ethnography of qualitative research. *BMC public health*, *13*(1), 1-11.

Jamshed, S. (2014). Qualitative research method-interviewing and observation. *Journal of basic and clinical pharmacy*, *5*(4), 87.

Jha, A.K. (2012). "Epistemological and pedagogical concerns of constructionism: relating to the educational practices", *Creative Education, 3*(2), 171-178.

Joffe, H. and Yardley, L. (2004). Content and Thematic Analysis. In D. Marks & L. Yardley (Eds.). *Research Methods for Clinical and Healthy Psychology*. Sage.

Johnson, B. (2008). Teacher-student relationships which promote resilience at school: A micro level analysis of students' views. *British Journal of Guidance and Counselling, 36*(4), 385–398.

Jones, E., Gutman, L., & Platt, L. (2013). Family stressors and children's outcomes. Childhood Wellbeing Research Centre. UK Government. https://www.interfaceenterprises.co.uk/assets/news/brochures/new-blog-post/DFE-RR254-1.pdf

Jones, L., Doces, M., Swearer, S., & Collier, A. (2012). *Implementing bullying prevention programs in schools: A how-to guide* (Berkman Center Research Publication No. 2013-1).

Kaye-Tzadok, A., Kim, S. S., & Main, G. (2017). Children's subjective well-being in relation to gender - What can we learn from dissatisfied children? *Children and Youth Services Review*, *80*, 96-104.

Kelly, P., Watt, L., & Giddens, S. (2020). An Attachment aware schools programme: a safe space, a nurturing learning community. *Pastoral Care in Education*, *38*(4), 335-354.

Kern, M. L., Waters, L., Adler, A., & White, M. (2015). A multidimensional approach to measuring wellbeing in students: Application of the PERMA framework. *The Journal of Positive Psychology, 10*(3), 262-271.

Keyes, C. L. (2005). Mental illness and/or mental health? Investigating axioms of the complete state model of health. *Journal of consulting and clinical psychology*, *73*(3), 539.

Kivunja, C., & Kuyini, A. B. (2017). Understanding and Applying Research Paradigms in Educational Contexts. *International Journal of higher education, 6*(5), 26-41.

Klinger, D.A., Freeman, J. G., Sebok, S. S., Bilz, L., Liiv, K., Ramelow, D., Samdal. O., Dür, W., & Rasmussen, M. (2015). Cross-national trends in perceived school pressure by gender and age from 1994 to 2010. *The European Journal of Public Health*, *25*(2), 51-56.

Klocke, A., Clair, A., & Bradshaw, J. (2014). International variation in child subjective well-being. *Child Indicators Research*, *7*(1), 1-20.

Korstjens, I., & Moser, A. (2018). Series: Practical guidance to qualitative research. Part 4: Trustworthiness and publishing. *European Journal of General Practice, 24*(1), 120-124.

Krnjaić, Z. (2019). Hobby Potential for Positive Youth Development and Wellbeing. In *The Book of Proceedings of the 25th International Scientific Conference 25th Round Table on Giftedness "Complexity of the phenomenon of giftedness and creativity– challenges: an individual and society* (pp.41-47).

Ladd, G. W. (1990). Having friends, keeping friends, making friends, and being liked by peers in the classroom: Predictors of children's early school adjustment?. *Child Development, 72,* 1081-1100.

Ladd, G. W. (2009). Trends, travails, and turning points in early research on children's peer relationships. In K. H. Rubin, W. M. Bukowski, & B. Laursen (Eds.), *Handbook of peer interactions, relationships, and groups* (pp. 20–41). The Guilford.

Lagacé-Séguin, D. G., & Case, E. (2010). Extracurricular activity and parental involvement predict positive outcomes in elementary school children. *Early Child Development & Care*, *180*(4), 453–462.

Lame, G. (2019). Systematic literature reviews: an introduction. In *Proceedings of the Design Society: International Conference on Engineering Design*, *1*(1), 633-1642. Cambridge University Press.

Langford, H. (2016). Exploring the Perspectives of Children and Young People; How Children and Young People View Secondary School Staff to Support Pupil Wellbeing. [Doctoral Thesis]. University of Exeter.

Lansdown, G. (2001). *Promoting children's participation in democratic decision-making.* UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre.

Lansdown, G., Jimerson, S. R., & Shahroozi, R. (2014). Children's Rights and School Psychology: Children's Right to Participation. *Journal of School Psychology 52*(1), 3–12.

Law, P. C., Cuskelly, M., & Carroll, A. (2013). Young people's perceptions of family, peer, and school connectedness and their impact on adjustment. *Australian Journal of Guidance and Counselling, 23*, 115–140.

Leung, L. (2015). Validity, reliability, and generalizability in qualitative research. *Journal of family medicine and primary care*, *4*(3), 324.

Lewis, A. (2020). 1 Understanding the concept of child well-being. *Childhood Well-being and Resilience: Influences on Educational Outcomes*, 7.

Lincoln, Y., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. Sage.

Linton, M. J., Dieppe, P., & Medina-Lara, A. (2016). Review of 99 self-report measures for assessing well-being in adults: exploring dimensions of well-being and developments over time. *BMJ open*, *6*(7).

Little, S. & Maunder, R. (2020). Training secondary school teachers on early attachment trauma and adolescent brain development: Impact on empathy. *Educational Studies.*

Little, S., & Maunder, R. (2021). Why we should train teachers on the impact of childhood trauma on classroom behaviour. *Educational and Child Psychology*, *38*(1), 54-61.

Littlecott, H. J., Moore, G. F., & Murphy, S. M. (2018). Student health and well-being in secondary schools: the role of school support staff alongside teaching staff. *Pastoral care in education*, *36*(4), 297-312.

Loschert, K. (2019). Science of Learning: What Educators Need to Know about Adolescent Development. Alliance for Excellent Education.

Lyons, M. D., Huebner, E. S., & Hills, K. J. (2013). The dual-factor model of mental health: A short-term longitudinal study of school-related outcomes. *Social Indicators Research*, *114*(2), 549-565.

Ma, C. Q., & Huebner, E. S. (2008). Attachment relationships and adolescents' life satisfaction: Some relationships matter more to girls than boys. *Psychology in the Schools, 45*, 177–190.

Mahoney, J. L., Larson, R. W., & Eccles, J. (Eds.). *Organized activities as contexts of development: Extracurricular activities, after-school and community programs*. Lawrence Erlbaum.

Mansfield, K. L., Jindra, C., & Fazel, M. (2020). *The OxWell School Survey 2020: Report of Preliminary Findings*. University of Oxford. https://www.psych.ox.ac.uk/research/schoolmentalhealth/summary-report/preliminarysummaryreport_oxwellsurvey2020_entire_survey_2020-09-11.pdf

Marin, P., & Brown, B. (2008). The school environment and adolescent well-being: Beyond academics. *JAMA*, *295*(13), 1549-1555.

Marshall, L., Wishart, R., Allison, D., & Smith, N. (2017). Supporting Mental Health in Schools and Colleges: Quantitative Survey. UK Government. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/634726/Supporting_Mental-Health_survey_report.pdf

Martin, A. J., & Dowson, M. (2009). Interpersonal relationships, motivation, engagement, and achievement: Yields for theory, current issues, and educational practice. *Review of Educational Research, 79,* 327–365.

Marucci, E., Oldenburg, B., & Barrera, D. (2018). Do teachers know their students? Examining teacher attunement in secondary schools. *School Psychology International*, *39*(4), 416-432.

Maslow, A. H. (1943). A theory of human motivation. *Psychological Review, 50*(4), 370-96.

Maslow, A. H. (1954). *Motivation and personality*. Harper & Row.

Maslow, A. H. (1970). *Motivation and personality* (2nd ed.). Harper & Row.

Masonbrink, A. R., & Hurley, E. (2020). Advocating for children during the COVID-19 school closures. *Paediatrics, 146*(3).

McLaughlin, C., & Clarke, B. (2010). Relational matters: A review of the impact of school experience on mental health in early adolescence. *Educational and Child Psychology*, *27*(1), 91.

McNeely, C.A., Nonnemaker, J.M. & Blum, R.W. (2002). Promoting school connectedness: Evidence from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health. *Journal of School Health, 72*(4), 138–146.

Michel, G., Bisegger, C., Fuhr, D. C., & Abel, T. (2009). Age and gender differences in health-related quality of life of children and adolescents in Europe: a multilevel analysis. *Quality of life research*, *18*(9), 1147-1157.

Milatz, A., Lüftenegger, M., & Schober, B. (2015). Teachers' relationship closeness with students as a resource for teacher wellbeing: A response surface analytical approach. *Frontiers in psychology*, *6*, 1949.

Mogashoa, T. (2014). Applicability of constructivist theory in qualitative educational research. *American International Journal of Contemporary Research*, *4*(7), 51-59.

Moher, D., Liberati, A., Tetzlaff, J., & Altman, D. G. (2010). Preferred reporting items for systematic reviews and meta-analyses: the PRISMA statement. *International Journal of Surgery*, *8*(5), 336-341.

Morin, A. J. S., Marsh, H. W., Nagengast, B., & Scalas, L. F. (2014). Doubly latent multilevel analyses of classroom climate: An illustration. *Journal of Experimental Education, 82*(2), 143–167.

