

Inclusive Education and Integrated Working: An Exploration of the
Transition into Care for Young People in Key Stage 4

Paper1

Integrated Working and the Personal Education Plan: An Exploration
of the Transition into Care for Young People in Key Stage 4

Paper 2

Inclusive Education and the Personal Education Plan: An Exploration
of the Support for Young People Entering Care in Key Stage 4

Submitted by Maryanne Woodland to the University of Exeter
as a thesis for the degree of Doctor in Educational, Child and
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Area of Focus

Underachievement of Children in Care

The education system has undergone major reform in recent years, papers such as the Every Child Matters (DfES, 2003) and The Children's Plan (DCSF, 2007) have instigated a re-evaluation of the process and context of the education system. One of the major implications of this reform has been the need to identify any groups within the population who underachieve educationally with the intention of providing additional support.

Historically, there is a wealth of literature documenting the underachievement of Children in Care (which will be referred to as CIC). These include: The care matters change for children DfES (2005), Care matters. Transforming the lives of CIC, DfES (2006). Statistics for Children Looked After (including adopted and care leavers), DCSF (2009) and Jackson & Mc Parlin, (2006).

Multiagency Approach to Children in Care

When a child or young person enters care, the change that occurs for that young person is profound and complex, affecting the physical, emotional and psychological aspects of their lives. Entering care also includes the involvement of a range of professionals and agencies and therefore necessitates multiagency working, which adds complexity to an already complex situation for the young person concerned. The complexity of the professional dynamic which is involved in the support of children in care has been identified as a contributing factor to the underachievement of children in care. Specifically, the number of professionals involved and the lack of a clear line of accountability and responsibility has been identified as a

factor which sets CIC apart from wider population of young people within the education system and may explain their underachievement in academic terms. As a result, the systems and guidance for CIC have been reformed. The notion of 'Corporate Parenting' has therefore been introduced to raise awareness of the need for shared professional responsibility to support those in care within the education system. In practical terms, the reform has resulted in the development of the role of designated teacher and use of the Personal Education Plan within school settings, however, the process of supporting young people entering care within college settings has remained relatively unexplored.

The Role of the Educational Psychologist within Corporate Parenting

Traditionally, educational psychology has been informed by research within academic spheres of psychology. Given the academic and professional principles which guide the development of a 'professional doctorate', however, I also consider the notion of applied psychology to be implicit within the scope for research for a professional doctorate in educational, child and community psychology. I have therefore identified promotion of the educational achievement of children in care as a key area for development within national policy and as an area for research. Whilst there is a growing body of evidence concerning CIC within educational, social care and child psychology literature, the impact that educational psychologists can have on this process is relatively under explored. Given the professional knowledge and positioning of Educational Psychology Teams within Children's Services, I would therefore suggest that considering the way in which educational psychologists can promote the educational achievement of Children in Care merits attention.

In addition, with reference to the statistics cited and the relatively high occurrence of young people within Key Stage 4 entering care within the Local Authority in which I practice, I have selected transition into care for young people within Key Stage 4 as the area for research. Specifically, I will explore the meaning given to the use of PEP's within transition to promote the wellbeing of young people in line with ECM (DfES, 2003) agenda which promotes a holistic view of education.

The studies contained within this thesis have therefore been designed to illustrate the complexity of the social reality for young people entering care and those supporting them, to provide a real world basis for future research and to elicit information which can be used to consider the development of future service delivery.

Paper 1

Paper 1 explores the transition to care for young people within Key Stage 4 from multiple agency perspectives. Data was collected using focus groups or interviews from professionals involved in the Personal Education Plan (PEP). The research questions for study 1 are identified below:

- I. What is the purpose of the Personal Education Plan within the transition to care?
- II. What are the perceptions of the professionals working with young people coming into care when considering promoting educational attainment in terms of commonalities and differences?
- III. How is the promotion of resilience cited within the Every Child Matters: Time for Change (DfES, 2007) 'factored into' the construction of the Personal Education Plan?
- IV. How do or can Educational Psychologists contribute to the construction of Personal Education Plans for young people coming into care in Key Stage 4?

Paper 2

Paper 2 is an exploration of the support provided during the transition to care within a Key Stage 4 setting. This stage of the study sought to explore:

- How is the Personal Education Plan disseminated and engaged in within a Key Stage 3 / 4 setting?
- What awareness is there of the potential additional needs for young people entering care in terms of classroom practice and interaction?
- How are additional needs addressed?

Summary of Findings

Study 1

The findings of study 1 suggest that the implementation of the PEP and the notion of Corporate Parenting have yet to be effectively established in practice terms within X Local Authority. There was consistent evidence to show that young people entering care often experience successive changes. Evidence within the field of resilience has identified successive change (Fergusson & Linskey, 1996, Garmezy & Masten, 1994) as a factor which reduces resilience. CIC may therefore be considered as a potentially highly vulnerable group within the education system. Consequently, the study suggests that resilience and attachment based approaches are highly pertinent to young people entering care. Although the findings of the study indicate that there is little systematic involvement of EPs within the PEP process at the present time, there is considerable evidence to suggest a distinct overlap between the needs identified by professionals and the skill set and knowledge of EP's.

These findings therefore provide a clear rationale for EPs to develop approaches which apply an evidence based, working knowledge of resilience within integrated working for young people entering care in Key Stage 4.

Study 2

The findings of study 2 suggest that teaching staff identify individual need in response to conflict (in the form of response to presenting behaviour within school). Additional support is therefore reactive. The nature of additional need identified within the study was predominantly psychosocial. The dichotomy between inclusive legislation and practice is explored. Teachers identified the need for a proactive response to supporting young people in care as an area for development at both the individual and systemic level. Future considerations for the application of psychology and research are identified.

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**Paper 1 - Integrated Working and the Personal Education Plan:
An Exploration of the Transition into Care for Young People in
Key Stage 4**

Abstract

The Social Care and Education systems have undergone major reform in recent years, papers such as the Every Child Matters (DfES, 2003) and The Children's Plan (DCSF, 2007) have acted as political drivers for the identification of children in care as an vulnerable group within education. In addition, the need for effective integrated working has been identified as a key area of development in terms of professional practice. The Personal Education Plan has been identified as a vehicle for raising attainment and promoting integrated working, however, the process of engaging in the Personal Education Plan has remained relatively unexplored.

This study reports a qualitative exploration of integrated working in the support of young people entering care in Key Stage 4. The study specifically explored transition, integrated working and the application of psychology within this process. Data was collected using focus groups and interviews to elicit the views of the professionals who engage in supporting young people entering care. Data was analysed using Thematic Analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

The findings of the study identify the successive nature of changes experienced by the young person entering care as potentially detrimental to him/her and the supporting professionals. Findings from the study suggest that professionals supporting young people in care experience ambivalence regarding the usefulness of the PEP Personal Education Plan. The competent management of change, acknowledgement of psychosocial implications and effective group working were identified as areas of development for young people entering care and for the professionals supporting them. In addition, the study found that the knowledge and experience of Educational Psychologists' is an under utilised but potentially valuable resource.

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Introduction

Aim

The aim of the study was to explore the reality of an integrated approach to supporting the educational attainment of young people during the transition to care. The study specifically explored transition, integrated working and the application of psychology within these processes. Specifically, the extent to which the psychology cited within legislation was meaningfully engaged in for the benefit of young people entering care.

The educational outcomes for CIC have been well documented by the Department for Children, Schools and Families and the Joseph Rowntree Foundation. The 'Statistics for Children Looked After (including adopted and care leavers)' (DCSF, 2009) compares the number of children coming into care since 2005. The number of children entering care has remained relatively stable over the last 4 years (at approximately 25,000 with the figures for 2009 at 25,400). When viewing the age of entry to care, the 10 to 15 year old group had the highest frequency, at 9,100 children or 36% of the population entering care (DCSF, 2009). Within the report, the most common categories of need which facilitated entry to care included: abuse and neglect (49%), absent parents (14%) and family in acute stress (14%).

The Joseph Rowntree Foundation has also tracked the outcomes for CIC. In a recent report, entitled 'Monitoring Poverty and Social Exclusion' (MacInnes, Kenway and Parekh, 2009), figures on educational attainment for 'vulnerable groups within education' are considered. The report highlights the improvement for Children in Care over the last 10 years but acknowledges the inequity of results

which is still apparent when compared to the rest of the population. The following excerpt is taken from the report:

‘Around one-third of looked-after children obtain no GCSE’s and more than half obtain fewer than five. Both these proportions are markedly lower than at the start of the decade, the result of consistent year-on-year falls, but are still far higher than for children on average. On leaving care, a higher proportion of looked-after children were in full time education in 2008 (around one third) compared to 2004 (around one quarter). Still though, around 30 per cent are not in education, employment or training.

On the basis of these figures, it would be wrong to conclude that the care system itself is the cause of poor outcomes for looked after children. These poor outcomes are far more likely to be the result of the disadvantage they faced that led to their being placed in care.’

MacInnes et al, 2009 pg 57

When considering the present study, it is interesting to note that whilst educational gains have been made for Children in Care, the report identifies the impact of negative experience prior to the commencement of care in relation to educational outcomes and ultimately, poverty. This quote also highlights the merit of study which acknowledges the importance of meeting the individual needs of Children in Care in terms of their emotional, social and academic development, which is reflected in the Care Matters: Time for Change paper (DfES, 2007).

‘Unfortunately, circumstances outside of their control mean that children and young people in care face a

number of barriers to achieving this aim. As a result of their experiences they have often had a disrupted education, they may have difficulties with their social and emotional wellbeing, and they often lack stable relationships in their lives, resulting in attachment problems and a lack of resilience. It is vital that carers and other professionals give children and young people in care the encouragement and support necessary for them to overcome these barriers and succeed.'

DfES (2007), pg 5-6

As an educational psychologist in training and researcher, it was appropriate to consider the ways in which psychological knowledge could be synthesised with practice in support of young people entering care. Specifically, what psychological approach could be used to inform provision and support for CIC which acknowledges the ongoing effect of past experience and (importantly) provides a framework for enabling the children and young people coming into care to fulfil their potential?

Psychological Literature

When reviewing the literature for the topic for study (the transition into care and use of the Personal Education Plan), it is important to acknowledge research relevant to both the professional context for working (within a multiagency setting) and to review research in which psychology had been applied for the benefit of Children in Care. The present section is therefore divided into two parts to reflect these two areas.

Multiagency studies of CIC

Most of the studies reviewed focused on participants from within their respective disciplines. One exception addressed the educational support of children in care from a variety of perspectives. Coulling (2000) conducted a qualitative study exploring the shared understanding of support for the educational attainment of children in foster care which included teachers, social workers children, foster carers and home finding officers. Whilst the sample was relatively small (25 participants), the main findings provide some interesting data in terms of differences and commonalities of constructs regarding educational success. Coulling identified differences in definition of success and failure and the nature of effective practice between the respective groups who took part in the study. In addition, she advocated the creation of shared understanding of success between all of the parties involved to promote effective practice. Interestingly, Coulling's study also drew attention to the relationship between the foster carer – child and the foster carer – school relationships in promoting positive outcomes.

In a recent study commissioned by the Association of Educational Psychologists, two larger scale studies were conducted to examine the practice of educational psychologists within multiagency approaches to the support of children in care. Notably, the Norwich, Richards and Nash (2008) use of a mixed method design provides some illuminative observations and recommendations for future practice and research of educational psychologists. Norwich et al (2008) findings also advocate establishing of shared meaning within multi-disciplinary to facilitate effective working. The study goes beyond observations of shared meaning to attempt to evaluate multiagency participation in terms of theoretical frameworks. Furthermore, the study highlights the frequency of use of attachment theory within educational psychologist practice. It is interesting to note however, that despite the growing body of evidence on attachment

and education, to date, there is relatively little research concerning attachment and the educational achievement of children in care (Golding, 2008) or the shared understanding of attachment in cross professional discourse.

The next section gives a brief summary of research pertaining to Children in Care.

Psychological Research

Psychological approaches which have been evaluated within social work and foster care literature include cognitive behavioural therapy (Pallett, Scott Blakeby, Yule & Weissman, 2002, Herbert & Wookey, 2007), differing methods of behaviour management (Hill-Tout, Pilhouse & Lowe, 2003, Minnis & Devine, 2001, Golding & Picken, 2004) interventions addressing self esteem (Odell, 2007) and employing social learning theory (Golding, 2007). Historically, results regarding the efficacy of approaches to support CIC have been mixed, due perhaps to the complex interaction of past history, major change and new expectations (in the form of one or more moves to new families or schools).

The statistics relating to children in care have shown improvement in terms of outcome, however, there is still a quantifiable difference between the achievement of those in care and children whose experience has not resulted in entry to the care system. In addition, the varying degrees of success noted from research which focuses on behaviour or self esteem suggests that the needs of children entering care are still not fully understood. Specifically, further exploration of the needs of children in care must be engaged in as a

pre-requisite for providing appropriate support and closing the inequality gap in terms of achievement and wellbeing.

From reviewing the existing literature regarding children in care, it becomes evident that a greater understanding of the developmental history is necessary. In addition, the mixed responses of the population in care to behavioural interventions underlines the importance of needing to understand the adaptive value or origins of behaviours prior to intervention – recognising behaviour as meaningful and the child as an active agent who makes meaning of their experience.

An interesting piece of research which acknowledges the need for greater understanding of the developmental factors which may affect children in care has drawn attention to the possible benefits of applying attachment theory. Taylor, Swann and Warren (2008) conducted an innovative small scale qualitative study of foster carers' views of the causes of foster children's emotional and behavioural difficulties. A detailed picture of evidence emerged in terms of the identification of precipitating, perpetuating or predisposing factors which have parallels in attachment research. Caution is needed when considering the results of this study due to the fact that the sample was relatively small and self selecting, however, the evidence from the study supports the argument for greater understanding of the social and emotional development of children and young people entering care.

In addition, Golding (2008) reviewed parenting programmes with consideration to developing a similar evidence base for Children in Care. She concluded that whilst evidence suggests that interventions based on social learning theory are beneficial, the unique needs of Children in Care provide a rationale for developing training

interventions which are also informed by developmental and attachment theory and suggests this as a potential starting point for an evidence based approach to working with CIC.

The study of resilience seeks to define and understand responses to adverse life conditions in the hope of providing preventative or supportive intervention. The definition and validity of resilience as a construct has been the subject of much debate (see Luther, Cicchetti & Becker, 2000 for a comprehensive commentary of resilience as a construct), which perhaps reflects difficulty of capturing and quantifying diverse nature of life events and differences in individual response within a scientific framework.

For the purpose of clarity, resilience has been defined as:

‘a class of phenomena characterised by good outcomes in spite of serious threats to adaptation or development.’

Masten (2001)

The development of resilience, however, has been posited to be the successful management of, rather than avoidance of risk (Rutter,1994). There is a growing body of evidence which supports the notion of a developmental array promoting competent or vulnerable response posited within Waddington’s Developmental Pathways Approach (1957). Key pieces of literature include; increased or prolonged exposure to multiple risk factors reducing children’s capacity to demonstrate resilience (Fergusson & Linskey, 1996, Garmezy & Masten, 1994). However, successful management of risk has been identified as a future protective factor (Rutter, 1994). In addition, capacity and ability to form and maintain relationships with parents, siblings, key adults and peers supported resilient response (Werner, 1982, Beardslea, Hoke, Wheelock, Rothberg, Van & Swatling, 1987)

In summary, research relating to attachment theory and resilience provides the potential for a pertinent framework and rationale for active participation in the support of children entering care for all of the parties involved. Specifically, the professional knowledge and practice of Educational Psychologists may provide a potentially useful of expertise, in which understanding (informed by a research evidence base) of attachment, resilience and interventions can be made accessible to those who work to support children in either the care or educational fields. The next section describes the epistemological stance and design of the study.

Methodology

Epistemological stance

When considering the present study, it was important to select an epistemology which acknowledged the cultural and political context for those working to support young people entering care. Having worked within the Children in Care Team as an educational psychologist in training and within the education system, the interaction between policy and practice has always fascinated me as it offers both opportunity and constraint for those working with and for the benefit of young learners.

The use of Critical Realism (Robson, 2007) as an epistemology presented a lens for reflecting upon the interaction of context and practice. Within Critical Realism, mechanisms function on the basis of their structure. Within this study, structure was defined within two levels, professional grouping/purpose and role within the protocol of the Personal Education Plan. For a fuller discussion of the of the underpinning assumptions and application of Critical Realism as a lens through which the area for study has been conceptualised, see Appendix B (page 73)

In summary, when considering research, realism allows an integration of objectivist and subjectivist approaches. More specifically, this stance acknowledges the influence of social context, meaningful action and agency within a remit for study. Critical Realism has been proposed as a pertinent framework in which to research the reality for children in care (Golding, Dent, Nissim and Stott, 2006). This framework is particularly pertinent to research, given the interaction between the political drivers, the multiagency approach that has arisen as a result of policy and the need for effective practice and co-

operation between those involved when considering the entry into care of young people in Key Stage 4 and the promotion of their educational attainment.

Having identified the epistemological stance that I have adopted, I will now give a brief overview of the factors which contributed to the design of the present study. As stated previously, the epistemology and methodology of this study have been selected to gain a snapshot of the reality of supporting the transition into care of young people in Key Stage 4. A guiding principle of my selection of method has been guided by the ideas put forward by Carla Willig (cited in Lyons and Coyle, 2007, p26) which advocate the creative use of methods with the aim of finding the most effective way of answering research questions.

Methodological Issues

The sampling method used was designed to provide an overview of practice within the county. Data was collected using focus groups and interviews to elicit the views of the professionals who engage in supporting young people through transition and with their academic attainment. Data was collected within the context of professionals' teams (using focus groups) or as individuals (in the case of foster carers for example) to enable free discussion and to gain a sense of the organisational or working context of the professionals involved.

When considering my choice of analysis, I sought to find an approach which would allow me to elicit the views and perceptions of the professionals involved. Initially, I had considered using Social Constructionism as my epistemology with grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) as my method of analysis, as it would allow the flexibility to consolidate findings from the differing professional groups.

However, with further consideration, I decided against this approach. Whilst grounded theory produces a very rich picture of evidence, it was not appropriate to the level of initial exploration that I was engaged in. I had observed the fluid nature of attendance of PEP meetings (variability in attendance within the professional groups involved) and felt that the subsequent effects of communication should be taken into account. Specifically, the PEP meeting presents a unique insight into multiagency working due to the changes in membership of the team over time (as a result in changes in school, foster care placement, social worker etc). On the basis of my observations, it became apparent that the differing membership of PEP meetings inhibits co-construction over time; therefore using a method of analysis such as grounded theory would perhaps be begging the question of an agreed perception or definable theory of the use of the PEP.

The method of analysis selected for the study was Thematic Analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006). This model was selected due to its scope regarding the level of analysis and it's capacity to allow the data from the differing professional groups to be conceptualised and compared. Specifically, this model provides a framework for an exploration of the consistencies, divergences and areas for systemic development in the support of young people coming into care.

Thematic Analysis is a widely used approach within qualitative psychology which has been critiqued for lack of clarity (Roulston, 2001). Braun and Clarke (2006) argue that thematic analysis provides a cogent framework for the rigorous analysis of data. In addition, they have addressed the criticisms of thematic analysis within their model through the identification of key decisions to be made prior to data collection and analysis. Braun and Clarke's (2006) paper offers clear

definition of thematic analysis and illustrates the capacity for the epistemological flexibility of the approach with due regard to rigour. For the sake of clarity, I have defined my use of Thematic Analysis in terms of the key decisions which Braun and Clarke identified within Appendix B (p 72). This approach to data analysis is further discussed in terms of its strengths and limitations within Appendix B(p 85). Having discussed the epistemological and methodological issues concerned with the study, the following sections of the method will identify the way in which the method was employed.

Participants and Sampling

The present study was conducted using a purposive sampling method (Robson, 2007, p264). Specifically this included participants in Personal Education Plan (PEP) meetings, Social Care and Educational Psychologists. Given that the county where the study took has a large rural geographical area, it was important to give consideration to demographic differences and consequent differences in practice within the region. Within the context of the Local Authority, the Educational Psychology Service is based within 3 Areas, north, mid and south. I therefore sought participation from the following professionals in each of the areas.

I sought and gained permission to undertake research with the following professionals. 5H Where data was collected using a focus group format, the number of participants are given in brackets. Further explanation of the choice of focus group or interview as a method of collecting data is given in the section entitled 'Design' on page 24.

Professional	Location in Region			Total Number of Participants
	1	2	3	
Social Care (Children's Team)	1(2)	0	0	2
Social Care (Fostering Team)	0	1(9)	1(3)	12
Educational Psychologist Team	1(7)	1(5)	1(10)	22
PEP Co-ordinators	1	1	1	3
Designated Teachers	1	1	1	3
Foster Carers	1	1	0	2

Table 1.1 shows consent given and data collected by professional grouping within each of the areas within the Local Authority.

The areas identified within the table have been labelled numerically to preserve anonymity.

Materials

The following materials were used in the preparation for and collection of data (see Appendix A, p 71):

- Rationale explaining the study and explanation of involvement required.
- Consent Forms.
- Semi-structured interview schedule.

Data was recorded using a digital sound recorder.

Design

Data was collected using focus groups or interviews from professionals involved in the Personal Education Plan (PEP). The method of data collection (interview or focus group) was designed to reflect participants working practice – whether they worked as individuals with responsibility for CIC (such as a foster carer) or within part of a team (such as Social Care). In addition, focus group design was used to facilitate discussion of professional practice and therefore produce a richer data set. I have specified the method of data collection for each professional grouping below:

Professional	Method of Data Collection
Social Care (Children’s Team)	Focus Group
Social Care (Fostering Team)	Focus Group
Educational Psychologist Team	Focus Group
PEP Co-ordinators	Focus Group/ individual interview
Designated Teachers	Individual interview
Foster Carers	Individual interview

Table 1.2 shows the method of data collection for each of the professional groupings.

One exception to the structure for the use of interview or focus group may be noted (in the case of PEP Co-ordinators). One of the PEP Co-ordinators was unable to attend the focus group and was therefore interviewed on an individual basis. As stated previously, a semi-structured interview schedule was used for all participants (see Appendix A). A funnelling approach (Smith, 2008 p62) was employed in development of the schedule design and prompts to reduce the potential for participants to be influenced by the researcher.

Data was recorded using a digital sound recorder and transcribed for analysis (see Appendix B p 76).

The data for each professional group identified within the participants section was thematically analysed (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Analysis comprised of the following stages:

1. Familiarisation with data - recorded data was transcribed (see Appendix A p 71), initial reading and initial thoughts noted.
2. Generation of initial codes – this included systematic semantic coding of each data set (including all of the interviews/focus groups from a given group – foster carers for example). Data was then collated to form initial codes. Items were then re-assessed for suitability within each code.
3. Identifying themes – Codes were reviewed in order to identify initial themes. The codes were then collated under theme headings.
4. Reviewing themes – themes were then reviewed on two levels, for internal and external consistency.
Internal consistency refers to reviewing codes within a theme with regard to consistency of content. The dimensions or descriptors of a theme were identified and recorded.

External consistency refers to the reviewing themes in relation to the entire data set. This involved recoding the transcripts thematically and reviewing any data which did not fit into the pre-existing themes and dimensions for possible further themes. An initial thematic map was then drawn up for each professional group involved in the study.

5. Defining and naming themes - themes were then analysed and reviewed to define their parameters (see Appendix C p 87 for a full example of data coding in relation to themes identified within foster carer grouping).

Themes were then labelled and defined.

An overview of the analysis for each professional group was then produced using a thematic map (see Appendix C p87 for overview of themes for each professional group).

The results of the analyses for each professional group are given below.

In addition, a further literature review was conducted to explore the links between existing research literature and the themes identified within analysis. A summary of the limitations, key thematic findings of the study and discussion of the results follows.

Results and Discussion

Limitations of the Study

Prior to discussing the results, it is important to consider the relative strengths and weaknesses of the study as a piece of research (see Appendix B p 85).

The initial aim of this study was to explore the reality of an integrated approach to supporting the educational attainment of young people during the transition to care. The study specifically explored integrated working during the transition to care and the application of psychology within this process.

The identification of children in care as a vulnerable group and the need for integrated working have been driven through Governmental legislation and guidance. The rhetoric within the legislation (Care Matters: Time for Change, 2007, for example) is informed by psychological research and theory (such as attachment and resilience). The secondary aim of this study was to explore the extent to which the psychology cited within legislation was meaningfully engaged in for the benefit of young people entering care.

I. What is the purpose of the Personal Education Plan within the transition to care?

The initial context of this study focused on the change in a young person's life that happens when they make the transition into care. On closer analysis of the data, it became evident that the extent of change and loss experienced by a young person entering care is

much more far reaching (for a full illustration of the prevalence of change cited across professional groups, see Appendix C p 163). The experience of transition and change therefore needed to be considered prior to considering the use of the PEP. For the purpose of clarity, the findings for Research Question 1 have been organised under the following headings:

- Transition Redefined
- Psychological Reflections on Change for Children in Care
- The Personal Education Plan
- Psychological Reflections on the use of the PEP

Transition redefined

Transition due to change as redefined by the data collected includes:

Changes prior to entering care

‘that (*the transition to care*) happens in different ways and for very different reasons as well. It can be from as simple as a parent needing hospital treatment and there are no other family members around and we have to accommodate children under those bases to a very, very to you know, a very, very difficult situations in the house, of you know, allegations of sexual abuse etc. coming in care proceedings, parents ending up in prison, children very damaged coming into the care system and being placed with our carers.’

Social Care

Changes during entry to care

‘They just have to come in don’t they, which isn’t good enough really. I mean in terms of, your obvious interest in the resilience factors, what we’re doing is actually taking them away from a lot of the protective environment, family, friends, familiar world, and putting them in a world that actually is quite far away from that, which is quite a big

shock to any child's system really. And we all talk about this, don't we? And wish we could do it differently.'

Social Care

Changes after entering Care

'We liked her (*Social Worker*) and she kept in touch all the time. Now she's been taken off the case, and I haven't got a clue who her social worker is now, nobody's come back to me, you know.'

Foster Carer

Poor communication and a lack of information as a result of change was also seen to be a barrier to responding effectively to a young person's needs.

'I find sometimes, with an initial PEP, if they've moved schools, that PEP, although it can be semi-useful, because they don't know the child, they can't comment very much on their academic progress or relationship with adults.'

PEP Co-ordinators

'I think it's very important to have information of the child's background of, particularly within schools, how much they've been moved school or how much normal schooling they've been able to have, where they're at school, what they've actually learnt and things like that. I think that's very important.'

Foster Carer

Psychological Reflections on Change for Children in Care

Given the above evidence, the notion of transition (or response to change) should be acknowledged as far more complex than the move to care. The above excerpts show that change for a young person coming into care may include loss of key relationships such as parents, close family members, peers and teachers. A growing body of research suggests that key adults aid resilient response during change and loss (Werner, 1982). Successive losses of relationship increase the potential for young people to become vulnerable (Garmezy & Masten, 1994). Successive losses in relationship may affect a young persons availability to learn and therefore their academic achievement. The shortage of foster carers within the Local Authority may also necessitate geographical change, resulting in changes in everyday practices and pass times for the young person. In addition, changes in Social Care support were cited by all groups involved in the study as a barrier for effective practice.

The nature of successive change was also perceived to affect young people's sense of identity and agency.

'I think, and if they feel part of that, as well as knowing what's going on, I think the more they feel that they might have some little control, somewhere, or some part of it, then I think that might help.'