National Institute for Health and Care Excellence. (2020). *Social and Emotional Wellbeing in Secondary Education: NICE public health guidance*. NICE. https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ph20/resources/social-and-emotional-wellbeing-in-secondary-education-1996230289093

Nelson, E. E., Leibenluft, E., McClure, E. B., & Pine, D. S. (2005). The social re-orientation of adolescence: A neuroscience perspective on the process and its relation to psychopathology. *Psychological Medicine, 35*, 163–174.

New Economics Foundation. (2012). *Measuring Wellbeing: A guide for practitioners*. New Economics Foundation. https://b.3cdn.net/nefoundation/8d92cf44e70b3d16e6_rgm6bpd3i.pdf

Newland, L. (2014). Supportive family contexts: promoting child well-being and resilience. *Early Child Development and Care, 184(9-10),* 1336-1346.

Newton, N. (2010). Exploring Qualitative Methods: The use of semi-structured interviews. *Exploring Qualitative Methods*, 1-11.

Nezlek, J. B. (2000). The motivational and cognitive dynamics of day-to-day social life. In J. P. Forgas, K. Williams, & L. Wheeler (Eds.), *The social mind: Cognitive and motivational aspects of interpersonal behavior* (pp. 92–111). Cambridge University Press.

Noble, T., & McGrath, H. (2008). The positive educational practices framework: A tool for facilitating the work of educational psychologists in promoting pupil wellbeing. *Educational and Child Psychology*, *25*, 119–134.

Noble, T., McGrath, H., Roffey, S. & Rowling, L. (2008). *A scoping study on student well-being*. Department of Education, Employment & Workplace Relations.

Noblit, G. W., & Hare, R. D. (1988). *Meta-Ethnography: Synthesizing Qualitative Studies* (Vol. 11). Sage Publications.

Nowell, L. S., Norris, J. M., White, D. E., & Moules, N. J. (2017). Thematic analysis: Striving to meet the trustworthiness criteria. *International journal of qualitative methods*, *16*(1).

O'Connor, C. A., Dyson, J., Cowdell, F., & Watson, R. (2018). Do universal school-based mental health promotion programmes improve the mental health and emotional wellbeing of young people? A literature review. *Journal of clinical nursing*, *27*, 3-4.

O'Connor, H., Madge, C., Shaw, R., & Wellens, J. (2008). Internet-based interviewing. *The Sage handbook of online research methods*, 271-289.

Oberle, E., Ji, X. R., Guhn, M., Schonert-Reichl, K. A., & Gadermann, A. M. (2019). Benefits of extracurricular participation in early adolescence: Associations with peer belonging and mental health. Journal of youth and adolescence, 48(11), 2255-2270.

Oberle, E., Schonert-Reichl, K. A., & Thomson, K. C. (2010). Understanding the link between social and emotional well-being and peer relations in early adolescence: Gender-specific predictors of peer acceptance. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, *39*(11), 1330-1342.

OECD. (2015). *PISA 2015 Results (Volume I), Excellence and Equity in Education*. OECD. https://www.oecd.org/education/pisa-2015- results-volume-i-9789264266490-en.htm

Office for National Statistics. (2018). *Children's Wellbeing Measures*. ONS. https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/wellbeing/datasets/childrenswellbeingmeasures

Office for Standards in Education. (2019). *Education Inspection Framework*. London: The Stationery Office. UK Government. https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/education-inspection-framework

Ofsted. (2019). Teacher well-being at work in schools and further education providers. Author. UK Government. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/819314/Teacher_well-being_report_110719F.pdf

Okonofua, J. A, Paunesku, D., & Walton, G. M. (2016). Brief Intervention to Encourage Empathic Discipline Cuts Suspension Rates in Half Among Adolescents. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences in the United States of America, 113*(19), 5221-5226.

Orben, A., Tomova, L., & Blakemore, S. J. (2020). The effects of social deprivation on adolescent development and mental health. *The Lancet Child & Adolescent Health*.

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. (2015). *Skills for social progress: The power of social and emotional skills*. OECD Publishing.

Osterman, K. F. (2000). Students' need for belonging in the school community. *Review of educational research*, *70*(3), 323-367.

Oyarzún-Gómez, D., & de la Pava, J. L. (2019). Exploring subjective well-being and school sense of community among high school students through photovoice. *Child Indicators Research*, 1-25.

Park, S., & Holloway, S. (2018). Parental Involvement in Adolescents' Education: An Examination of the Interplay among School Factors, Parental Role Construction, and Family Income. *School Community Journal*, *28*(1), 9-36.

Pascoe, M. C., Hetrick, S. E., & Parker, A. G. (2020). The impact of stress on students in secondary school and higher education. *International Journal of Adolescence and Youth*, *25*(1), 104-112.

Patalay, P., & Fitzsimons, E. (2016). Correlates of Mental Illness and Wellbeing in Children: Are they the same? Results from the UK Millennium Cohort Study. *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, 55*(9), 771-783.

Patalay, P., & Fitzsimons, E. (2017). *Mental ill-health among children of the new century: trends across childhood with a focus on age 14*. London: Centre for Longitudinal Studies.

Patalay, P., & Fitzsimons, E. (2018). Development and predictors of mental ill- health and wellbeing from childhood to adolescence. *Social Psychiatry and Psychiatric Epidemiology, 53*(12), 1311-1323.

Pati, D., & Lorusso, L. N. (2018). How to write a systematic review of the literature. *HERD: Health Environments Research & Design Journal, 11*(1), 15-30.

Patton, G. C., Sawyer, S. M., Santelli, J. S., Ross, D. A., Afifi, R., Allen, N. B., Arora, M., Azzopardi, P., Baldwin, W., Bonell, C., Kakuma, R., Kennedy, E., Mahon, J., McGovern, T., Mokdad, A. H., Patel, V., Petroni, S., Reavley, N., Taiwo, K., Waldfogel, J., … Viner, R. M. (2016). Our future: a Lancet commission on adolescent health and wellbeing. *The Lancet 387*(10036), 2423–2478.

Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods* (3rd ed.). Sage.

Peña-López, I. (2017). PISA 2015 Results (Volume III). *Students' Well-Being*.

Pence, A. R., & Dymond, S. K. (2015). Extracurricular school clubs: A time for fun and learning. *Teaching Exceptional Children*, *47*(5), 281-288.

Petticrew, M., & Roberts, H. (2006). *Systematic reviews in the social sciences: a practical guide*. Blackwell.

Pfeifer, J. H., & Peake, S. J. (2012). Self-development: Integrating cognitive, socioemotional, and neuroimaging perspectives. *Developmental Cognitive Neuroscience, 2*(1), 55–69.

Pietkiewicz, I., & Smith, J. A. (2014). A practical guide to using interpretative phenomenological analysis in qualitative research psychology. *Psychological journal, 20*(1), 7-14.

Pollard, E.L., & Lee, P.D. (2003). Child Well-being: A Systematic Review of the Literature. *Social Indicators Research, 61*(1), 59-78.

Ponterotto, J. G. (2005). Qualitative Research in Counseling Psychology: A Primer on Research Paradigms and Philosophy of Science. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 52*(2), 126–136.

Powdthavee, N., & Vignoles, A. (2008). Mental health of parents and life satisfaction of children: A within-family analysis of intergenerational transmission of well-being. *Social Indicators Research, 88*, 397–422.

Public Health England (PHE). (2014a). *The link between pupil health and wellbeing and attainment*. UK Government. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/370686/HT_briefing_layoutvFINALvii.pdf

Public Health England (PHE). (2014b). *Improving Young People's Health and Wellbeing: A Framework for Public Health*. UK Government. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/773365/20150128_YP_HW_Framework_FINAL_WP__3_.pdf

Public Health England (PHE). (2015). *Promoting children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing. A whole school and college approach*. UK Government.

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/promoting-children-and-young-peoples-emotional-health-and-wellbeing

Public Health England. (2021). Guidance for parents and carers on supporting children and young people's mental health and wellbeing during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. UK Government. https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing/guidance-for-parents-and-carers-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak

Purewal, N. (2020). An investigation of the role of the Educational Psychologist in meeting social, emotional and mental health needs [Unpublished Doctoral thesis]. University of Nottingham.

Putwain, D. W. (2007). Researching academic stress and anxiety in students: some methodological considerations. *British Educational Research Journal*, *33*(2), 207-219.

Putwain, D. W. (2008). Test anxiety and GCSE performance: The effect of gender and socio-economic background. *Educational Psychology in Practice: Theory, Research and Practice in Educational Psychology, 24*(4), 319–334.

Putwain, D. W. (2009a). Assessment and examination stress in Key Stage 4. *British Educational Research Journal, 35*(3), pp. 391 -411.

Putwain, D. W. (2009b). Situated and contextual features of test anxiety in UK adolescent students. *School Psychology International, 30*(1), 56–74.

Putwain, D. W., & Roberts, C. M. (2009). The development and validation of the teachers use of fear appeals questionnaire. *British Journal of Educational Psychology, 79*(4), 643–661.

Putwain, D., & Symes, W. (2011). Teachers' use of fear appeals in the Mathematics classroom: Worrying or motivating students? *British Journal of Educational Psychology, 81*, 456–474.