Educational Psychologist

'They (*the young person*) feel like, ah well, they're dumping me and giving me somebody else and. It took this care worker with C, for C to trust her, and she was just beginning to open up, well not open up about her life, but being able to sit and sort of talk to her, at first she would have nothing to do with her, she wouldn't even see her. And all of a sudden, she's gone again you see.'

Foster Carer

When considering the effects of change on a young person's life, it is important to acknowledge that resilience may be a key skill which needs to be developed; however, the above extracts also introduce the notion of age appropriate development. Lewin's (1982) theory of child development is founded upon attachment theory and transactional analysis and may offer an alternative explanation for the punitive affect of change.

Lewin posited that establishing a sense of power and identity are key developmental tasks within the 14-16 age group. Developing the skills to problem solve and using interaction to develop a sense of self are fundamental issues for effective development of self. Changes in key adults (for young people in the Key Stage 4 age range), therefore, could affect a young person's opportunities to explore and establish their identity in addition to potentially reducing their resilience.

The findings of the study on the nature and extent of change for young people entering care suggest that support for CIC needs to reflect the changing dynamic (or process) that they experience. The psychological literature cited pertaining to child development and resilience offers additional insight into the effects of the losses associated with such significant degrees of change within the process of development. Further consideration of the usefulness of literature pertaining to resilience is given in the findings for Research Question 3.

Findings on the efficacy and use of the PEP to promote educational attainment and wellbeing are now considered.

The Personal Education Plan

The data collected from all professional groups suggests a clear consensus that the purpose of the PEP was to promote educational attainment.

‘The PEP is there to support the young person in their education, so obviously through the sections of understanding both the social academic position that a young person’s in, what their targets should be, to explore what barriers there may be to achieving those targets or qualifications or whatever it may be. Really, to sort out how those are going to be addressed and who’s going to take responsibility for addressing it. So it’s the educational section of corporate parenting, for me.’

Designated Teacher

The development of the post of PEP co-ordinator was also highly valued both in terms of aiding clarity of role and promoting integrated working.

‘Before she was there, I used to go to PEPs and you didn’t know if you were supposed to chair them or the school were, and it just wasn’t set up. H is really fantastic and it’s just, it has made a significant difference in getting PEPs sorted.’

Social Care

The PEP was generally valued by participants, however, several practitioners expressed concern about maintaining the PEP as a child friendly experience.

‘I would be concerned for the young person, that PEPs can become bigger and more formal, whereas I don’t know how young person centred that is, I think that’s probably about the needs of the professionals sometimes, than the young person really. And I think what’s worked with the PEPs is that they are quite informal. I suppose I’d be worried about them becoming more formalised I think.’

'we went round and we said who we were and tried to make her like at ease, but it's very intimidating, all those people sat round in a room, talking about you.'

PEP Co-ordinators

There were distinct differences in the narratives about the PEP (see Appendix C p87 for Thematic Maps), however, when considering the purpose of the PEP with regard to individual's level of engagement and practice. Divergences in expectations about practice could be seen both within professional groups:

'They're a form filling exercise for us, that we get chased about, we do them. If you're lucky a social worker comes out and does them with you, or it's done in the sort of, we all sit together and talk about it and then it gets filed. It doesn't raise our awareness to anything in particular. If it does, we're often saying, well why didn't we know that anyhow? It duplicates a lot of work we already do.'

Designated Teacher

'I think in terms of the process, if I was going to say what, where is the probably the biggest variance in practice and what would be really good to tease out, would be how you make the contents of a PEP impact on a young person's experience in school. How you actually stop it being a paper exercise that's then put in the file 'til the next review in six months.'

Designated Teacher

'I think it helps to really sort of focus the student and again raise awareness with the carer as well as to the sorts of things that should be happening, particularly if they've not had the experience of education before with their own

family. And it's also quite good for them to see the amount of help they're getting.'

Designated Teacher

And across professional groups:

' if you've got to say no to other people and upset other people, I'm quite happy to do that, because it's the child that's important. And there's no point in doing a meeting if you're just going to tick boxes and you know, send your paperwork off and get it marked and come back, saying, yes that's lovely, if it's full of a load of crap. You know, it's got to be, I'd rather have two words on there and have the young person leaving the meeting saying, 'yea, that was quite good, I've got this and I've got that'.

PEP Co-ordinators

The above excerpt has been selected for two reasons. Firstly, it illustrates professionals' concerns that the Personal Educational Plan should be meaningful for the young person. Secondly, it also illustrates professional tensions as a theme. Across the data collected, professional tensions arose due to a perceived lack of participation (or commitment to engaging in the PEP), uncertainty about the value of their own contribution and stereotyping of roles, based on previous experience.

'we have a lot higher expectation of carers now to operate and support the educational aspects, more than ever really. And if they're not strong advocates, there's a big gap, so we ask a lot more carers in the education arena than we used to.'

Social Care

Findings suggest that PEP Co-ordinators held the most process orientated views of engaging with the PEP. Figure 2.2 gives a summary of the analysis of PEP Co-ordinator data.

Figure 2.2 shows the most common themes which arose from analysis of the transcripts of Personal Education Plan Co-ordinators. The diagram illustrates PEP Co-ordinators' focus on shared working, interaction with young people entering care and the professionals working with them within their dialogue.

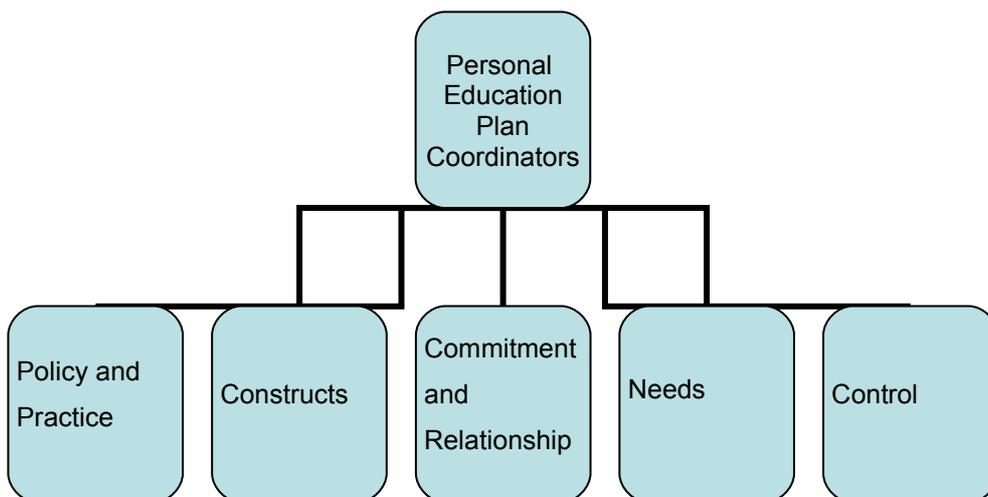


Table 2.2.1 identifies the dimensions of each theme (or 3rd Tier themes). Within the themes of 'Policy and Practice', 'Needs' and 'Control', the table illustrates the tensions perceived by PEP co-ordinators when considering usefulness of the PEP in promoting the academic attainment of CIC. In addition, the dimensions of the themes entitled 'Constructs' and 'Commitment and Relationship' illustrate the way in which personal and professional constructs can

shape professional practice (either positively or negatively). Notably, the findings suggest that PEP Co-ordinators felt that meeting the social and emotional needs of young people entering care was a highly important but unaddressed (due to lack of Social Care/ CAMHS support) facet of their work.

The concerns expressed about the PEP have been grouped under the following headings: 'Tension between policy and practice', 'Experience suggesting variance in the perceptions of other professionals commitment', 'Concern regarding the PEP process in identifying and correctly prioritising individual needs of CIC', 'Perceived lack of control (frustration/anxiety)' and 'Changes in home/school placement for CIC and loss of control'. The PEP was, however, viewed as a useful vehicle for prioritising the needs of CIC in relation to their educational attainment.

When viewing the second and third tier themes (see table 2.2.1, below), it is evident that, as lead professionals, the PEP Co-ordinators' felt ambivalent towards the PEP as a process, expressing concern that the process of PEP meetings had the potential to be a tick box exercise (or product) which did not meaningfully engage with the real needs of CIC - as is illustrated by the theme entitled 'Unmet social and emotional needs (tension between perceived role of Social Care and the reality of Social Care practice)'.

Table 2.2.1 identifies the dimensions of each theme (or 3rd Tier themes) for Personal Education Plan Co-ordinators' data:

Theme	Third Tier themes/Dimensions of 2 nd Tier themes
Policy and Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy as a driver for action (making professionals accountable) • Usefulness as a framework • Tension between policy and practice
Constructs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Previous professional experience shaping constructs of self/own role • Previous professional experience shaping constructs of other professionals (negative stereotyping) • Current professional experience changing constructs of others (positive)
Commitment and Relationship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commitment to young people in care • Commitment to the process of promoting educational attainment and wellbeing • Experience suggesting variance in the perceptions of other professionals commitment • Relationship perceived as essential for welfare of young person in care • Responsiveness as aim and ideal of PEP Co-ordinator professional practice
Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of Personal Education Allowance to meet individual needs • Concern regarding the PEP process in identifying and correctly prioritising individual needs of CIC • Unmet social and emotional needs (tension between perceived role of Social Care and the reality of Social Care practice)
Control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional role and PEP framework as a vehicle for directing positive change • Perceived lack of control (frustration/anxiety)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Changes in home/school placement for CIC and loss of control
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The level and purpose of Social Care involvement in the Personal Education Plan was also identified within the data as a source of tension. Specifically, professionals looked to Social Care representatives for information and support regarding social and emotional issues. However, the narrative within Social Care data identified foster carers as 'becoming more responsible' for the Personal Education Plan. In addition, findings from the other professional groups within the study suggest a tension or concern regarding meeting the social and emotional needs of CIC.

Figure 2.1 shows the most common themes represented which arose from the analysis of Social Care data. Specifically, the themes identified related to Social workers practice as opposed to Personal Education Plan (or a multiagency approach to) practice.

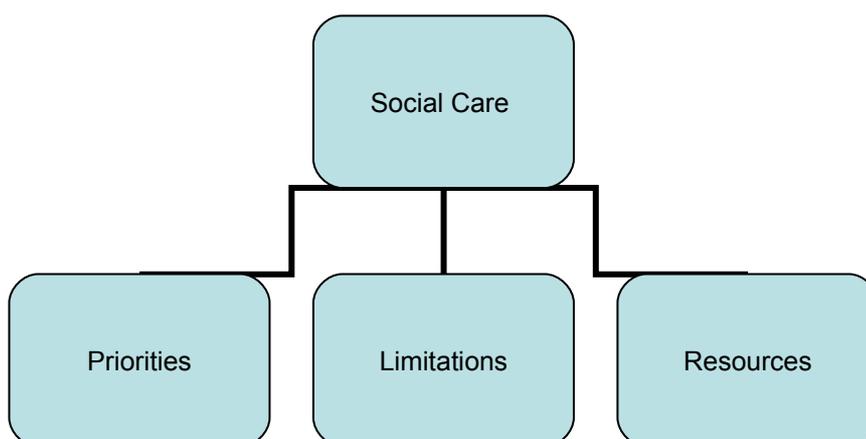


Table 2.1.1 identifies the dimensions of each theme (or 3rd Tier themes). The third tier themes identified within the theme 'Priorities' provide a clear illustration of the focus on profession-centric discourse within the Social Care data. Discourse within the 'Priorities' theme included the shift towards a greater safeguarding emphasis and complexity of cases. The findings suggest that the actual role of social workers has moved away from a traditional perception of social work (which includes a 'frontline' support role to children and young people) to a more systemic approach which includes a greater emphasis on risk evaluation procedures and protocols. Addressing the social and emotional needs of CIC was perceived as an unmet need and additional tension to providing good practice with reference made to the added responsibility that has been put on foster carers and the need for additional specialist provision (such as Children's and Adolescent Mental Health Service).

Findings relating to Service to CIC pertained more to managing resources and providing greater accountability within the agency. Specifically, the low number of foster carers, greater geographical areas to be covered, loss of experienced practitioners within the service and the level of administration related to policy reform were seen as limitations to effective practice.

When considering the PEP, the discourse of social workers provides a vivid contrast to the other professional groups from whom data was collected. The PEP was did not generally feature within the general discourse on professional practice. When the PEP was considered, it was perceived as a product which enabled the gathering of information for their professional practice, rather than a process to be contributed to (as may be seen in the findings from other groups, such as the PEP Co-ordinators).

2N Table 2.1.1 identifies the dimensions of each 2nd tier theme (or 3rd Tier themes) of Social Care data:

Theme	Third Tier themes/Dimensions of 2 nd Tier themes
Priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting the needs of own professional practice (meeting thresholds and desired outcomes) • Increase in complexity of need of CIC and effects on working practice • Reactive response to crisis • Awareness of good practice (identifying and promoting protective resilience factors) • Education seen as peripheral to Social Care working remit
Limitations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low number of foster carers • Loss of experience within the team • Need for better communication to promote good practice • Paperwork and policy as a barrier to working with CIC • Lack of social and emotional support for CIC (tension between changing role of social care and need for support)
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tension between knowledge of good practice and available resources • PEP seen as a resource for own professional practice rather than as a process to contribute to • PEP Co-ordinators relieving work pressure

Psychological Reflections on the use of the PEP

Psychological literature pertaining to effective multiagency work may offer greater clarity with regard to the interaction within Personal Education Plan meetings. Orelove and Sobsey (1991) distinguished between types of collaborative work. Within their theoretical writings, Personal Education Plan meetings may be defined as interdisciplinary – where professionals share information and the decision making process but implement actions separately. It is important to note however, that changes in the respective roles and membership of Personal Education Plan meetings may impact on effective co-ordination. Changes in membership affect the information sharing process. In addition, clear expectations of professional roles are more difficult to establish.

The nature of change within meetings is unlikely to improve in the foreseeable future, however, the development of using psychologically based frameworks as a basis for inter professional discourse (Norwich, Andrews and Nash, 2008) provides an potentially useful option for creating shared understanding within a changing group membership and therefore promoting effective working.

The findings for Research Question 1 demonstrate the need for clarity of purpose and role between professionals working within the context of the PEP. When considering the above excerpts collectively, it is evident that there are contrasting professional discourses regarding the level of involvement in the PEP, namely these relate to conflicting ideas regarding who is responsible for identifying and addressing the needs of young people entering care. Where the responsibility for addressing need was perceived to be held by other professionals (as illustrated in the case of the Social Care and Designated Teacher excerpts), the PEP was commonly discussed as a product or ‘tick box’

exercise. The notion of the 'PEP as a product' conflicts with the need for a process driven approach as identified in the section on 'Transition'.

The next research question considers the perceptions of professionals when promoting educational attainment.

II. What are the perceptions of the professionals working with young people coming into care when considering promoting educational attainment in terms of commonalities and differences?

Commonalities

The importance of relationships was a consistent theme across professional groups.

'You can get a good rapport then, so especially here I think, because of the way we operate, they (*foster carers*) know that they've got somebody they can ring if there is a problem, any little problem that the student might go home and mention, they immediately know they can ring in and it will be dealt with.'

Designated Teacher

Within the context of transition and change, the building of relationships had several important dimensions for the young person. These included: gaining information as a basis for understanding and co-operation, relationship as a prerequisite for supporting healthy development and attainment, relationship and responsiveness and belonging (see the Foster Carer Relationship and Responsiveness description in Appendix C p108 for a particularly rich example).

In addition, the need for stability placement at school and home was a consistent theme across professional groups.

‘I’ve seen other things happen in the past, it’s been where a child has quite literally been taken from one place, thrust into another and there’s no genuine relationship, no knowledge, no real understanding, no acceptance of boundary lines and that’s all had to be done at the same time, whereas with this situation, all of those things were already in place. And so he moved into something that he regarded as very safe.’

Designated Teacher

Divergences

As identified in the previous section, the perception of the usefulness of the PEP varied.

‘Don’t get me wrong, the reviews are useful because you’re bringing back data to the table, but actually how is what the young person is saying in those meetings, really communicated to subject teachers and therefore have some impact on their daily experience? I think that’s a key area.’

Designated Teacher

In addition, when professionals discussed a young person in care experiencing difficulty, there were distinctly different attributions regarding the way in which their presenting behaviour was perceived. Generally these consisted of ‘within child’ explanations of behaviour:

'she won't ask for help, she won't.'

Foster Carer

'he gets wound up quite easily, but he knows he gets wound up easily'

Designated Teacher

'But through that(*the PEP*), we actually found out that the child was being looked at as un-educable because of their whole situation of what they were in, just not interested in learning, over the years having moved to all different primary schools. That's when they so get behind with their learning. 'Cos it's not the flowing everyday life of a school all the way through and get so many changes, as well as home changes.'

Foster Carer

5V

In summary, when considering commonalities in professional discourse, knowledge of the young person was perceived as a key element to promoting attainment and wellbeing. Knowledge of the young person was viewed as the basis for meaningful response and understanding. Specifically, this involves having a greater sense of their journey to date and provides the potential basis for sensitive and effective support and intervention. Agency for the young person and the professionals was also consistently referred to as an enabling influence.

This research question also sought to identify divergences in the narratives collected for the study. As illustrated within Social Care and PEP Co-ordinator data, perceptions of the utility of and level of participation in the PEP varied within and across of the professional groups involved, for both research questions 1 and 2.

Whilst all professional groups understood the aim of the PEP (to raise the educational attainment of CIC), this study provides evidence that effective implementation of the PEP has yet to be established.

Finally and importantly, data collected on professional views of the meaning of young people's behaviour (when difficulties are experienced) were shown to vary between within child/ deficit explanations and systemic explanations. When reviewing the findings regarding promoting educational attainment of CIC and the meaning given to the behaviour of young people entering care, there is considerable evidence to suggest that further evidence based knowledge of the process of child development (relative to the changes in psychological and social factors which may accompany the entry to care) is needed to make the aim of PEPs a reality. The findings of this study suggest that this type of knowledge is a previously unidentified need within professional practice in support of CIC.

The next research question considers the professional views and knowledge of resilience within the context of change and transition for young people entering care.

III. How is the promotion of resilience cited within the Every Child Matters: Time for Change (DfES, 2007) 'factored into' the construction of the Personal Education Plan?

For ease of reading, the following findings have been structured using the following headings:

- Knowledge of Resilience
- Use of Resilience

Knowledge of Resilience

The evidence gathered for this study suggests that professionals taking part in this study had an understanding of resilience as a within person ability.

‘The ability to cope, the ability to keep coping in all sorts of different stressful environments and situations.’

Designated Teacher

The conceptualisation of resilience as a construct has been the topic of much debate (see Luther, Cichetti & Becker, 2000), however, as previously stated within the introduction and literature review, there is a growing body of evidence to suggest that resilience is most usefully defined as ‘a class of phenomena characterised by good outcomes in spite of serious threats to adaptation or development.’ (Masten, 2001).

Whilst the policy relating to CIC reflects advances made within psychological research (Every Child Matters: Time for Change, DfES 2007), the findings of the present study suggest that the process of theory (in this case, of resilience) informing practice (as advocated by Schon, 2006) is not evident within the implementation of the PEP. On a more encouraging note, professionals within the present study were able to identify some knowledge of protective factors such as:

The use of knowledge of the successful management of previous risk (Rutter, 1994).

‘That there’s some stability, some factors that, protective factors really, that promote that resilience really, and I think it’s about those protective factors being in place, but it’s about getting an understanding from the young person, about what is helpful to them and having some kind of continuity.’

Social Care

Or relationships with key adults (Werner, 1982)

‘Yea, being able to show them that you do care enough to take the time to go and see what they’ve been doing, is very important, yea. For the fun things, not just because you’ve got to go because it’s a meeting, but for things like that.’

Foster Carer

In addition, their experience of practice with CIC had enabled them to identify risk factors which inhibit resilient response such as increased or prolonged exposure to multiple risk factors reducing children’s capacity to demonstrate resilience (Fergusson & Linskey, 1996, Garmezy & Masten, 1994):

‘Not having lots of placement changes, having lots of school changes, because at the end of the day, that’s going to affect everyone’s resilience, to some extent.’

Social Care

They did not, however, feel confident to use their understanding of resilience to support educational achievement. Further consideration is given to the use of resilience and the application of psychology for the benefit of CIC within the next section.

Use of Resilience

The findings of the present study suggest that whilst professionals are able to identify some of the factors which promote resilience, their use of resilience related factors as potential sources of support/intervention is not informed by theory or evidence base.

As stated previously, the findings from research question 1 suggest that PEP Co-ordinators have the most process orientated approach to PEP meetings which reflects the extent to which they engage in the process of supporting educational attainment. In addition evidence has been given to suggest that all professionals within the study felt that a process orientated approach would also be the preferred method for engaging in the support of CIC. When considering how to promote a process orientated approach, which acknowledges the successive changes experienced by young people entering care, the findings of the present study suggest that PEP Co-ordinators do not have access to and therefore cannot apply the wealth of literature available to provide an evidence based framework to supporting CIC. The following quote suggests that PEP Co-ordinators rely instead on the expertise of the other professionals attending the meeting:

‘Are you conscious of using kind of, thinking about resilience when you’re doing the PEP process?’

‘Possibly not, no’

‘Not that I can remember’

‘No, I don’t think I have, I mean I like to concentrate an awful lot on the positives of everything that the teachers are saying.’

PEP Co-ordinators

The above extract suggests that PEP Co-ordinators are using the principles of reflective practice, their professional experience and their knowledge of psychological approaches such as solution focused techniques, however, there is evidence to suggest that poor levels of psychologically based knowledge may be inhibiting their practice at the present time. There is additional evidence to suggest that although PEP Co-ordinators were aware of the impact of personal events on learning, they felt uncertain about how to address them.

‘It’s hard to, you can’t do everything, it’s really hard because you have to combine I guess that, with, you know, you sort of prioritise really and you have to make the PEPs a nice setting for the young person you know, ideally you want them to be there to feel at ease, that’s the first barrier. And you know, if they come in and there’s people there they don’t know, you know, that’s not going to help.’

PEP Co-ordinators

‘It is, it is an ongoing, it’s a constant thing, there’s no consistency really. I mean obviously you’re kind of aware, you are aware of it, but you can’t always tackle that, it’s totally different, it’s a totally different area in a way, you know, resilience to what’s going on in their lives.’

PEP Co-ordinators

‘I do tend to want to keep it more as an education meeting and, you know, it’s not that I’m covering up their issues, but it’s about focussing on their education.’

PEP Co-ordinators

Educational Psychologists, however, saw their understanding and use of knowledge of resilience as something that they can contribute to PEP meetings.

'I guess where I'm coming from is that we have you know, a kind of specialist knowledge around attachment and resilience that maybe designated teachers, social workers and foster carers don't have, so therefore we might have a slightly different perspective in terms of reminding teachers that relationship with those who have that knowledge.'

Educational Psychologists

When considering the findings of the present study within the context of the growing psychological evidence base pertaining to resilience, it is evident that young people entering care have many experiences which can potentially impede the ability to cope with challenge and change. It is encouraging to note that there is also evidence to suggest that the professionals that took part in the study have developed an awareness of practical interventions which promote resilience. There is, however, evidence to suggest that current professional practice is shaped by their previous professional knowledge, rather than being informed by evidence based practice. Findings suggest that the professionals supporting young people entering care may benefit from additional psychological knowledge and support to identify their unmet needs in promoting positive outcomes for CIC. Further consideration of EP knowledge and application of psychologically informed approaches such as resilience, is given in the next section.

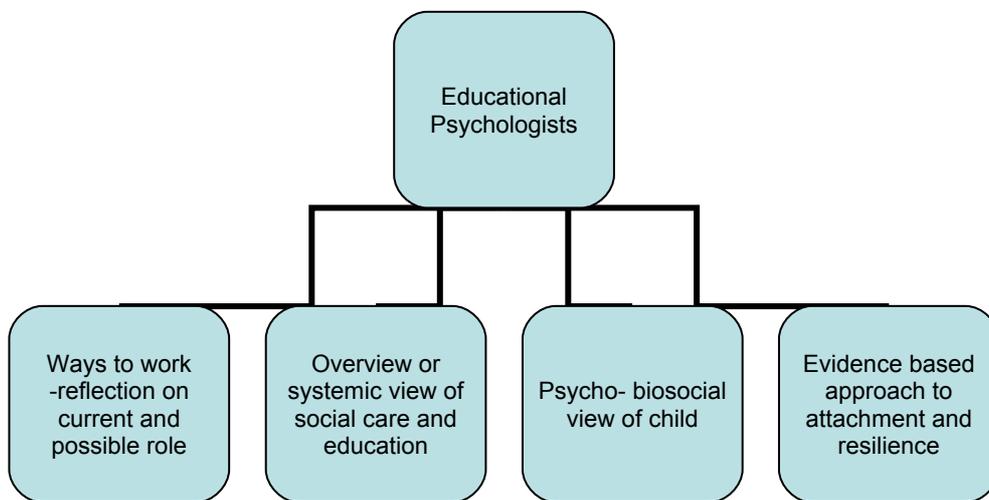
IV. How do or can Educational Psychologists contribute to the construction of Personal Education Plans for young people coming into care in Key Stage 4?

As previously stated within the Methodology section, data was collected from Educational Psychologists (abbreviated to EP from this point) within each of 3 area bases within X Local Authority. Figure 2.4

shows a summary of the 2nd tier themes which arose from analysis of the data. The findings of the present study are then discussed under the headings:

- Reflection on current EP role
- Reflection on possible EP role

Figure 2.4 illustrates the most common themes represented within the analysis of transcripts from Educational Psychologists' data.



For the purpose of clarity, the dimensions of each of the 2nd tier themes (or third tier themes) have been given in table 2.4.1. The full corpus of analysed data for EP's is given in Appendix C (p117).

Table 2.4.1 identifies the dimensions of each 2nd tier theme (or 3rd Tier themes) for Educational Psychologists' data:

Theme	Third Tier themes/Dimensions of 2 nd Tier themes
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Ways to work -reflection on current and possible role	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimal involvement in the PEP • Experience to date – reflections on whether the PEP is used as a professional product or is a useful process • Process working with CIC
Overview or systemic view of social care and education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EP role in supporting Education and Social Care – A community approach • EP views and experience of systemic Social Care issues • EP views and experience of systemic Education issues
Psycho-biosocial view of child	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tension between the needs of the child and the needs of professionals • The practice of inter relating biological, psychological and social factors when viewing child development
Evidence based approach to attachment and resilience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of knowledge of resilience • Identification of protective factors which support resilience in applied psychology for CIC • Identification of risk factors relating to resilience in applied psychology for CIC

Reflection on Current EP Role

When viewing Table 2.4.1, the second tier theme ‘Ways to work -reflection on current and possible role’ illustrates that at the present time, within the X Local Authority, EP’s have little direct involvement with PEP meetings.

'I thought it was very unusual when I was invited, but on the occasions I have been there, it's been useful, which makes me worry actually about the times when youngsters we are involved with, are having PEPs and we aren't involved.'

Educational Psychologist

Findings relating to current EP practice suggest that there were initially differing opinions with reference to systematic involvement with CIC within the context of PEP meetings.

'Well I think there is a role in the PEP. I would also have a big concern about us rushing in and doing anything with a child that's just gone into care, because I don't think that's necessarily the most appropriate time to add another adult, he's going to kind of drop in and see a couple of times into what's a fairly chaotic traumatic change for a young person, but we can work with the school in a different way to set things up for that child.'

Educational Psychologist

There also appeared to be a lack of clarity regarding when and how EPs are involved in supporting young people entering care.