Putwain, D., Remedios, R., & Symes, W. (2016). 'Experiencing fear appeals as a challenge or a threat influences attainment value and academic self-efficacy', *Learning and Instruction*, 40, pp. 21-28.

Ranson, K. E. & Urichuk, L. J. (2008). The effect of parent-child attachment relationships on child biopsychosocial outcomes: A review. *Early Child Development and Care, 178*(2), 129–152.

Ratnayake, P., & Hyde, C. (2019). Mental health literacy, help-seeking behaviour and wellbeing in young people: Implications for practice. *The Educational and Developmental Psychologist*, *36*(1), 16-21.

Rees, G., Bradshaw, J., Goswami, H. & Keung, A. (2010). *Understanding Children's Well-being: A National Survey of Young People's Well-being*. The Children's Society & The University of York. https://www.york.ac.uk/inst/spru/research/pdf/Understanding.pdf

Rees, G., Goswami, H., People, L., Bradshaw, J., Keung, A., & Main, G. (2012). *The Good Child Report: A Review of Our Children's Wellbeing*. BASW. https://www.basw.co.uk/system/files/resources/basw_110600-6_0.pdf

Renshaw, T. L., Long, A. C., & Cook, C. R. (2015). Assessing adolescents' positive psychological functioning at school: Development and validation of the Student Subjective Wellbeing Questionnaire. *School psychology quarterly, 30*(4), 534.

Richards, K. (2003). *Qualitative Inquiry in TESOL*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Ritchie, J. & Lewis, J. (2003). *Qualitative research practice: a guide for social science students and researchers*. Sage.

Rob, M., & Rob, F. (2018). Dilemma between constructivism and constructionism. *Journal of International Education in Business*.

Robson, C., & McCartan, K. (2016). *Real world research*. John Wiley & Sons.

Roeser, R.W., Eccles, J.S. & Sameroff, A.J. (2000). School as a context of early adolescents' academic and social-emotional development; a summary of the research findings. *The Elementary School Journal, 100*(5), 443–471.

Roffey, S. (2011). Enhancing connectedness in Australian children and young people. *Asian Journal of Counselling, 18*(1), 15-39.

Roffey, S. (2015). Becoming an agent of change for school and student well-being. *Educational & Child Psychology*, *32*(1), 21-30.

Roffey, S. (2017). Young people's wellbeing in schools: Student voice and agency. In Hardy, J. & Hobbs, C. *Using qualitative research to hear the voice of children and young people: The work of British educational psychologists*. The British Psychological Society.

Roffey, S., Williams, A., Greig, A., & MacKay, T. A. W. N. (2016). Mental health and wellbeing in schools: Concerns, challenges and opportunities. *Educational and Child Psychology*, *33*(4), 5-7.

Rosenfeld, L. B., Richman, J. M., & Bowen, G. L. (2000). Social support networks and school outcomes: The centrality of the teacher. *Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal, 17*, 205–226.

Rubin, K. H., Coplan, R., Chen, X., Bowker, J., & McDonald, K. L. (2011). Peer relationships in childhood. In Bornstein, M.H. & Lamb, M. E. (Eds.), *Developmental science: An advanced textbook* (pp. 519–570).

Ryan-Nicholls, K.D., & Will, C.I. (2009). Rigour in qualitative research: Mechanisms for control. *Nurse Researcher, 16*(3), 70–85.

Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2000). Self-determination theory and the facilitation of intrinsic motivation, social development, and well-being. *American Psychologist, 55*, 68–78.

Ryan, R. M., Huta, V., & Deci, E. L. (2008). Living well: A self-determination theory perspective on eudaimonia. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, *9*(1), 139-70.

Ryff, C. D. (1989). Happiness is everything, or is it? Explorations on the meaning of psychological well-being. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 57,* 1069–1081.

Ryff, C. D. (2014). Psychological well-being revisited: Advances in the science and practice of eudaimonia. *Psychotherapy and psychosomatics*, *83*(1), 10-28.

Ryff, C. D., & Singer, B. (2000). Interpersonal flourishing: A positive health agenda for the new millennium. *Personality and Social Psychology Review, 4*, 30–44.

Ryff, C. D., & Singer, B. H. (2008). Know thyself and become what you are: A eudaimonic approach to psychological well-being. *Journal of happiness studies, 9*(1), 13-39.

Salter, E. (2010). The Promotion of Emotional Well Being in Secondary Schools. [Doctoral Thesis]. University of Sheffield.

Sandelowski, M. (1986). The problem of rigor in qualitative research. *Advances in Nursing Science, 8*, 27–37.

Sandelowski, M. (1995). Sample size in qualitative research. *Research in nursing & health*, *18*(2), 179-183.

Sandelowski, M. (1996). One is the liveliest number: The case orientation of qualitative research. *Research in nursing & health*, *19*(6), 525-529.

Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council. (n.d.). *The Sandwell Wellbeing Charter Mark.* https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/info/200343/well-being_charter_mark/4225/about_the_sandwell_well-being_charter_mark

Savin-Baden, M., & Major, C. H. (2010). *New approaches to qualitative research: Wisdom and uncertainty.* Routledge.

Sawyer, S. M., Afifi, R. A., Bearinger, L. H., Blakemore, S. J., Dick, B., Ezeh, A. C., & Patton, G. C. (2012). Adolescence: a foundation for future health. *The lancet*, *379*(9826), 1630-1640.

Sawyer, S. M., Azzopardi, P. S., Wickremarathne, D., & Patton, G. C. (2018). The age of adolescence. *The Lancet Child & Adolescent Health*, *2*(3), 223-228.

Schaefer, D. R., Simpkins, S. D., Vest, A. E., & Price, C. D. (2011). The contribution of extracurricular activities to adolescent friendships: new insights through social network analysis. *Developmental Psychology, 47*(4), 1141–1152.

Scientific Pandemic Influenza Group on Behaviours and the Department for Education. (2020). *COVID-19: Benefits of remaining in education - evidence and considerations*. UK Government. https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/spi-bdfe-covid-19-benefits-of-remaining-in-education-evidence-and-considerations-4-november-2020

Scott. D. & Usher, R. (2004). *Researching education: Data, methods, and theory in educational enquiry*. Continuum.

Sebastian, C., Burnett, S., & Blakemore, S. J. (2008). Development of the self-concept during adolescence. Trends in Cognitive Sciences, 12(11), 441–446.

Seers, K. (2012). What is a qualitative synthesis?. *Evidence-based nursing, 15*(4), 101-101.

Seginer, R. (2006). Parents' educational involvement: A developmental ecology perspective. *Parenting: Science and practice*, *6*(1), 1-48.

Seligman, M. (2011). *Flourish*. Free Press.

Sharpe, H., Ford, T., Lereya, S. T., Owen, C., Viner, R. M., & Wolpert, M. (2016). Survey of schools' work with child and adolescent mental health across England: A system in need of support. *Child and Adolescent Mental Health*, *21*(3), 148–153.

Shucksmith, J., Spratt, J., Philip, K., & McNaughton, R. (2009). A critical review of the literature on children and young people's views of the factors that influence their mental health. NHS Health Scotland. http://www.healthscotland.scot/media/2247/a-critical-review-of-the-literature-on-children-and-young-people-s-views-of-the-factors-that-influence-their-mental-health-2009.pdf

Siddaway, A. P., Wood, A. M., & Hedges, L. V. (2019). How to do a systematic review: a best practice guide for conducting and reporting narrative reviews, meta-analyses, and meta-syntheses. *Annual review of psychology, 70*, 747-770.

Side, J., & Johnson, K. (2014). Bullying in schools: why it happens, how it makes young people feel and what we can do about it. *Educational Psychology in Practice*, *30*(3), 217-231.

Sim, J., & Waterfield, J. (2019). Focus group methodology: some ethical challenges. *Quality & Quantity*, *53*(6), 3003-3022.

Simmons, C., Graham, A. & Thomas, N. (2015). Imagining an ideal school for wellbeing: Locating student voice. *Journal of Educational Change*, *16*(2), 129–44.

Smith, J. A., & Osborn, M. (2008). Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis. In J. Smith, *Qualitative Psychology: A Practical Guide to Research Methods* (pp. 53-80). Sage.

Soutter, A. K. (2011). What can we learn about wellbeing in school?. *The Journal of Student Wellbeing, 5*(1), 1-21.

Soutter, A. K., Gilmore, A., & O'Steen, B. (2011). How do high school youths' educational experiences relate to well-being? Towards a trans-disciplinary conceptualization. *Journal of Happiness Studies, 12*(4), 591-63.

Spera, C. (2005). A review of the relationship among parenting practices, parenting styles, and adolescent school achievement. *Educational psychology review*, *17*(2), 125-146.

Spradley, J. P. (2016). *The ethnographic interview*. Waveland Press. (Original work published 1979).

Spratt, J., Shucksmith, J., Philip, K. & Watson, C. (2006). Part of who we are as a school should include responsibility for well-being: Links between the school environment, mental health and behaviour. *Pastoral Care*, 14–21.

St John, T., Leon, L., & McCulloch, A. (2005). *Lifetime Impacts: Childhood and Adolescent Mental Health-Understanding the Lifetime Impacts.* Report of a Seminar Organised by the Office of Health Economics and the Mental Health Foundation, April 2004. Mental Health Foundation.