'Generally I'm just not close enough to that, to the process often, because that's been triggered by something that's going on usually outside of school, so those timings don't immediately connect into where my cycle of work might be with the young person. Do you see what I mean? So, and that's probably why my involvement isn't consistent always at a certain point in that process. So we get involved in relation to co-practice type procedures and schools trigger in our involvement, which may or may not wrap in to that process happening. So I might be seeing the youngster for quite a while because things have been getting worse and worse for them in school, then they're taken into care, so I might go along to the PEP because I might have a lot to contribute, or that might happen, they might go into care, there might be a PEP, an EP hasn't been involved, but

actually as a result from going into care, things deteriorate and then we get involved. So it's not, I'm not saying it very well, but the two things don't directly map onto each other.'

Educational Psychologist

Educational Psychologists, do however work meta to both Education and Social Care systems. Specifically, within their professional role, EPs work with professionals from the care and more particularly the education system whilst belonging to neither professional body. The positioning of EPs alongside both systems therefore potentially provides unique insights into the workings of both systems and more importantly, how they fit together to provide for CIC. Their working knowledge of both care and education systems and legislation has provided the basis for reflection on current practice, which reflects the experience of professionals identified earlier in the results section:

'I mean there's quite an interesting tension isn't there with the amount of legislation that's been put in and for me, it almost is legislated to the point where it de-skills professionals, so it takes sometimes, the over amount of structure kind of takes out the meaningfulness and the flexibility in the processes.'

Educational Psychologist

There was also recognition of the tension between the notion of inclusion and integration when considering the potentially unique experience of young people who have entered care:

'for me it's back to front, it's almost what we perceive to be the stage as the importance of education, how the child fits into that, not looking at what really are the needs of the child, and what do we need to do as the school, educationalist, psychologist, whatever, to address the

needs in order to further them on, if that makes any sense.
It's back to front.'

Educational Psychologist

There was however, evidence to suggest that EP's awareness of legislative reforms and policy provided a basis for evaluation of current educational (and within profession) practices which may be beneficial, given the difficulties with implementation of the PEP cited within Research Question 2.

'I mean it's interesting if you think about the notion of kind of Every Child Matters, the notion of corporate parenting and actually being pro-active rather than re-active, so I wonder whether it poses a question about should we be asking about any children in care and actually looking at how well we're promoting or how could we support their well-being?'

Educational Psychologist

Given the nature of the role of EPs, there was also acknowledgement of the promotion of wellbeing of young people entering care as an ongoing process and the potential for supporting the professionals around young people in care more systemically:

'I think, given the WHO 2004 report, it's the support of the family around and the carers around the person that has the biggest influence over the ability to rehabilitate. I think I would see it as less of a sort of individualised thing and more of a dynamic.'

Educational Psychologist

The findings regarding current EP practice suggest that EP's may be underutilised within provision for CIC (in terms of raising educational attainment) within X Local Authority at the present time. When considering EP knowledge of the education and care systems and legislation, the findings of this study suggest that EP's could have an additional contribution to make regarding building effective professional discourse which reflects the aims of legislative change and supports the professionals involved in promoting the educational achievement of CIC. Further consideration of the ways in which EP professional knowledge and experience may be used is given in the next section.

5B1 Reflection on possible EP role

There was considerable evidence within the 'Overview or systemic view of social care and education' theme to suggest that EP's professional experience enabled them to reflect on the wider systemic issues and perceptions of the practice of other professionals which were cited as a potential source of difficulty within the data from the other professionals within the study. Analysis of EP data identified that EP knowledge of education and care systems, along with their knowledge of group process may be a potentially untapped resource within effective multiagency working with CIC, as illustrated in the following excerpts:

Within PEP meetings

'It also depends what sort of agenda different people are bringing to the meeting, doesn't it? Could be that school is so fed up with the behaviour for example, that their agenda is actually, can we find somewhere else for this youngster to go? That would completely skew supportive nature of any meeting to discuss the plans. I think it's down to having a very good facilitator leader of the meeting. There are lots of specific skills which are necessary to pick out those and let people air their frustrations, to play it through, then to

take something positive from that, and say. It is a distinct skill to be able to chair something as potentially emotive as one of these meetings.'

Educational Psychologist

In a consultative role

'I think, with our course training as community psychologists as well, perhaps there would be something that you could do in your community based plan, because then it's looking at the community as a whole and not just individual children about education and whether that be a supervisory role, a consulting role.'

Educational Psychologist

Or within college settings

'It's having that big picture and being able to slot in at the right place, with a professional judgement and I've found it a very helpful way of looking at the role.'

Educational Psychologist

It is evident from the results of this study that further clarity is needed about how to promote the educational attainment of young people entering care. The complexity of managing successive changes presents a considerable challenge for any young person and the professionals supporting them. There is considerable evidence within this study to suggest that meaningful interaction and agency underpin young people's ability to develop competence in the face of such change. Analysis of EP data (as identified within the theme 'use of resilience' and 'The practice of inter relating biological, psychological and social factors when viewing child development') suggests that the

knowledge base of EPs may provide a valuable resource which has been relatively untapped to date, both in terms of knowledge of the evidence base underpinning interaction (such as attachment theory) and the competent negotiation of change (in terms of resilience):

‘I think they kind of work at different levels don’t they, because I think with attachment it’s sort of understanding how you can relate best to the child and what might work in terms of behaviour management or might not work. Whereas with resilience, it’s almost, it’s more important in the sense that knowing what can help, like keeping social networks and those sorts of things, would actually inform your decisions perhaps about where the child goes, whether you move them on to somewhere else, those sorts of things. I mean, they both will to an extent, but I think you know, the resilience bit can have huge impact on what you do.’

Educational Psychologist

The above excerpt demonstrates the way in which EP knowledge can inform support and intervention for CIC. In addition, the training undertaken by EP’s enables them to integrate social, psychological and biological factors when considering child development. Specific examples of EP dialogue which relate to the issues identified by other professionals within the study include:

The need to feel safe and secure in order to learn (posited by foster carers).

‘There is an environmental link though isn’t there, because you have to be in a place that’s safe and secure where you feel you can take the risk and I can get it wrong and it’ll still be ok and if I get it right, then that’s, you know, I’ve made those steps to improve, so it’s that kind of nurturing’

Educational Psychologist

Promoting professional constructs which acknowledge psychosocial factors rather than within child factors.

'If these (*PEP*) meetings are happening, and the question I think was around to how an EP would, could get involved or benefit or involvement could have with that, if these meetings are happening, and if they're collecting, or they should be looking at changes within the individual and around the individual.'

Educational Psychologist

Increasing meaningful engagement in the PEP within college settings (identified by Designated Teachers).

'looking at attainment records for school, curriculum levels, absentees from school, behaviour difficulties, social difficulties, perhaps emotional difficulties and if all these are recorded at the meeting and everybody brought their own perspective view on these things, from their different professions and the school did that, then you would have a profile of the individual over a month, three months and six months and the changes.'

Educational Psychologist

And addressing and evaluating social and emotional needs (identified as an unmet need by Social Care and PEP Co-ordinators) in a way which reflects the young person's experience.

'people are a product of their environment. Quite often people will display irrational, complicated, bizarre behaviour, but to whisk them into CAHMS, for an assessment for eight weeks, perhaps isn't the right way to go, because quite a few times, it's actually, that's exactly what's happening, to a mental problem. And actually I'm

not sure that needed to be like that, I think there needs to be more of an acknowledgement that this young person's having had a lead up to a break up with their family, but a very complicated time, actually there needs to be some admission that they need some time and space and need some stability to actually see truly what is going on.'

Educational Psychologist

At the present time, there is significant evidence to suggest that there is minimal EP involvement in the PEP process. It is important to acknowledge the concerns of EP's and other professionals expressed at having another professional involved in the meetings as a matter of routine. There is, however, clear evidence to suggest that the nature of EP training, their professional knowledge regarding child development, their knowledge of multiagency and systemic working and their knowledge of the care and education systems makes the profession a potentially valuable but underutilised resource at the present time.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it is evident that additional Service development and research is needed to consolidate and effectively use all of the resources available for a young person entering care. There is a clear body of evidence within the study which suggests that meaningful

engagement and competence are issues for the young people making the transition to care and the professionals working within an integrated setting to support them.

The present study sought to explore integrated working in the support of young people entering care in Key Stage 4. The study specifically explored transition, integrated working and the application of psychology within this process. The findings of this study necessitated a redefinition of the notion of transition for young people entering care. There was consistent evidence from all of the professional groups involved in the study to suggest that young people experience successive changes, before, during and after entering care. The notion of a distinct transition into care was therefore rejected in favour of evidence which suggested that professionals are supporting young people through a process of continuing change.

When considering the Personal Education Plan, findings of the study suggest that professionals working with CIC to promote educational attainment understand the purpose of the PEP. There is, however, clear evidence to suggest that the implementation of the PEP and the notion of Corporate Parenting has yet to be effectively established in practice terms within the Local Authority. Specifically, many of the professionals involved in the study referred to times when the PEP was perceived as a product (or tick box exercise) rather than a useful process which reflected the young person's needs. The findings of the study suggest that the role of PEP Co-ordinator was valued in terms of having a designated person to lead the process. There was however, evidence of tensions within this group of professionals regarding the psychological and social needs of young people entering care and the extent to which they could be addressed.

The results of the study also confirm the findings of the research cited within the introduction. on multiagency working (Norwich et al 2008). The differences in narrative between professional groups supports the notion that professional identity is shaped by personality, personal history and work related experience (Nias, 1999, Goodson, 1992 and Thomas, 1995). The evidence suggests that the degree of successful co-operation within Personal Education Plan meetings was dependent on previous experience of other professional groups, expectations of own role and expectations of others' roles (Busher, 2005). Gaining greater role clarity has therefore been identified as a key issue for effective integrated working in support of young people entering care.

When considering the application of psychology in support of CIC, the findings of the study suggest that resilience and attachment based approaches are highly pertinent to young people entering care. In particular, foster carer findings support Coullings (2000) findings which suggest that the experience and behaviour of young people entering care have parallels in attachment research.

In addition, the present study potentially extends our understanding of the needs of young people entering care. There was consistent evidence to show that young people entering care often experience successive changes – in social worker, foster carer and school. Due to difficulties cited within the study regarding availability of foster carers and appropriate placement, young people may change school, which can also result in loss of peer contact and disruptions to course of study. Evidence within the field of resilience has identified successive change (Fergusson & Linskey, 1996, Garmezy & Masten, 1994) as a factor which reduces resilience. In addition, changes on

key relationships may result in the loss of contact with key adults (also cited as a protective factor for resilience, Rothberg, Van & Swatling, 1987). CIC may therefore be considered as a potentially highly vulnerable group within the education system. These findings also provide a clear rationale for the need to develop an evidence based working knowledge of resilience within integrated working in order to address the real life experience of young people entering care.

Through analysis of the data, there was evidence of professional awareness of risk and protective factors which have had a tangible effect on the young people that they have worked with. Awareness of these factors, however, was based on responses to individual cases rather than evidence base. Findings suggest that, at the time of the study, there was little generalisation of these strategies to develop systemic good practice.

Although the findings of the study indicate that there is little systematic involvement of EPs within the PEP process at the present time, there is considerable evidence to suggest a distinct overlap between the needs identified by professionals and the skill set and knowledge of EP's. When considering the results of the study acknowledgement must be given to concerns regarding adding another adult to the process of PEP meetings. The challenge set by the findings of this study include the sensitive application of psychology which meets the needs of young people entering care and the professionals supporting them, whilst not creating further barriers to making the process child centred, relevant and effective. There were however, examples within EP discourse which identify alternative ways of working with professionals which may benefit from further development.

The findings of this study present a strong case for research at the Local Authority level to identify unmet needs (both of young people and the professionals supporting them), with a view to applying psychology to further professional practice and to ultimately improve outcomes for CIC.

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Appendices Content Page

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C	89 97 98 101 108 117 118	Data Analysis <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thematic maps for each professional group with summary of theme dimensions. • Foster Carer thematic map with full description of theme dimensions • Data table to show the thematic dimensions of 'Change' • Data table to show the thematic dimensions of 'Consistency' • Data table to show the thematic dimensions of 'Relationship and Responsiveness' • Educational Psychologist thematic map with full description of theme dimensions

APPENDIX A

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING

An Exploration of the Transition into Care for Young People in Key Stage 4.

The present proposal was designed to provide an illuminative account of the transition into care for Key Stage 4 learners.

Due to changes in the structure of the Doctorate in Educational Psychology, The thesis component has been replaced by the opportunity to conduct research. Specifically, the research should provide an original contribution to both the discipline of psychology and also in terms of service delivery.

Stage 1 of the study examines the transition into care from both care and educational perspectives. Whilst there has been a wealth of legislation informing the need to improve standards for CIC, there is relatively little research to provide an evidence base for practice. Having reviewed the current literature from social work, education, foster care and psychological journals, I have decided to use an exploratory approach to research for the initial part of Stage 1 of the study. I wish to 'capture' some of the real issues for the adults working to facilitate transition into care. For ethical reasons I have chosen not to attempt to interview the young people involved. Furthermore, I hope to gain an insight into the dynamics of home - school liaison which has historically been considered as a potential point of 'break down' for facilitating the wellbeing of children and young people in care.

My hopes for Stage 1 of this study are several fold:

- As stated previously, to begin to evidence the reality of transition into care within the current legislative context.

- To gain insight from a variety of perspectives (including foster-carers, designated teachers, social workers and educational psychologists).
- To analyse data from the above sources to identify facilitating factors and barriers to successful home and school placement, therefore acknowledging the importance of both social care and education's contributions to promoting the potential of CIC.
- To explore the use of resilience with a view to the potential contribution of Educational Psychologists

The study, when complete (in 2010) could provide a valuable basis for the development of practice regarding the transition into care in terms of multiagency working. Your contribution would therefore be valued.