Statham, J. & Chase, E. (2010). *Childhood wellbeing: A brief overview*. Childhood Wellbeing Research Centre. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/183197/Child-Wellbeing-Brief.pdf

Stracuzzi, N. F., & Mills, M. L. (2010). Teachers Matter: Feelings of School Connectedness and Positive Youth Development among Coos County Youth. New England Issue Brief No. 23. *Carsey Institute*.

Suldo, S. M., Thalji-Raitano, A., Kiefer, S. M., & Ferron, J. M. (2016). Conceptualizing high school students' mental health through a dual-factor model. *School Psychology Review*, *45*(4), 434-457.

Suldo, S., Thalji, A., & Ferron, J. (2011). Longitudinal academic outcomes predicted by early adolescents' subjective well-being, psychopathology, and mental health status yielded from a dual factor model. *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, *6*(1), 17-30.

The British Psychological Society (BPS). (2014). *Code of human research ethics*. BPS. https://www.bps.org.uk/news-and-policy/bps-code-human-research-ethics-2nd-edition-2014

The British Psychological Society (BPS). (2018). *Code of Ethics and Conduct (2018).* BPS. https://bps.org.uk/news-and-policy/bps-code-ethics-and-conduct

The British Psychological Society (BPS). (2019). *Promoting mental health and wellbeing in schools*. BPS. https://www.bps.org.uk/sites/www.bps.org.uk/files/Policy/Policy%20-%20Files/BPS%20Briefing%20Paper%20-%20Promoting%20Mental%20Health%20and%20Wellbeing%20in%20Schools.pdf

The British Psychological Society (BPS). (2020). Back to school: Using psychological perspectives to support re-engagement and recovery. BPS. https://www.bps.org.uk/sites/www.bps.org.uk/files/Policy/Policy%20%20Files/Back%20to%20school%20-%20using%20psychological%20perspectives%20to%20support%20re engagement%20and%20recovery.pdf

The British Psychological Society. (2021, 22nd February). Unhelpful 'catch up' narrative about lost learning during the pandemic places unnecessary psychological pressure on children and young people. https://www.bps.org.uk/news-and-policy/unhelpful-narrative-lost-learning-during-pandemic

The Children's Society. (2019a). *The case for National measurement of children's well-being.* The Children's Society. https://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/information/professionals/resources/the-case-for-national-measurement-of-childrens-well-being

The Children's Society. (2019b). *The Good Childhood Report 2019*. The Children's Society. https://saphna.co/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/the_good_childhood_report_2019.pdf

The Children's Society. (2020a). *Life On Hold: Children's Well-being and COVID-19*. The Children's Society. https://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/sites/default/files/life-on-hold-childrens-well-being-and-covid-19.pdf

The Children's Society. (2020b). *The Good Childhood Report 2020*. The Children's Society. https://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/sites/default/files/2020-09/PRE022a_Good%20Childhood%202020_V6_LR.pdf

The Government Office for Science. (2008). *Foresight mental capital and well-being project. Final project report— Executive summary*. UK Government. http://www.bis.gov.uk/assets/biscore/corporate/migratedD/ec_group/116–08-FO_b

Thompson, N. (2018). *Mental health and well-being: Alternatives to the medical model*. Routledge.

Thorley, C. (2016). *Education, education, mental health: Supporting secondary schools to play a central role in early intervention mental health services.* IPPR. https://www.ippr.org/files/publications/pdf/education-education-mental-health_May2016.pdf

Thorne, S. E. (2015). Qualitative metasynthesis: a technical exercise or a source of new knowledge?. *Psycho-oncology, 24*(11), 1347-1348.

Tobin, G. A., & Begley, C. M. (2004). Methodological rigour within a qualitative framework. *Journal of Advanced Nursing, 48*, 388–396.

Tomé, G., Almeida, A., Ramiro, L., & Gaspar, T. (2021). Intervention in Schools promoting mental health and well-being: a systematic. *Global Journal of Community Psychology Practice*, *12*(1).

Tomyn, A. J., & Cummins, R. A. (2011). The subjective wellbeing of high-school students: Validating the personal wellbeing index—school children. *Social Indicators Research, 101*(3), 405-418.

Torrance, H. (2004). Using action research to generate knowledge about educational practice. *Evidence-based practice in education*, 187-200.

Tov, W. (2018). Well-being concepts and components. In E. Diener, S. Oishi, & L. Tay (eds.), *Handbook of well-being*. NobaScholar. https://www.nobascholar.com/chapters/12/download.pdf

Toye, F., Seers, K., Allcock, N., Briggs, M., Carr, E., & Barker, K. (2014). Meta-ethnography 25 years on: challenges and insights for synthesising a large number of qualitative studies. *BMC medical research methodology*, *14*(1), 1-14.

UK Government. (2008). *Healthier Living & Learning: Anti-Bullying Guidance for Schools*. UK Government. https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/health/healthy-schools-london/awards/sites/default/files/Anti%20Bullying%20-%20Guidance%20for%20Schools.pdf

UK Government. (2012). The Education (School Teachers' Appraisal) (England) Regulations 2012. UK Government. https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/115/made

UK Government. (2014). *Children and Families Act 2014*. UK Government. https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/6/contents/enacted

UK Government. (2018). *Data Protection Act 2018*. UK Government. https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2018/12/contents/enacted

UK Government. (2021, 4th January). *A transcript of the Prime Minister's address to the nation.* UK Government. https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/prime-ministers-address-to-the-nation-4-january-2021

UK Parliament. (2006). *Childcare Act, 2006*. UK Government. https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/21/contents

UNCRC. (1989). *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child*.

UNESCO. (2020). *COVID-19 Educational disruption and response.* UNESCO. https://en.unesco.org/covid19/educationresponse

United Nations General Assembly. (1989). Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989). United Nations Treaty Series, 1577, 3. UNICEF. https://www.unicef.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2010/05/UNCRC_united_nations_convention_on_the_rights_of_the_child.pdf

University of Nottingham. (2020). *Code of Research Conduct and Research Ethics*. University of Nottingham. https://www.nottingham.ac.uk/research/resources/documents/code-of-research-conduct-and-research-ethics-v7.0-june-2020.pdf

Uslu, F., & Gizir, S. (2017). School belonging of adolescents: The role of teacher–student relationships, peer relationships and family involvement. *Educational Sciences: Theory & Practice, 17*(1).

van Harmelen, A, L., Kievit, R. A., Ioannidis, K., Neufeld, S., Jones, P. B., Bullmore, E., Dolan, R., The NSPN Consortium, Fonagy, P., & Goodyer, I. (2017). Adolescent friendships predict later resilient functioning across psychosocial domains in a healthy community cohort. *Psychological Medicine, 47*(13), 2312-2322.

Van Ryzin, M. J., Gravely, A. A., & Roseth, C. J. (2009). Autonomy, belongingness, and engagement in school as contributors to adolescent psychological well-being. *Journal of youth and adolescence*, *38*(1), 1-12.

Vansteenkiste, M., Lens, W., & Deci, E. L. (2006). Intrinsic versus extrinsic goal contents in self-determination theory: Another look at the quality of academic motivation. *Educational psychologist*, *41*(1), 19-31.

Vansteenkiste, M., Sierens, E., Soenens, B., Luyckx, K., & Lens, W. (2009). Motivational profiles from a self-determination perspective: The quality of motivation matters. *Journal of educational psychology*, *101*(3), 671.

Vizard, T., Sadler, K., Ford, T., Newlove-Delgado, T., McManus, S., Marcheselli, F., Davis, J., Williams, T., Leach, C., Mandalia, D., & Cartwright, C. (2020). *Mental health of children and young people in England, 2020: Wave 1 follow up to the 2017 survey*. NHS Digital. https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/publications/statistical/mental-health-of-children-and-young-people-in-england/2020-wave-1-follow-up

Vollstedt, M., & Rezat, S. (2019). An introduction to grounded theory with a special focus on axial coding and the coding paradigm. *Compendium for early career researchers in mathematics education*, *13*, 81-100.

Vostanis, P., Humphrey, N., Fitzgerald, N., Deighton, J., & Wolpert, M. (2013). How do schools promote emotional well-being among their pupils? Findings from a national scoping survey of mental health provision in English schools. *Child and Adolescent Mental Health*, *18*(3), 151-157.

Vujčić, M. T., Brajša-Žganec, A., & Franc, R. (2019). Children and young people's views on well-being: A qualitative study. *Child Indicators Research*, *12*(3), 791-819.

Warin, J. (2017). Creating a whole school ethos of care. *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties*, *22*(3), 188-199.

Weare, K. (2015). What works in promoting social and emotional well-being and responding to mental health problems in schools? Research Gate. https://www.researchgate.net/profile/KatherineWeare/publication/242610650_What_Works_in_Developing_Children%27s_Emotional_and_Social_Competence_and_Wellbeing/links/5698f39e08aeeea985944a9a/What-Works-in-Developing-Childrens-Emotional-and-Social-Competence-and-Wellbeing.pdf

Weare, K., & Nind, M. (2011). Mental health promotion and problem prevention in schools: what does the evidence say? *Health promotion international*, *26*(1), 29-69.

Wentzel, K. R. (1999). Social-motivational processes and interpersonal relationships: Implications for understanding motivation at school. *Journal of educational psychology*, *91*(1), 76.

Widnall, E., Winstone, E., Mars R., Haworth, C., and Kidger, J. (2020). *Young People's Mental Health during the COVID-19 Pandemic: Initial findings from a secondary school survey study* in South West England. School for Public Health Research: National Institute for Health Research. https://sphr.nihr.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Young-Peoples-Mental-Health-during-the-COVID-19-Pandemic-Report.pdf

Williamson, D. E., Birmaher, B., Ryan, N. D., Shiffrin, T. P., Lusky, J. A., Protopapa, J., Dahl, R. E., & Brent, D. A. (2003). The Stressful Life Events Schedule for children and adolescents: development and validation. *Psychiatry Research, 119*(3), 225–241.

Wilding, L. (2015). The application of self-determination theory to support students experiencing disaffection. *Educational Psychology in Practice*, *31*(2), 137–149.

Willig, C. (2012). *Qualitative interpretation and analysis in psychology*. McGraw-Hill Education.

Willig, C. (2013). *Introducing Qualitative Research in Psychology* (3rd ed.). Open University Press.

Willms, J. D. (2003). *Student engagement at school: A sense of belonging and participation: Results from PISA 2000*. OECD.

Woolley, M.E., Kol, K.L. & Bowen, G.L. (2009). The social context of school success for Latino middle school students: Direct and indirect influences of teachers, family, and friends. *The Journal of Early Adolescence, 29*(1), 43–70.

World Health Organisation (WHO). (2018a). Adolescent health in the South-East Asia Region. WHO. https://www.who.int/southeastasia/health-topics/adolescent-health

World Health Organisation (WHO). (2018b). Mental Health: strengthening our response. WHO. https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/mental-health-strengthening-our-response

Wright, R. W., Brand, R. A., Dunn, W., & Spindler, K. P. (2007). How to write a systematic review. *Clinical Orthopaedics and Related Research,* 455, 23-29.

Wyn, J., Cahill, H., Holdsworth, R., Rowling, L., & Carson, S. (2000). MindMatters, a whole-school approach promoting mental health and wellbeing. *Australian & New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry*, *34*(4), 594-601.

Yardley, L. (2015). Demonstrating validity in qualitative psychology. In J. A. Smith (Ed.), *Qualitative Psychology: A practical guide to research methods*. Sage.

Yeager, D. S., Fong, C. J., Lee, H. Y., & Espelage, D. L. (2015). Declines in efficacy of anti-bullying programs among older adolescents: Theory and a three-level meta-analysis. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology*, *37*, 36-51.

Young Minds. (2017). *Wise up Prioritising wellbeing in schools*. Young Minds. https://youngminds.org.uk/media/1428/wise-up-prioritising-wellbeing-in-schools.pdf

Zafeiriou, M. E., & Gulliford, A. (2020). A grounded theory of educational psychologists' mental health casework in schools: connection, direction and reconstruction through consultation. *Educational Psychology in Practice*, *36*(4), 422-442.

Zakarial, R. B., & Musta'amal, A. H. B. (2014). Rapport building in qualitative research. *1st International Education Postgraduate Seminar Proceedings*, *1*(23-24).

Zimmer-Gembeck, M. J., & Skinner, E. A. (2008). Adolescents coping with stress: development and diversity:" Approximately 25% of adolescents will experience at least one significant stressor, including the death of a loved one or witnessing a traumatic event". *The Prevention Researcher*, *15*(4), 3-8.

Zullig, K. J., Huebner, E. S., & Patton, J. M. (2011). Relationships among school climate domains and school satisfaction. *Psychology in the Schools*, *48*(2), 133-145.

Zuzanek, J. (2009). Students' study time and their "homework problem". *Social Indicators Research*, *93*(1), 111-115.

Appendices

Appendix 1. *Phases of a meta-ethnography (Noblit & Hare, 1988).*

Phases of a meta-ethnography	
Phase 1	Getting started: determining the focus of the synthesis, which the qualitative research may inform.
Phase 2	Deciding what is relevant: identifying and selecting study accounts to synthesise.
Phase 3	Reading the studies: repeatedly reading accounts and the noting of interpretive metaphors, concepts or themes, with extensive attention afforded to the details in the accounts.
Phase 4	The relationship between the studies: determining the relationship between the studies to be synthesised.
Phase 5	Translation of the studies: the systematic comparison of the meaning of metaphors, concepts or themes and their relations across study accounts to identify the range of them.
Phase 6	Synthesising translations: the comparison of translations from phase 5, for common or overarching concepts and, from these, for new interpretations to be developed. This is a 'second level of synthesis'.
Phase 7	Expressing the synthesis: communication of the synthesis in an appropriate format.

Appendix 2. *Systematic search terms used in the systematic literature review.*

Database	Search Terms
Web of Science	((TI=(“young people*” OR adolescen* OR youth* OR pupil* OR student*OR teenage*) AND TI=(school OR education OR “educational setting”) AND AB=(perception* OR perspective* OR view* OR perceive OR identify AND TI=(wellbeing OR "well-being")) AND LANGUAGE: (English)
Scopus	TITLE("young people*" or adolescen* or youth* or pupil* or student* or teenage*) AND TITLE(school or education or "educational setting") AND ABS(perception* or perspective* or view* or perceive or identify) AND TITLE(wellbeing or "well-being")
PsychINFO	(("young people*" or adolescen* or youth* or pupil* or student* or teenage*) and (school or education or "educational setting*")).ti. and (perception* or perspective* or view* or perceive or identify).ab. and (wellbeing or "well-being").ti.
ERIC	TITLE("young people*" or adolescen* or youth* or pupil* or student* or teenage*) AND TITLE(school or education or "educational setting") AND ABS(perception* or perspective* or view* or perceive or identify) AND TITLE(wellbeing or "well-being")
ETHOS	Pupil wellbeing school

Appendix 3. *Summary of studies included in the systematic review and main concepts/themes identified.*

Author, Year and Publication	Topic (Relevance to review question)	Study Overview/Aims	Sample	Methodology	Data Collection	Main concepts/themes
Coombes et al. (2013) Journal Article	Explored the EHWB of young people in school from their own perspective.	To gain the views of young people surrounding EHWB in secondary school. To identify gaps in provision, in order to illuminate ways of developing secondary school EHWB provision.	*n*= size of focus groups not reported (eight focus groups in total) Age: 13-14 years (Year 10)	Framework Analysis	Focus Groups	-Taught opportunities linked to EHWB. -Curricular omissions. -Teacher skills and professional standards. -Teacher qualities and values. -Teacher-pupil relationships. -Links to mental health: negative affect. -Pressures and conflicts within school. -Peer relationships: support and relatedness. -The place of EHWB on the school agenda. -Pupil's understanding of available support. -Accessibility of specialist support. -Pupils feeling heard and not judged. -School commitment to the profile and implementation of policies.
Copp (2011) Thesis	Explored issues young people raise about their EWB in school, support provided	*Phase 1:* Young people's perspectives of EWB in school.	*Phase 1:* *n*=4 (f=3, m=1)	*Phase 1:* -Not specifically analysed; data was used to develop questionnaire for *Phase 2.*	*Phase 1:* Focus Groups *Phase 2:* Questionnaire	-Positive relationships with peers: feelings of belonging and trust. -Positive relationships with teachers: support, encouragement and empathy. -Academic pressures and success. -Fun lessons.

Author, Year and Publication	Topic (Relevance to review question)	Study Overview/Aims	Sample	Methodology	Data Collection	Main concepts/themes
	which has been helpful, and any changes or improvements which could enhance EWB in school.	*Phase 2:* EWB in school questionnaire. *Phase 3:* Opportunity for some young people to expand on their questionnaire responses, regarding EWB in school.	*Phase 2:* n=100 (f=51, m=49) *Phase 3:* n=12 (f=8, m=4) *(Only data from Phase 3, is included within this review)* Age: 13-14 years (Year 9)	*Phase 2:* -Content Analysis *Phase 3:* -Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis	*Phase 3:* Semi-structured Interviews	-Approaches to learning: inclusion of topics linked to 'real life' and on solutions to personal issues. -Access to alternative means of support such as school counsellors and youth projects. -School environment. -Values: transparency, feeling heard, respect, confidentiality. -The active role of teachers in responding to difficulties. -Access to school clubs. -Having access to different spaces within school. -Professional skills and accessibility of support.
Langford (2016) Thesis	Identified key themes or areas which young people perceive as important to their overall sense of	*Phase 1:* -Explored key areas which young people perceive to be important to wellbeing and young people's	*Phase 1:* n=16 (m=8, f=8) n=40 (m=14, f=26)	*Phase 1:* -Thematic Analysis -SPSS Statistical Analysis Programme.	*Phase 1:* Focus Group Quantitative, self-report	-Opportunities to access a broad range of extra-curricular activities/clubs. -Feeling informed. -Encouragement, and attitudes of educational staff. -Internal rewards: confidence and a sense of accomplishment. -Peer socialisation and friendships.