Many thanks

Maryanne Woodland

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING

CONSENT FORM

An Exploration of the Transition into Care for Young People in Key Stage 4

I have been fully informed about the aims and purposes of the project.

I understand that:

There is no compulsion for me to participate in this research project and, if I do choose to participate, I may at any stage withdraw my participation

I have the right to refuse permission for the publication of any information about me

Any information which I give will be used solely for the purposes of this research project, which may include publications

All information I give will be treated as confidential

The researcher will make every effort to preserve my anonymity

.....
(Signature of participant)

.....
(Date)

.....
(Printed name of participant)

One copy of this form will be kept by the participant; a second copy will be kept by the researcher(s)

If you have any concerns about the project that you would like to discuss, please contact:

Maryanne Woodland

Focus Group Schedule

1. What are the facilitating factors for a successful transition to care?
2. What are the barriers for a successful transition to care?
3. What is your understanding of the PEP?
4. What is your understanding of resilience?
5. Do you use the notion of resilience in your support of young people in care?
6. Is there anything else that you would like to mention?

APPENDIX B

Epistemology Rationale 2A

When considering entry into care, the complexity of addressing individual needs of the young people involved and the need for co-ordinated working amongst the professionals supporting them, the overall picture quickly becomes complicated and difficult to conceptualise. I therefore sought an approach which had the capacity to incorporate and frame these complex influences and the way in which they interact. As an educational psychologist embarking on research within the field for the first time, I made the decision to select a stance which focused on explanation of actions and interactions within a given social setting (namely Personal Education Plan meetings). This decision reflects my commitment to the notion of applied psychology and developing a role as an applied psychologist.

Specifically, my choice of epistemology reflects my beliefs and assumptions both as a professional and researcher. These include a commitment to making psychology explicit and accessible and the notion of reflective practice (Schon, 2006), namely, the cyclical process of practice and theory informing each other. My choice also reflects a commitment to developing research which is both rigorous and meaningful, developing the use of psychology in a culturally situated and relevant way and a belief that giving consideration to the way in which psychology is applied (both within policy and practice) is pivotal to ensure that psychology is used to empower individuals and groups.

Critical Realism (Robson, 2007) offers an approach for real world (applied research) which explicitly acknowledges 'the value laden and political nature of research'. For the purpose of clarity, I have identified some of the key principles of Critical Realism which have

particular pertinence when considering transition and the support of children in care as an area for study.

‘Explanation is showing how some event has occurred in a particular case. Events are to be explained even when they cannot be predicted.’

Robson (2007), p 32

As stated previously, when considering the entry of a young person into care, the degree of social change experienced is profound and unique to that young person. In addition, the requirement for integrated working between professionals from Social Care and Education add further complexity in terms of professional identity, priorities and the ability of individuals to interact and communicate effectively. An exploration of the ways in which these dynamics interact therefore merits attention as a first step for understanding and improving practice.

The policy dictates and educational reforms which have driven the agenda for integrated working must be acknowledged when seeking to understand the effect of entry to care on a young person’s life and development. Specifically, the influence of a young person’s or professional’s past history and the narratives that individuals bring to their interaction within the context of Personal Education Plan meetings cannot be ignored. Any attempt to separate individual’s engagement within the PEP process from their wider social identity would only produce a partial picture of the reality of the transition to care and therefore seriously compromise the validity and usefulness of findings. In addition, Critical Realism enables researchers to move beyond a reductionist approach to interaction to acknowledge and evaluate the influence of professional/personal identity, priorities and protocols.

'The concept of causation is one in which entities act as a function of their basic structure.'

Robson (2007), p 32

With reference to integrated working in support of children in care, acting as a function of basic structure is an important notion. Specifically this would include the young person's experience of the world and engagement in family scripts and professionals' views of their own identity and role in supporting young people in care. Given the relatively recent move to integrated working and the potential for changes in group membership, it would be inappropriate to assume a shared understanding or consensus of perception about individual stakeholders' roles. Critical Realism also acknowledges the power of meaning, agency and the development of systemic ways of acting within interaction.

'Explanation is concerned with how mechanisms produce events. The guiding metaphors are of structures and mechanisms in reality rather than phenomena and events.'

Robson (2007), p 32

The guiding metaphor which underpins Critical Realism uses structure and mechanism rather than phenomena in relation to events. This distinction is important when considering meaningful interaction of participants with the environment and each other for two reasons. The use of structures and mechanism sets any actions within the context of meaning, personal engagement and utility, acknowledging the systematic way in which individuals and groups construct meaning in order to develop co-operative practice. This enables researchers to consider the interactions/traditions which contribute to a cultural context.

Secondly, the use of mechanism over phenomena as a metaphor also places the researcher as a participator and co-constructor to the cultural context rather than as an objective observer. When conducting research (particularly with vulnerable or minority groups) it is important to acknowledge that when psychology is applied within real life settings, the way in which it is applied can either empower or disempower. When considering integrated working and support for young people making the transition into care, it is also important to remember that the interaction under study does not occur in a political or social vacuum and therefore, neither will the potential application of any results.

This approach to research could be criticised in terms of having limited value in terms of generalisability. However, Critical Realism as a research epistemology does offer a new way to understand the experience of marginalised or vulnerable groups within society by acknowledging the social context in which they live (and psychology is applied) into the sphere for research. Specifically, this approach does not assume cultural influences as a given, therefore potentially challenging any aspects of culture which may be detrimental to healthy development. In essence, Critical Realism provides a wider base for the development of a systemic approach to understanding human behaviour, whilst not objectifying those it seeks to help. Specifically, Critical Realism also opens the remit of research to include a more sensitive approach to behaviour with regards to the meaning that we, as humans, give to it within our cultural and social contexts.

Within the context of the area to be studied, the Critical Realist approach has enabled me to conceptualise the area for study. Robson (2007) illustrates the realist explanation with the use of an analogy. If one posed the question:

‘Does gunpowder blow up if a flame is applied? Yes, if the conditions are right. It doesn’t ignite if it is damp, or if the mixture is wrong or if no oxygen is present or if heat is only applied for a short amount of time. In realist terms, the **outcome** (the explosion) of an **action** (applying the flame) follows from **mechanisms** (the chemical composition of the gunpowder) acting in particular **contexts** (the particular context which allows the reaction to take place).’

Robson, 2007, pg 30

This analogy is useful when considering the factors which influence the transition into care. Specifically, this analogy has enabled me to conceptualise the process of the transition to care, the factors which influence the transition and use of the Personal Education Plan in the following way:

- Action – entry to care.
- Mechanism – use of the Personal Education Plan (which may include the input of the child or young person entering care, foster carers, designated teachers, social workers, educational psychologists and, within X, PEP co-ordinators).
- Context – legislation and guidance (including professional structures and protocols) focusing on increasing educational attainment for CIC.
- Outcome – raised educational attainment for CIC.

Methodological Discussion

As stated within the main body of text, the changes in professional composition of those attending PEP meetings presents a unique context in terms of multiagency working. It would therefore be inappropriate to assume co-construction across the stakeholders concerned. These questions contextualise analysis of the data with due regard to the role of researcher as an active participant in the interpretation process. The questions include:

- What represents a theme?

A theme is defined both in terms of prevalence across data sets. Themes are not, however, solely defined by prevalence and are therefore not based on quantifiable measures (as in content analysis, Braun and Clarke, 2006). They are also defined with regard to their importance to the original research questions. The researcher is therefore an active participant of constructing themes within the reflective process of analysing data.

- A rich description of the data or a detailed account of one particular aspect?

The aim of this study is to produce a rich thematic picture of themes rather than an in depth account of a particular theme. It is important to acknowledge that in reporting findings, some of the depth of data may be lost. This approach does, however, give great utility when exploring an under-researched area (Braun and Clarke, 2006), such as the present study.

- Use of inductive versus theoretical analysis?

The present study employs both types of analyses for distinct purposes.

Inductive analysis is used to gain an insight into the views and practices of those contributing to the support of young people entering care and to consider professional practice to support the holistic development of young people entering care in Key Stage 4 through the lens of the Developmental Pathways approach.

Theoretical analysis is used when analysing the data for information relating to resilience (specifically, data was thematically analysed for talk of protective or risk factors).

- Use of semantic or latent themes?

These questions contextualise analysis of the data with due regard to the role of researcher as an active participant in the interpretation process. The questions include

- Epistemology: essentialist/realist versus constructionist thematic analysis?

As discussed previously, the present study has been conceptualised within a realist approach (Robson, 2007, p 32). With regards to analysis of data, the realist perspective enables the theorisation of individuals' and distinct groups' data rather than through the lens of co-construction. Analysis reflects the assumption that the relationship between language, experience and meaning is unidirectional (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p29). When considering the complex social and professional dynamics of the topic under study, this epistemology

facilitates greater clarity in terms of representing differing perspectives brought by the professional groups concerned.

Limitations of the Study

The small scale nature of the study affects the degree to which it can be generalised, however, the initial aim of the study was to explore a relatively under researched area, namely, the reality of integrated working and the transition to care. Given this brief, the study does provide a rich account of practice dynamics for those supporting young people entering care, with a view to the potential for further research.

The method of sampling also needs to be considered. The study sought to provide a real life snap shot within the Local Authority (known as 'x' from this point forward). Given the large geographical area that x covers and the range in demographic (in terms of areas relative wealth and chronic deprivation), data was sought from all 3 areas within x across all professional groups involved in the study. Difficulties gaining access to Social Care Teams resulted in a loss of data for analysis at the final stage, affecting the representational value of the sample. In addition, it needs to be acknowledged that the number of Foster Carers who were approached for participation in the study was also highly dependent on initial identification by Social Care. The inability of the researcher to gain access to all of the relevant Social Care Teams, therefore, also affected the number of Key Stage 4 Foster Carers that could be contacted. Difficulty experienced within the study do, however, appear to reflect the difficulties in communication experienced by the professionals from whom data was sought.

When considering the method of analysis, a full representation (across the professional range) of the themes presented within the results section could not be shown and was therefore described within Appendices B and C. It is important to acknowledge that some of the depth and richness of the original data has been lost within the process of thematic analysis. The method selected for analysis has

illuminated the complexity of integrated working and provided valuable insights for further study.

The rigour of analysis also needs to be reflected upon. It is important to acknowledge the part of the researcher within the construction of themes (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Given the wealth and range of the data collected, the review of themes of internal and external validity became an essential element of remaining true to the original thoughts and ideas presented by participants. This involved a lengthy process of re-visiting the transcripts and maintaining a critically reflective stance as a researcher. As stated within the section on epistemology, understanding rather than prediction is one of the underlying precepts or aims of Critical Realism. Given this aim, the cyclical approach of revisiting the data and review of identified themes has facilitated critical questioning of the way the data has been constructed during analysis and a basis for self reflection regarding the rigour of the process.

The study does, however, provide a rich source of information for review and action planning in terms of service development. The study could be used as a basis for discussion with the Local Authority Commissioner for Children in Care for example. The identification of issues for practice development and application are discussed in greater depth next within the discussion.

APPENDIX C

Social Care Thematic Map

2M Figure 2.1 shows the most common themes represented which arose from the analysis of Social Care data. Specifically, the themes identified related to Social workers practice as opposed to Personal Education Plan (or a multiagency approach to) practice.

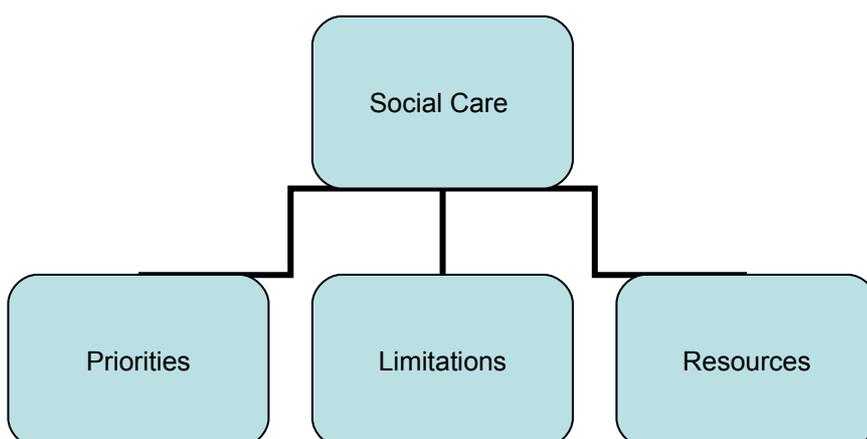


Table 2.1.1 identifies the dimensions of each theme (or 3rd Tier themes). The third tier themes identified within the theme 'Priorities' provide a clear illustration of the focus on profession-centric discourse within the Social Care data. Discourse within the 'Priorities' theme included the shift towards a greater safeguarding emphasis and complexity of cases. The findings suggest that the actual role of social workers has moved away from a traditional perception of social work (which includes a 'frontline' support role to children and young people) to a more systemic approach which includes a greater emphasis on risk evaluation procedures and protocols. Addressing the social and emotional needs of CIC was perceived as an unmet need and additional tension to providing good practice with reference made to the added responsibility that has been put on foster carers and the need for additional specialist provision (such as Children's and Adolescent Mental Health Service).

Findings relating to Service to CIC pertained more to managing resources and providing greater accountability within the agency. Specifically, the low number of foster carers, greater geographical areas to be covered, loss of experienced practitioners within the service and the level of administration related to policy reform were seen as limitations to effective practice.

When considering the PEP, the discourse of social workers provides a vivid contrast to the other professional groups from whom data was collected. The PEP was did not generally feature within the general discourse on professional practice. When the PEP was considered, it was perceived as a product which enabled the gathering of information for their professional practice, rather than a process to be contributed to (as may be seen in the findings from other groups, such as the PEP Co-ordinators).