Author, Year and Publication	Topic (Relevance to review question)	Study Overview/Aims	Sample	Methodology	Data Collection	Main concepts/themes
	wellbeing. Aimed to gain a greater understanding of how young people perceive school to support wellbeing and ways wellbeing could be further supported.	views, when systematically assessed. -Explored the relationship between self-reported wellbeing questionnaires and key areas identified by young people. *Phase 2:* -To gain a greater understanding of young people's perceptions of how wellbeing is supported within school, and how pupil wellbeing could	*Phase 2:* n= 8 (m=4, f=4) Age: 12-14 years (Years 8 and 9) *(Only data from Phase 2, is included within this review).*	*Phase 2:* -Thematic Analysis	wellbeing questionnaire. *Phase 2:* -Semi-structured Interviews. (Information gathered in phase 1 – informed the Semi-structured Interview schedule).	-The role of school in supporting family relationships. -Friendship support within school. -Fulfilment of basic needs, i.e., feelings of safety. -Teachers caring/emotional support from staff. -Promoting healthy living. -Regular access to enjoyable and relaxing activities.

Author, Year and Publication	Topic (Relevance to review question)	Study Overview/Aims	Sample	Methodology	Data Collection	Main concepts/themes
		be further supported.				
Salter (2010) Thesis	Pupil views surrounding the promotion of EWB in secondary school.	*Cycle 1:* To explore the concept of EWB. *Cycle 2:* Exploration of teaching staff stressors, their EWB and implications for the promotion of EWB. *Cycle 3:* A focus on behaviour management policy, attendance incentives, the role of mentors,	*Cycle 1:* n=6 (m=3, f=3) Age: Year 7 *Cycle 2:* n=6 (f=6) Age= Year 9 *Cycle 3: (note: young people took part only in Cycles 1 and 2)*	Grounded Theory	Focus Groups (with young people)	-A positive whole-school environment. -Relationships with friends. -Access to SEAL. -Relationships with teachers. -Recognising and rewarding positive behaviours. -Exams and academic pressure. - Peer support and collaboration. -Encouragement from educational staff. -Acknowledgement and consistency amongst teaching staff. -Behaviour management. -Equitability of rewards and sanctions. -Teacher stressors and attitudes and the associated impact on pupils. -Teachers' EWB.

Author, Year and Publication	Topic (Relevance to review question)	Study Overview/Aims	Sample	Methodology	Data Collection	Main concepts/themes
		support systems and use of SEAL.				
Littlecott et al. (2016) Journal Article	Explored the role of teaching staff in supporting pupil health and wellbeing in a secondary school, from the perspectives of young people.	To gain a greater understanding of the role of support staff in promoting pupil health and wellbeing. Further, in understanding how the school system may influence relationships.	n= 30 (m=18, f=12) Age= Years 7-12	Thematic Analysis	Semi-structured Interviews	-Effectiveness of teacher support in responding to difficulties. -Home-school relationships. -Quality of teacher-pupil relationships: trust and rapport. -Perceived approachability of teaching staff. -Early intervention of support. -Accessibility of alternative means of support, i.e., school counsellors. -Pupils' awareness of support systems in school. -Active providing of support from school staff. -Teachers' time/capacity to provide support. -Physical spaces within school to access support. -Confidentiality of support. -Perceived skills of staff influential to pupils' accessing of support.

Appendix 4. *CASP ratings for qualitative studies.*

Author	Was there a clear statement and aims?	Is the quality 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 sufficiently rigorous?	Is there a clear statement of findings?	How valuable is the research?
Coombes et al. (2013)	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	3	3
Copp (2011)	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Salter (2010)	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Langford (2016)	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Littlecott et al. (2018)	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3

Appendix 5. *CASP guidance material.*

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 6. *Braun and Clarke's (2006) 15-point checklist for a good thematic analysis.*

Process	No.	Criteria
Transcription	1	The data have been transcribed to an appropriate level of detail, and the transcripts have been checked against the tapes for 'accuracy'.
Coding	2	Each data item has been given equal attention in the coding process.
	3	Themes have not been generated from a few vivid examples (an anecdotal approach), but instead the coding process has been thorough, inclusive and comprehensive.
	4	All relevant extracts for all each theme have been collated.
	5	Themes have been checked against each other and back to the original data set.
	6	Themes are internally coherent, consistent, and distinctive.
Analysis	7	Data have been analysed – interpreted, made sense of – rather than just paraphrased or described.
	8	Analysis and data match each other – the extracts illustrate the analytic claims.
	9	Analysis tells a convincing and well-organized story about the data and topic.
	10	A good balance between analytic narrative and illustrative extracts is provided.
Overall	11	Enough time has been allocated to complete all phases of the analysis adequately, without rushing a phase or giving it a once-over-lightly.
Written report	12	The assumptions about, and specific approach to, thematic analysis are clearly explicated.
	13	There is a good fit between what you claim you do, and what you show you have done – ie, described method and reported analysis are consistent.
	14	The language and concepts used in the report are consistent with the epistemological position of the analysis.
	15	The researcher is positioned as *active* in the research process; themes do not just 'emerge'.

Appendix 7. *Information sheet for settings.*

The University of Nottingham
UNITED KINGDOM · CHINA · MALAYSIA

School of Psychology

Information Sheet for Settings

An Exploration of Young People's Perceptions of what Contributes to Positive Wellbeing within Education.

Ethics Approval Number or Taught Project Archive Number: S1282

Researcher: *Hollie Riley (hollie.riley@nottingham.ac.uk)*

Supervisor: Anthea Gulliford (anthea.gulliford@nottingham.ac.uk)

School of Psychology, University of Nottingham, University Park, Nottingham, NG7 2RD

Dear xxxxxxxx

My name is Hollie Riley and I am a Trainee Educational Psychologist at xxxxxxx Educational Psychology Service. I am studying for the Doctorate in Applied Educational Psychology at the University of Nottingham. As part of my training, I am undertaking research that aims to explore and identify factors that contribute to the positive wellbeing of pupils, from their own perspective, within education.

The Aim of the Research

The aims of the study include gathering information from young people aged 15-16 years, to understand their views better. This may inform educational practice and provision, highlighting ways in which educational professionals can further support and promote the wellbeing of young people in schools.

It is further hoped that young people will benefit from the opportunity to share their views, in relation to their educational experiences and factors they feel contribute to positive wellbeing within education.

Identification of Participants

In order to participate in the research young people would need to:

- Be in Year 11 and attend a secondary educational setting.
- Obtain parental consent.

Information letters and consent forms will be provided to potential participants and parents/carers, outlining the purpose and nature of the research, with the opportunity to ask any further questions. It is hoped both male and female participants will be included in the study, besides from this, participants will be randomly selected to take part in the study. Once pupil and parental consent has been obtained, the young person will have the opportunity to meet with the researcher, prior to their involvement, to discuss the research, ensuring they have a clear understanding about the purpose and nature of the research and their potential involvement. It will be emphasised to participants that participation in the research is voluntary and they will have the right to withdraw at any given time, without the need to provide a reason.

Research Description

Participants will be invited to a semi-structured interview, where they will be asked about their school experiences, and aspects which they feel contribute to positive wellbeing within education. It is hoped that interviews will take place within the participant's educational setting, in a private room with which they are familiar, unless an alternative setting is requested. Where this is not possible, interviews will be undertaken via video call.

The interview will be audio-recorded and then transcribed by the researcher. The whole interview will last approximately 30 minutes, depending on the length of the discussions that take place. The pupil will be given the opportunity to stop/terminate the interview at any given time should they wish. If there are questions the pupil would prefer not to answer, they will be given the option to skip them and will only be asked to share as much information as they feel comfortable with.

Confidentiality and Data Protection

The participant's identity and the educational setting will be made completely anonymous throughout the course of the research, and any identifiers for the young person or school they attend will be removed. All transcriptions will remain anonymised and will be stored safely, with all typed records being password protected. Following the interview, the participant will have the opportunity, if they wish, to review their recording. Following completion of the research, all data will be destroyed after 3 years.

If the participant alluded to potential danger or harm to either themselves or another individual, an exception would be applied to the confidentiality rule. It is only in this instance that an exception would be applied.

Disclaimer

There is no obligation to participate in this study. However, if a young person chooses to take part in this research, it is with the understanding that they would have the right to withdraw at any time.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to get in contact using the contact details above.

I look forward to further discussing the research with you and answering any questions you may have.

Yours sincerely

Hollie Riley
Trainee Educational Psychologist
University of Nottingham

Appendix 8. *Information sheet for participants.*

The University of Nottingham
UNITED KINGDOM · CHINA · MALAYSIA

School of Psychology

Information Sheet for Participants

An Exploration of Young People's Perceptions of what Contributes to Positive Wellbeing within Education.

Ethics Approval Number or Taught Project Archive Number: S1282
Researcher: *Hollie Riley (hollie.riley@nottingham.ac.uk)*
Supervisor: Anthea Gulliford (anthea.gulliford@nottingham.ac.uk)
School of Psychology, University of Nottingham, University Park, Nottingham, NG7 2RD

My name is Hollie Riley and I am training to be an Educational Psychologist at xxxxxxx Educational Psychology Service. This is an invitation to take part in some research. To decide whether you would be happy to take part, it is important to understand why the research is taking place and what taking part would involve.

Why am I doing this research?

I want to find out what young people aged 15-16 years feel contributes to positive wellbeing within education. I want to highlight ways in which schools can further promote the wellbeing of young people.