2N Table 2.1.1 identifies the dimensions of each 2nd tier theme (or 3rd Tier themes) of Social Care data:

Theme	Third Tier themes/Dimensions of 2nd Tier themes
Priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting the needs of own professional practice (meeting thresholds and desired outcomes) • Increase in complexity of need of CIC and effects on working practice • Reactive response to crisis • Awareness of good practice (identifying and promoting protective resilience factors) • Education seen as peripheral to Social Care

	working remit
Limitations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low number of foster carers • Loss of experience within the team • Need for better communication to promote good practice • Paperwork and policy as a barrier to working with CIC • Lack of social and emotional support for CIC (tension between changing role of social care and need for support)
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tension between knowledge of good practice and available resources • PEP seen as a resource for own professional practice rather than as a process to contribute to • PEP Co-ordinators relieving work pressure

Thematic Map of Personal Education Plan Co-ordinators' Data 1E

Figure 2.2 shows the most common themes which arose from analysis of the transcripts of Personal Education Plan Co-ordinators.

The diagram illustrates PEP Co-ordinators' focus on shared working, interaction with young people entering care and the professionals working with them within their dialogue.

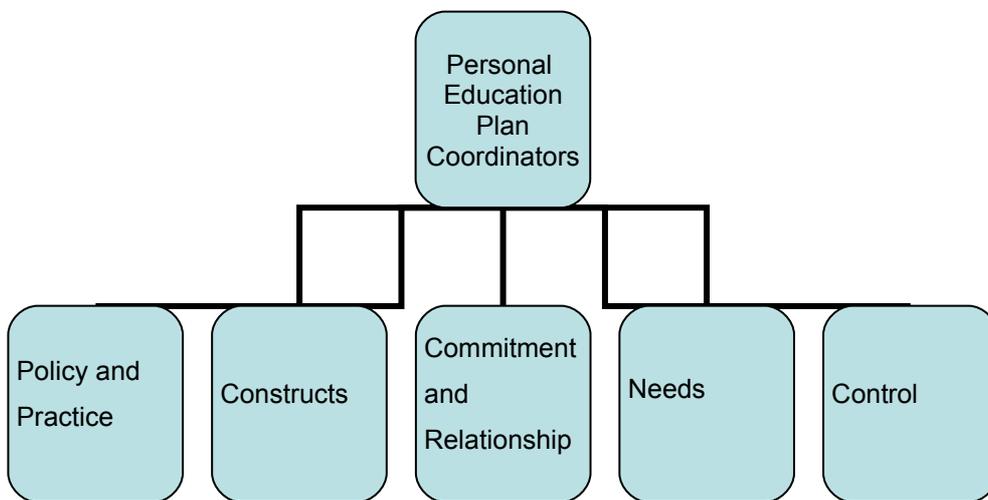


Table 2.2.1 identifies the dimensions of each theme (or 3rd Tier themes). Within the themes of 'Policy and Practice', 'Needs' and 'Control', the table illustrates the tensions perceived by PEP co-ordinators when considering usefulness of the PEP in promoting the academic attainment of CIC. In addition, the dimensions of the themes entitled 'Constructs' and 'Commitment and Relationship' illustrate the way in which personal and professional constructs can shape professional practice (either positively or negatively). Notably, the findings suggest that PEP Co-ordinators felt that meeting the social and emotional needs of young people entering care was a highly important but unaddressed (due to lack of Social Care/ CAMHS support) facet of their work.

The concerns expressed about the PEP have been grouped under the following headings: 'Tension between policy and practice', 'Experience suggesting variance in the perceptions of other professionals commitment', 'Concern regarding the PEP process in identifying and correctly prioritising individual needs of CIC', 'Perceived lack of control (frustration/anxiety)' and 'Changes in home/school placement for CIC and loss of control'. The PEP was, however, viewed as a useful vehicle for prioritising the needs of CIC in relation to their educational attainment.

When viewing the second and third tier themes, it is evident that, as lead professionals, the PEP Co-ordinators' felt ambivalent towards the PEP as a process, expressing concern that the process of PEP meetings had the potential to be a tick box exercise (or product) which did not meaningfully engage with the real needs of CIC - as is illustrated by the theme entitled 'Unmet social and emotional needs (tension between perceived role of Social Care and the reality of Social Care practice)'.

Table 2.2.1 identifies the dimensions of each theme (or 3rd Tier themes) for Personal Education Plan Co-ordinators' data:

Theme	Third Tier themes/Dimensions of 2nd Tier themes
Policy and Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy as a driver for action (making professionals accountable) • Usefulness as a framework • Tension between policy and practice
Constructs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Previous professional experience shaping constructs of self/own role • Previous professional experience shaping constructs of other professionals (negative stereotyping)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current professional experience changing constructs of others (positive)
Commitment and Relationship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commitment to young people in care • Commitment to the process of promoting educational attainment and wellbeing • Experience suggesting variance in the perceptions of other professionals commitment • Relationship perceived as essential for welfare of young person in care • Responsiveness as aim and ideal of PEP Co-ordinator professional practice
Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of Personal Education Allowance to meet individual needs • Concern regarding the PEP process in identifying and correctly prioritising individual needs of CIC • Unmet social and emotional needs (tension between perceived role of Social Care and the reality of Social Care practice)
Control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional role and PEP framework as a vehicle for directing positive change • Perceived lack of control (frustration/anxiety) • Changes in home/school placement for CIC and loss of control

Thematic Map of Designated Teachers' Data 1E 5J

Figure 2.3 shows the most common themes represented in the transcripts from Designated Teachers' data.

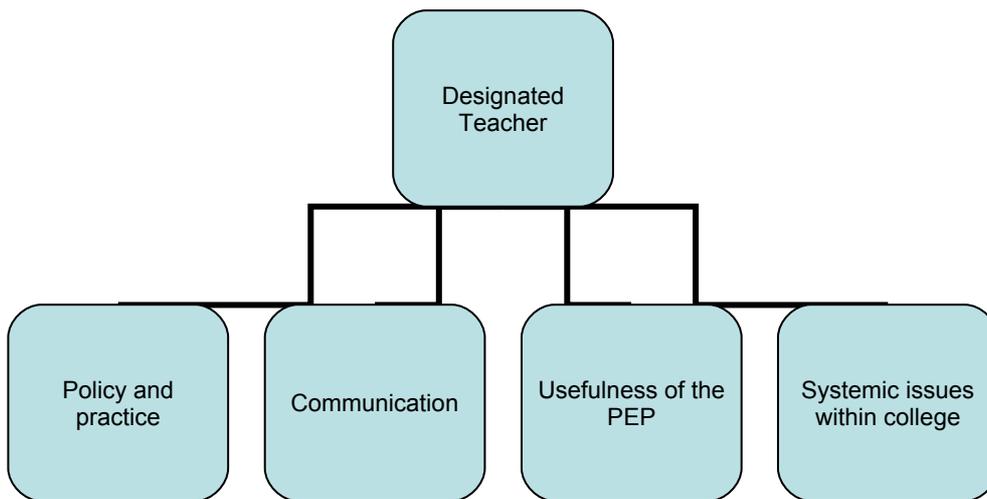


Table 2.3.1 identifies the dimensions of each 2nd tier theme (or 3rd Tier themes) for Designated Teachers' data. The third tier themes which are contained within 'Policy and Practice' illustrate ambivalence towards current educational policy and the implementation of the PEP. The PEP was seen as a successful vehicle for raising the profile of CIC within schools, however, policy regarding safeguarding and the structure of the PEP were perceived as barriers to identifying the needs of CIC and disseminating the type of information which would be useful to classroom practice. Designated teachers viewed successful provision for CIC to be based on good communication. PEP meetings were viewed as beneficial, however, the structure of the PEP proforma was viewed as a 'tick box exercise' (see 'Usefulness of PEP' theme. Provision for CIC was perceived as a joint process which should involve social workers and foster carers (see 'Communication' theme), however, findings suggest that, in

designated teachers experience, changes of care placement and subsequent changes in school were a frequent occurrence, resulting in loss of information and a reduction in the appropriateness of provision.

Findings suggest that the provision of the role of designated teacher has given rise to reflective evaluation of practice within the colleges in the study, which in turn had generated change within the pastoral systems of the colleges concerned (as expressed in the theme 'Developing school practice to incorporate provision for CIC'). Difficulties with gaining and disseminating information within colleges and the culture of colleges as organisations (tensions between inclusive practice and academic achievement) were perceived as barriers to appropriate provision for CIC.

Table 2.3.1 identifies the dimensions of each 2nd tier theme (or 3rd Tier themes) for Designated Teachers' data:

Theme	Third Tier themes/Dimensions of 2nd Tier themes
Policy and Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raising the profile of needs of CIC • Tension between confidentiality guidelines and their effects on teacher practice
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Valuing communication • As pivotal to successful provision for CIC • Negative effects of changes in home/school placement – loss of information
Usefulness of the PEP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The PEP as a 'tick box' exercise • Improving communication
Systemic issues within college	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dissemination of actions • School culture (positive factors)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• School culture (negative factors)• Developing school practice to incorporate provision for CIC
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Thematic Map of Foster Carers' Data

Figure 2.5 shows the most common themes represented within the analysis of transcripts from Foster Carers' data.

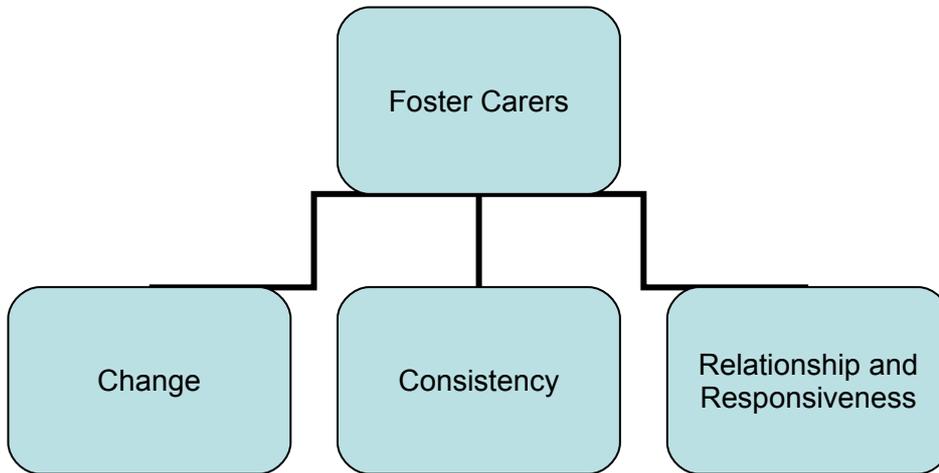


Table 2.5.1 shows the dimensions of each 2nd tier theme (or 3rd Tier themes) for Foster Carers' data.

Theme	Third Tier themes/Dimensions of 2 nd Tier themes
Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes in social worker (occurrence and effects) • Change and loss: Information, Identity And Relationship
Consistency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent information to enable responsiveness to the young person and relationship building • Consistency of contact • PEP as aid to consistent identification of need and actions
Relationship and Responsiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding as a prerequisite for relationship and co-operation • Relationship as a prerequisite for supporting healthy development and attainment • Responsiveness and relationship

Group: foster carer
Theme: Change

Note: for Source Section

- tr = transcript number
- pg = page number
- line = starting line number within the given transcript
- Brackets and italics used by researcher to clarify who is being discussed

Dimension	Source		Extract	
	tr	pg		
Changes in social worker	1	1	6	They (<i>Social Care</i>) change them too much, you know, they don't, you have one social worker for two weeks, another social worker for two weeks.
	1	1	33	Other than that really, that's about, you know, I think it's all to do with social services in a way, I mean they don't call it social services now, do they? They don't seem to, I don't suppose they have time, I don't, you know, they change so much as I said and they seem to put a child with you and then that's it, you know?
	1	2	46	We liked her (<i>Social Worker</i>) and she kept in touch all the time. Now she's been taken off the case, and I haven't got a clue who her social worker is now, nobody's come back to me, you know.
	1	5	180	I mean, C could have a social worker for two weeks and then it changes again, well to me that's totally unfair on that child. It's not helping that child and that's why we get cross with them. We feel that they should have a regular person.
	1	7	245	he (<i>young person</i>) also needed the support of a regular social worker, which he didn't get. I went for three months, not knowing when I had problems with him, ringing, oh well, I don't know who's his social worker, I
	1	7	251	

				<p>don't know. Which isn't good, you know, because I needed at that point, when I had problems with him, to be able to talk to somebody.</p> <p>You know, they didn't, he went from actually March, and it would probably be on the records, from March 'til May, 'til he had a social worker. And then this social worker turned up at one of the education meetings and of course not knowing anything about S, which isn't...</p>
Change and loss: Information, Identity And Relationship,	2	1	2	<p>I think the thing that is ever so important is to make sure you've got all the information and details of the child, that anybody's able to give us. I know that at times social services don't know a lot themselves, especially if it's an emergency placement. If it's an organised one, then by that time they should have a lot, all the information they can get and I think it's very important to have information of the child's background of, particularly within schools, how much they've been moved school or how much normal schooling they've been able to have, where they're at school, what they've actually learnt and things like that. I think that's very important for, especially if they're going to be a long-term placement and then they're going to move to a school, like our recent young lady has, moved to the local comprehensive. It's important that all that information can be passed on so the people know where the child's at and can put them within their limits.</p> <p>If you get a child that's suddenly coming in as an emergency and they are very reluctant to be coming with you anyway and you don't get much feedback from them, and perhaps maybe social services haven't got too much idea on the full situation, I think that's a real barrier to the child and to yourself, for being involved with any sort of schooling things, if they're just</p>
	2	2	76	
	2	2	44	