What is involved?

If you are happy to take part in the study, you will be asked, in a short interview, about your educational experiences, and what you feel contributes to positive wellbeing within school. In interviews like this, the researcher asks questions on a topic and gives you the opportunity to talk about anything you feel is relevant. Interviews will take about 30

minutes, or more if the discussions are longer. Interviews will take place in a private room, in your school, unless you would prefer to meet somewhere else. Where this is not possible, interviews will be completed virtually.

You may stop the interview at any time, should you wish, without giving a reason. You will be asked to only share as much information as you feel comfortable with. If there are any questions you would prefer not to answer, you will be able to skip them. The interview will be audio-recorded and then transcribed (typed-up) by the researcher.

Confidentiality and Data Protection

Your name, or your school's name, will not be used in the research. No one who reads the research will be able to identify who said what. All information will be stored safely and securely and will be password protected. Pseudonyms (different names) will be used, and the names of schools will also be replaced. All personal data will remain confidential, so that you cannot be identified. After the interview, you will have the opportunity, if you wish, to review the recording. Once the research is finished, all data will be destroyed after 3 years.

If you show any signs of possible danger or harm to either yourself or another individual, an exception will be applied to the confidentiality rule. It is only then that an exception would be applied.

Research Outcomes

It is hoped that you will benefit from the opportunity to share your views about what you feel is supportive to the wellbeing of young people within education. The aim of the research is to identify ways in which staff who work within education can further support and increase the positive wellbeing of young people.

Disclaimer

You do not have to take part in this study. If you would like to take part, it is with the understanding that you have the right to withdraw at any time.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to get in contact with me using the contact details above.

If you would be happy to take part in the research, then please sign the consent form attached and obtain consent from your parent/carer before returning the form to your educational setting by _____.

Please note participants will be randomly selected to take part in the research.

Appendix 9. *Information sheet for parents/carers.*

The University of Nottingham
UNITED KINGDOM · CHINA · MALAYSIA

School of Psychology

Information Sheet for Parents/Carers

An Exploration of Young People's Perceptions of what Contributes to Positive Wellbeing within Education.

Ethics Approval Number or Taught Project Archive Number: S1282
Researcher: *Hollie Riley (hollie.riley@nottingham.ac.uk)*
Supervisor: Anthea Gulliford (anthea.gulliford@nottingham.ac.uk)
School of Psychology, University of Nottingham, University Park, Nottingham, NG7 2RD

My name is Hollie Riley and I am training to be an Educational Psychologist at xxxxxxx Educational Psychology Service. I am undertaking research that aims to explore and identify what young people, aged 15-16 years, feel contributes to positive wellbeing within education, with the aim of highlighting ways in which educational professionals can further support and promote the wellbeing of young people.

I would like to invite your child to take part in the research. In order for you to decide whether you would be happy for your child to take part, it is important to understand why the research is being undertaken and what your child's involvement would include.

Research Description

If you would be happy for your child to participate in the study, they will be asked about their educational experiences and what they feel contributes to positive wellbeing within education. These views will be gathered during a semi-structured interview. The interview will include exploring certain questions and will provide your child with the opportunity to discuss further topics, with the researcher, appropriate to the research question. Interviews will be undertaken in a private room, with which your child is familiar, within their

educational setting, unless an alternative setting is requested. Where this is not possible, interviews will be undertaken via video call.

If there are questions your child would prefer not to answer, they can skip them and will only be asked to share as much information as they feel comfortable with. The interview will be audio-recorded and then transcribed by the researcher. The whole interview will last approximately 30 minutes, depending on the length of the discussions that take place. Your child will be given the opportunity to stop/terminate the interview at any given time, should they wish.

I have been cleared by the Disclosure and Barring Service, a government body formed by the Criminal Records Bureau and the Independent Safeguarding Authority. This ensures that unsuitable people are prohibited from working with vulnerable groups, including children and young people.

Confidentiality and Data Protection

Your child's identity will remain completely anonymous throughout the course of the research. All information will remain anonymised and will be stored safely, with typed records being password protected. Pseudonyms will be used, and the names of settings will also be replaced. All personal data will remain confidential, in order to omit any factors which may identify your child within the research. Following the interview, your child will have the opportunity, if they wish, to review the recording. Following completion of the research, all data will be destroyed after 3 years.

If the participant indicated any potential danger or harm to either themselves or another individual, an exception would be applied to the confidentiality rule. It is only in this instance that an exception would be applied.

Research Outcomes

It is hoped that your child will benefit from the opportunity to share their views about what they feel contributes to positive wellbeing within education. The aim of the research is to

highlight ways in which educational professionals can further support and promote the positive wellbeing of young people in education.

Disclaimer

There is no expectation for your child to take part in this study. However, if they would like to take part in this research, it is with the understanding that they would have the right to withdraw at any time.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to get in contact using the contact details above.

If you would be happy for your child to take part in the research, then please sign the consent form attached for your child to return to their educational setting by _____.

Please note participants will be randomly selected to take part in the research.

Appendix 10. *The proposed semi-structured interview schedule (question prompts are in italics).*

Research Aims

The aims of the research are:

- *To explore young people's understanding of the term 'wellbeing'.*
- *To explore the perceptions of young people, in terms of what they feel contributes to positive wellbeing within education.*
- *To identify what educational professionals and settings need to consider when supporting and promoting the wellbeing of young people in education.*

Introductions and Research Aims

- My name is Hollie and as you know I am training to be an Educational Psychologist at _____ Educational Psychology Service.
- Thank you for returning your consent form to take part in this research.
- As you know the purpose of this research is to find out what you feel contributes to positive wellbeing within education. The aim of the research is to highlight ways in which schools can further promote the wellbeing of young people in school.
- I want to emphasise that participation in the research is voluntary and you are able to stop the interview at any point, should you wish. You have the right to withdraw from the research up until _____, when data will be analysed.

Revisit Participant Information Sheet

Data Collection

- As explained in the participant information sheet, which has been shared with you, data will be collected through semi-structured interviews, which will include me asking you certain questions, but with the opportunity for you to talk about anything else you feel may be relevant to the research.
- If there are any questions you would prefer not to answer, then you can skip them.
- The interview will be audio-recorded and should last approximately 30 minutes, however this will depend on the length of discussions that take place.

Confidentiality and Data Protection

- I want to emphasise that all data will remain anonymous throughout the course of the research. No one who reads the research will be able to identify who has said what.
- All audio-recordings will be stored safely and will be password protected. All data will be destroyed after 3 years.
- Following your interview, you will have the option to review your transcribed interview, should you wish. If this is something you would like to do then please get in contact by _____.
- If, during the interview, you indicate any potential danger or harm to either yourself or another individual, it is only in this instance an exception would be applied to the confidentiality rule.

Following Participation

- Once we have finished the interview, I will share a debrief form with you which will include information about the research and a list of some organisations who can provide support to young people, in relation to mental health and wellbeing.
- You will also have the option to ask any questions about the research and share any reflections about the interview.
- Following the interview, if you have any further questions or queries then please get in touch. All my contact details will be included in the debrief form, which will be provided. Also, remember that _____ within school is happy to provide any support following the interview, should you wish.

Wellbeing

1. What does the term 'wellbeing' mean to you?
    - *What does the term 'wellbeing' include, for you? (Are there any words that come to mind when you think about wellbeing, such as any particular feelings?)*
    - *How would you define this term?*

I would like you to answer the following questions on wellbeing by reflecting on your secondary school experience (so your time throughout high school). I am aware that what you think about this topic may be influenced by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and school closures, however I want to also capture your thoughts around what contributed to positive wellbeing, before this. So, when answering the following questions, I would like you to think back to all your time ***throughout*** secondary school, such as when you started, your time during different year groups and now.

Wellbeing and Education

2. If someone has positive wellbeing, what might this look like in school? What would we see?
    - *How might someone with positive wellbeing think and feel?*
    - *How might someone with positive wellbeing behave within school? (What might they do?)*
    - *Can you provide some examples?*

3. If someone has poor wellbeing, what might this look like in school? What would we see?
    - *How might someone with poor wellbeing think and feel?*
    - *How might someone with poor wellbeing behave within school? (What might they do?)*
    - *Can you provide some examples?*

4. Can we talk about what aspects of school you think are supportive to your wellbeing? (*What helps your wellbeing in school? What contributes to positive school experiences? What makes a difference to wellbeing in school?) (This may include relationships, school life generally or learning)*
    - *How do you feel school experiences positively impact on your wellbeing? (Can you provide any examples?) (friendships, relationships with staff, policies, extra-curricular activities, achievements, feeling heard)*

- *When you started, what do you feel was supportive to your wellbeing? Can you give any examples?*
- *Has this been supportive to your wellbeing throughout school?*
- *Why do you think this was?*
- *Can you provide any examples?*
- *What aspects of school do you currently feel are supportive to your wellbeing?*

5. Why do you think these things make a difference in terms of wellbeing? Which of these do you feel is the most important?
    - *How do these make you think and feel?*
    - *How do these things influence behaviour?*

6. Do you think this is the same for most people? Why do you think this is?

7. Is there anything you feel contributes negatively to your wellbeing within school? *(Can you provide any examples?) (friendships, relationships with staff, academic pressures, bullying)*
    - *When you started, was there anything which you feel contributed negatively to your wellbeing?*
    - *As you moved through school, into different year groups, did this change? (Do you feel anything else contributed negatively towards your wellbeing?)*
    - *What, currently, do you feel negatively contributes towards your wellbeing?*
    - *Can you provide any examples?*

8. Do you think this is the same for most people? Why do you think this is?

9. What does your school do to support pupil wellbeing? (*Is there anything specifically in place to support pupil wellbeing in school? Can you provide some examples?) (PSHE, school policies, bullying, assemblies)*
    - *Which of these do you feel is most helpful?*
    - *What did school do to support your wellbeing when you started?*

- *What is currently in place to support your wellbeing?*

10. What are the things you want staff to know are important for the wellbeing of young people in education, throughout secondary school? (What do staff need to consider?)
    - *What would the 'ideal school' environment look like? (How would people feel?)*
    - *What could schools do more of?*
    - *Is there anything you would change within school to support the wellbeing of young people?*

11. Is there anything else which you feel should happen in school to support the wellbeing of young people?
    - *What else could school staff do to support your wellbeing when you begin secondary school?*
    - *What do you feel would support your wellbeing further throughout education?*

Additional Information

12. Is there any further information you would like to share or add?
    - *Do you feel there is anything we have missed?*
    - *Is there anything you feel needs further clarification?*

13. Do you have any questions?
    - *If you have any queries or questions following the research, then please do get in contact.*

Closing Statement

- If you have nothing further to add then that brings us to the end of the interview.
- Remember all personal data will remain confidential and no one who reads the research will be able to identify who has said what. All information will be stored confidentially and will be password protected.

- You do have the option, if you wish, to review your transcribed interview. If this is something you would like to do then please get in contact by _____.
- If you feel you need support, remember there are a number of steps you can take, such as speaking to _____ and through referring to the information included in the debrief form, which I am going to share with you now.
- Thank you for taking the time to take part in this research.

Further Questions

- At this point, do you have any questions you would like to ask or is there anything you would like me to further clarify?

Appendix 11. *Ethical approval for the study.*

The University of Nottingham
School of Psychology

The University of Nottingham
University Park
Nottingham
NG7 2RD

tel: +44 (0)115 846 7403 or (0)115 951 4344

Ref: s1282

Friday 2nd October 2020.

Dear Anthea Gulliford and Hollie Riley,

Ethics Committee Review

Thank you for submitting an account of your proposed research **'An Exploration of Young People's Perceptions of what Contributes to Positive Wellbeing within Education.'**

That proposal has now been reviewed and we are pleased to tell you it has met with the Committee's approval.

However:
Please note the following comments from our reviewers;

Reviewer One:

Minor revision

Please include consent for the audio recordings.

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 12. *Participant consent form.*

School of Psychology

Consent Form

An Exploration of Young People's Perceptions of what Contributes to Positive Wellbeing within Education.

Ethics Approval Number or Taught Project Archive Number: S1282

Researcher: *Hollie Riley (hollie.riley@nottingham.ac.uk)*

Supervisor: Anthea Gulliford (anthea.gulliford@nottingham.ac.uk)

School of Psychology, University of Nottingham, University Park, Nottingham, NG7 2RD

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? (at any time and without giving a reason) YES/NO
- I give permission for my interview to be audio-recorded. YES/NO
- 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 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)

"This study has been explained to me to my satisfaction, and I agree for my child to take part. I understand that my child is free to withdraw at any time."

Signature of Parent/Carer: Date:

Name (in block capitals)

I have explained the study to the above participant, and they have agreed to take part.

Signature of researcher: Date:

Appendix 13. *Participant debrief form.*

The University of Nottingham
UNITED KINGDOM · CHINA · MALAYSIA

School of Psychology

Debrief Form

An Exploration of Young People's Perceptions of what Contributes to Positive Wellbeing within Education.

Ethics Approval Number or Taught Project Archive Number: S1282
Researcher: *Hollie Riley (hollie.riley@nottingham.ac.uk)*
Supervisor: Anthea Gulliford (anthea.gulliford@nottingham.ac.uk)
School of Psychology, University of Nottingham, University Park, Nottingham, NG7 2RD

The research you have taken part in is focussed on exploring what young people within education, feel contributes to positive wellbeing, with the aim of highlighting ways in which educational professionals can further support and promote the wellbeing of young people. Please note that all information will remain anonymous and will be stored confidentially, and you will be able to, if you wish, review the recording. If you would like to do this, please contact the researcher before _____. If no contact has been made within this time, it will be assumed that you are happy for information from the recording to be used within the research.

Some websites which you may find useful have been included. These websites are focussed on supporting the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people.

- https://youngminds.org.uk
- https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/for-children-and-young-people/

Thank you for your taking part in the study.

Appendix 14. *Steps taken to ensure trustworthiness during each phase of the thematic analysis.*

Phase of Thematic Analysis	Means of Establishing Trustworthiness
1. Familiarisation with the data	• Recording of theoretical and reflective thoughts. • Extensive engagement with the data. • Recording of thoughts surrounding possible themes/codes. • Efficient and effective storing of raw data. • Accurate record keeping (transcriptions and notes pertaining to the data). • Use of a reflexive journal.
2. Coding	• Audit trail for the generation of codes. • Use of a reflexive journal.
3. Generating initial themes	• Use of diagramming, in relation to theme development. • Detailed recording of the development of themes/concepts. • Use of a reflexive journal.
4. Reviewing and developing themes	• Access to supervision, discussion of themes and subthemes. • Use of a reflexive journal.
5. Refining, defining and naming themes	• Documenting the naming of themes. • Use of a reflexive journal.
6. Writing-up	• Detailed recording of the coding and analysis process. • Thick context descriptions. • Details of the audit trail. • Reporting of decisions made thought the research process.

Appendix 15. *Research journal extracts.*

Extract 1

In order to be able to develop understandings of what young people perceive to influence wellbeing in education, it feels important to gain an insight into young people's conceptualisation of what 'wellbeing' means to them. Given the term wellbeing is used broadly, and at times interchangeably, with different dimensions of wellbeing being drawn upon, there is a need to ensure how young people perceive wellbeing in education is understood. As wellbeing can be viewed as an 'umbrella term', it feels important to explore the term wellbeing in its entirety, with understandings of the term being informed by participant conceptualisations. This is consistent with the social constructionist epistemology, with meaning and knowledge being constructed through shared assumptions in given social contexts.

Extract 2

Given a small sample size and all young people being recruited from one school, some limitations have been placed on what it feels feasible to report, given the need for ethics and pupil anonymity to lead. Whilst I feel it would be interesting and relevant to discuss the characteristics of participants in greater depth, I do not feel this would be in the best interests of participants, or ethically appropriate.

Appendix 16. *Sample transcript.*

Line Number	Interview Transcript	Initial Codes	Overarching Theme
3.66	Interviewer: So, out of the things that we've discussed, for you, what do you think contributes most positively to your wellbeing? So, what's the most important thing to you, within school?		
3.67	Participant: I'd say, a strong friendship group in school is very important, because you've always got them to turn to, at lunch or at dinner. Always got someone to sit- to talk to. You've just got that time where you're not stuck in lessons being taught, and you've got the time to do what you want.	-Reassurance of having a friendship group. -Feelings of belonging. -Peer connectedness. -Accessibility of support from friends. -Opportunities to socialise with friends/peers outside of the classroom environment. -Access to unstructured times/flexibility.	-Social belonging and peer connectedness.
3.68	Interviewer: Okay, and if you felt as though you were struggling with your wellbeing, would there be somebody you feel you could talk to about that?		

3.69	Participant: I think there's a number of people you could speak to really, you've got, I'd be confident enough to go to my teachers. But, as well, you've got your friends and there's a bunch of them, so I'll be confident I could go there.	-Teacher support. -Feeling confident in accessing support. -Support from friends. -Accessibility of support.	-Relationships with educational staff: relational behaviour, skills and support. -Social belonging and peer relationships.
3.70	Interviewer: Do you think most people in Year 11 would agree that the most important thing in school is friendships or do you think that might differ?		
3.80	Participant: I think it could differ; I think the wide majority would say friendship. But there's all the stress comes with Year 11; it's the exam year, and that's what people focus on, and I think sometimes that's what people worry about, it's exams. I think sometimes they isolate themselves off. So, they work at home just to revise for all these exams that are coming up.	-Pressure of exams in Year 11. -Pressure to achieve academically. -Worrying associated with exams. -Expectations and perceptions of others. -Impact of academic demands/pressures on socialisation. -Increased levels of learning at home.	-Academic and social pressures.
3.81	Interviewer: Yeah, and what are your thoughts around exams and wellbeing?		
3.82	Participant: I think it can be very stressful. Like mock exams. You	-Lack of containment surrounding learning.	-Academic and social pressures.

	go home and all you do is revise, because you know you have a test the next day, and you knew with these circumstances that these could, well, they did, they are going to be our grades that we're gonna get in the summer. So, they were very important, and I think people knew that and put as much effort in as they could.	-Exam stress. -Impact of academic demands on opportunities outside of school. -Academic pressure. -Impact of COVID-19. -Impact on future prospects.	-External influences.