				<p>putting up a barrier to everything and you haven't got much feedback on information of what's needed for the child really. I think that's a difficult one and that's where that comes up when you are on the emergency call-out</p>
	2	3	83	<p>But through that(<i>the PEP</i>), we actually found out that the child was being looked at as un-educable because of their whole situation of what they were in, just not interested in learning, over the years having moved to all different primary schools. That's when they so get behind with their learning. 'Cos it's not the flowing everyday life of a school all the way through and get so many changes, as well as home changes.</p>
	2	3	114	
	2	3	122	<p>I can think of a couple of situations where I've had emergencies, and gosh, you don't know much about what's going on within their school, they're not forthcoming with information, because they're not interested their self, 'cos they're in such a mess anyway, that they're not interested or bothered with what's happening with them.</p>
	1	8	298	
	2	8	298	<p>I think it's needing information from schools and from social services about what really is happening with the child and what help they need and support.</p> <p>You know, just things that, when they're in their last years of school, they're not going to be learning that, 'cos that went on in first few years of primary school, and so they're not going to stand a chance of catching up and learning it.</p>
	1	10	385	<p>But obviously he (<i>young person</i>) knew that he didn't know how long he was going to be there.</p> <p>Well she (<i>young person</i>) lost her mother when she was, well D was, I think she was about thirteen when her mother died. ... Then her father died</p>

				<p>two years ago this August and her father was, had taken to court and that's why he was taken away from the family and bearing in mind D was coming up to sixteen then, she was a headstrong girl, she had brought that family, she had kept that family, she didn't go to school. She kept, because she'd got a younger brother, kept that family going. Then all of a sudden she's, they take the children, they're taken away</p> <p>They (<i>the young person</i>) feel like, ah well, they're dumping me and giving me somebody else and. It took this care worker with C, for C to trust her, and she was just beginning to open up, well not open up about her life, but being able to sit and sort of talk to her, at first she would have nothing to do with her, she wouldn't even see her. And all of a sudden, she's gone again you see. And her mother actually says that as well. Because her mother got to know her, now her mother turned round and said, well I don't know who, what's happening now, nobody's been in touch with me. So it's not only the child, it's the parents as well.</p>
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Group: Foster Carers
Theme: Consistency

Note: for Source Section

- tr = transcript number
- pg = page number
- line = starting line number within the given transcript
- Brackets and italics used by researcher to clarify who is being discussed

Dimension	Source			Extract
	t r	pg	line	
Consistent	1	1	1	I think the thing that is ever so

information to enable responsiveness to the young person and relationship building	1	1	4	<p>important is to make sure you've got all the information and details of the child, that anybody's able to give us. I know that at times social services don't know a lot themselves, especially if it's an emergency placement.</p> <p>If it's an organised one, then by that time they should have a lot, all the information they can get and I think it's very important to have information of the child's background of, particularly within schools, how much they've been moved school or how much normal schooling they've been able to have, where they're at at school, what they've actually learnt and things like that. I think that's very important for, especially if they're going to be a long-term placement and then they're going to move to a school, like our recent young lady has, moved to the local comprehensive. It's important that all that information can be passed on so the people know where the child's at and can put them within their limits.</p>
	1	1	39	<p>it just happened to be that it was the teachers' evening, you know, the parent teachers open evening, within a couple of weeks of the child arriving and the parents didn't want to go or have anything to do with any of it. So we said, well we'll go along if you want us to, which we did and really useful to meet up with teachers and see where they were at with that child at that time. Sort of pick up on a bit of ideas of how we needed to be involved.</p>
	1	3	116	<p>I think it's needing information from schools and from social services about what really is happening with the child and what help they need and support.</p>
	1	6	222	<p><i>So that clear expectations thing again?</i></p> <p>Yes, definitely, yes, and the child's view of what they think they're good at or not good at and what they want to achieve, they know what they're trying to achieve as well. They know and they've got a copy of it, so they know</p>

				<p>what they've said they're going to try to achieve, which is important. And then you can work together with them to try to achieve those things.</p> <p>They need to have stability, they need to get to know the person that is supposed to be helping them and I do find that social services is lacking in that.</p> <p>I have to say the headmaster has been absolutely brilliant, I mean C was excluded from school for ten days, he kept in touch with us all the time</p> <p>the schools I think need to keep in touch like this headmaster has, and that would be helpful actually to the carer, to know exactly what's going on.</p>
	2	1	15	
	2	2	58	
	2	3	72	
Consistency of contact	2	1	21	<p>Also, you know, if they're going to be able to have contact with their family. How often, where, when and keep up the continuity of that, that's important. The settling them in, if they're moving from one school to your local school, if they're going to be long-term.</p>
	2	1	30	<p>So I think it's important that if you've got a child that's perhaps going to be with you weeks or a few months, you need to ring up, make contact with the school and say, can we come and see you to see where we could help the child or what help does that child need? Even go and have a meeting with them to talk about it.</p>
	1	1	20	<p>I would want them to keep in touch with me, to find out how things are going, perhaps visit once, not every month but perhaps every six weeks they're here and just to get to know the child. You know, get to know the reasons why the child's here.</p>
	1	2	38	<p>our link worker at the moment, he's brilliant, he does keep in contact, but</p>

	1	3	81	he's supposedly for us, not for C, so...
	1	3	93	I speak to C's mother on a regular basis just to find out sort of what's going on there and with B, when I had B for six months, I used to, 'cos I had her brother for a while as well and he was hard to handle, and I used to have her over here for a meal so that she could see B, they could have some time together and things like that
	1	6	206	But I keep in touch with all of them. I'm going to see D tomorrow, you know, and I just, I think once they've been here, if you can build up a relationship with them, they want to keep in touch and they all ring me and we see them, and you know, which I find is good for the child.
	1	6	206	we had a good feed-back from headmaster, so. He rings and he lets us know how it goes. Social workers don't.
PEP as aid to consistent identification of need and actions	2	4	135	we discussed it at the PEP review, I brought it up at the PEP review, I'd already talked to the social worker about it, but, yea, just realisation of very simple things that are missing. And how can they do the basic maths and English, when a lot of that is missing? Ok, might not get a lot of extra learning because of limited understanding, but it's showing already, that it's helping.
	2	4	157	I've always found it a very useful time to go to school and sit around with the appropriate people there to be able to discuss each part of it. I've certainly always found that it can pick out the parts of what's needed as additional help.
	2	4	165	I've always found with the children that I've had here long-term that have been at the comprehensive school, that being involved, meeting up with someone from school with the PEP review, very important. I think it's very worthwhile

				and time well spent and I would always make sure that I was available to go for a PEP review. Because like with this, you know, what I think is important, it shows up as well, it's got all the views and the views of the child important, you see where they're coming from that perhaps they might not talk about at home, but some of it's down on here and you can find out what they like, what they particularly like, what they perhaps don't like and what they're aiming to achieve. So that you can then be supportive in hoping to help them achieve those things
2 1	5	195		I think that getting all together (<i>at PEP meetings</i>) is always important, because with different things like meetings, if you haven't got all the people involved, it can get muddled because one person can have a better understanding of one side of it than another, and it means if you're all there together, you can then piece it all together as to the best way to help that child forward with its learning and what it's going to do in the future. And also, the child's there, can put across views as well if they decide to talk, can put across views as well, but they're also there listening to and understanding, what's been thought about and arranged for their future and they can agree or not agree and then it can be looked at, what's right for that child. So yea, it gets the child's views, foster carers can put across their point of view of what's happening that's right or not right
1	6	212		I think the PEP review, 'cos it also I think another good thing about, like with all the targets, action needed, it puts down who's responsible and when it needs to be done by, and it's got everything there and then it's not just going to be talked about in the meeting, gone away and forgotten about, it's actually going to get actioned and done. Because if it isn't actioned and done, it

			comes up at the next review! So you know that those things are going to be brought up again if they're not done. Or you can look on it and think, oh that's been done, oh, I should have done that, I must get on and do that. Or see who should be doing what and it's all there in black and white, so nobody can get out of the fact that it should have all been done
2	8	317	I think the PEP review is important because you do tend to get the action of things that are discussed in there, because it's all down on paper in that one review paper and you can look up and get the actions from it. I think that's really important, because sometimes you can be at meetings and things and then for months nothing really happens. Sometimes because people are too busy, sometimes 'cos they just don't seem to get actioned, although I must say, I tend to chase things and they do get done! But no, I see, I've always seen PEPs as a very positive, important thing to be involved with and go to.
1	5	165	I think it's (<i>the PEP</i>) really necessary and also the child then feels that people are taking notice of them and, I mean we went with S twice actually, to Cullompton school he was at. A couple of them were very difficult, because there again, he had a social worker that turned up, hadn't got a clue, on S, new social worker, and it actually did get a bit heated. My husband did stick up for S and we got into a bit of trouble for that. But that's it, they either want us or they don't, and we will help that child. I think they're important, very important, yea, for children in care.
1	5	185	As we are regular(<i>attenders at PEP's</i>), the foster carers are regular, so that they should have, and everybody then can build up a rapport, you know, between, and sit down and get to know one another, you know, and that's what we feel that should.

Group: Foster Carer
 Theme: Relationship and Responsiveness

Note: for Source Section

- tr = transcript number
- pg = page number
- line = starting line number within the given transcript
- Brackets and italics used by researcher to clarify who is being discussed

Dimension	Source			Extract
	tr	pg	line	
Understanding as a prerequisite for relationship and co-operation	1	1	2	I find social workers lack a lot of understanding with children in care.
	1	1	27	obviously a good foster carer helps, to get to know the child. Unfortunately the one that we've got now is probably one of the best, but probably one of the worst, because she does not know how to communicate
	1	2	45	she(<i>community care worker</i>) was very good, C started to trust her. We liked her and she kept in touch all the time.
	1	9	312	and D needs help with him but because of this lack of trust with social services, she won't let them into her life. It's awful really
	1	9	317	she won't ask for help, she won't. That's probably half of D, but half of what happened, half of, you know, nobody really taking any notice of her, nobody really, as she felt, cared about what happened. I mean she was so very close to her dad. She looked after him, he was ill and she looked after him so much, Same with her mother. And I think she's just taken on this role with H now and thinking, well, you know, I can't lose him. Because she knows in a

				<p>way I suppose if she got in touch with social services, that they would take H away.</p> <p>anything goes wrong, she's on the phone and I try and see her once a month. I just take her out, we'd go out for a meal and you know, she could chat and open up. I'm the only person actually, she's got down here, she's got an aunt up in, N way. But she thinks they interfere, she's got this, everybody's against her. So I don't know how you handle that really.</p>
	1	9	328	
	1	10	382	<p>I do passionately feel that they, when children are in care, there should be one worker to them and that worker should stay with them, get to know the child and then that child will just start trusting. They feel like, ah well, they're dumping me and giving me somebody else and. It took this care worker with C, for C to trust her, and she was just beginning to open up, well not open up about her life, but being able to sit and sort of talk to her, at first she would have nothing to do with her, she wouldn't even see her. And all of a sudden, she's gone again you see.</p>
	2	1	5	<p>I think it's very important to have information of the child's background of, particularly within schools, how much they've been moved school or how much normal schooling they've been able to have, where they're at at school, what they've actually learnt and things like that. I think that's very important for, especially if they're going to be a long-term placement and then they're going to move to a school, like our recent young lady has, moved to the local comprehensive. It's important</p>

	2	1	16	<p>that all that information can be passed on so the people know where the child's at and can put them within their limits.</p> <p>It's useful to, if the child will talk to you, it's useful to have all their thoughts and ideas on everything, how they're feeling, so that you can work on talking with them when they want to about, you know, how to help them feel a bit better about themselves, their situation. So, if you've got background information, then you can work on that with talking to the child.</p> <p>really useful to meet up with teachers and see where they were at with that child at that time. Sort of pick up on a bit of ideas of how we needed to be involved.</p>
	2	1	40	
Relationship as a prerequisite for supporting healthy development and attainment	1	3	94	<p>if you can build up a relationship with them, they want to keep in touch and they all ring me and we see them, and you know, which I find is good for the child.</p>
	1	3	100	<p><i>So is there anything else that you think helps or hinders?</i></p> <p>I think because we care. I think it's as simple as that really, it's that, you know, each child that comes here, we care about.</p>
	2	2	63	<p>'cos our local school wasn't able to take on the person, because of what they saw in the background history, and it wasn't right, we knew it wasn't right anyway, needed more than that. And through that, going down to the special school, it did help, helped a lot, really flourished from that.</p>
	2	3	84	<p>I can think of a couple of situations where I've had emergencies, and gosh, you don't know much about what's going on within their school, they're not</p>

				forthcoming with information, because they're not interested their self, 'cos they're in such a mess anyway, that they're not interested or bothered with what's happening with them.
	2	3	90	She only came as an emergency, and she was in a right old muddle with absconding from school and running away from home and was she interested in learning and school work? No, not at all.
	2	3	94	they're taken away from their family and they know that there's things within their family that hasn't been right, and that's caused them to have to come into care, in to somebody's house that they don't know the house, they don't know the people, they're not going to be settling to their learning
	2	3	109	They've been so damaged anyway, but school's not much of a interest to them, until they can perhaps get settled and start to feel happier within school and then the brain can settle a bit to learn a bit more, sometimes. It depends how much damage they've had doesn't it really?
	2	7	269	And it's important that they know that you're there for them to give them the backup and support, and thankfully in the case of U school, they are just fantastic, they're tops they are, in giving support and help, so it's very important that the child knows that that is a good school for helping them and you know the fact that they would need to know that I'm there working along with that school to help with the benefits of what they need in their learning and for their future. I think it's important that they know that. To try to give them a good positive thoughts

	2	7	283	<p>about the school that they've got to go to.</p> <p>this particular child liked sport, which was brilliant for this household, because they like sport and was able to get involved with doing things with the child, and I know that the child had sports day and got awarded certificates and things for what they'd done and people were invited to go in and letter came home with all the school stuff and wasn't shown to me or anything and I found it there and said, 'hey, what about this?' 'Well you won't be interested in that, nobody ever comes to see me get anything or do anything at school'. I said, 'well would you like me to come in?' 'Well you wouldn't, would you?' 'Yea, course I would' and I went in to watch the certificate presentation and it was the first time anybody had been to support, watching that child get anything and the teacher said, 'we've never had anybody do that for him before'. And it meant so much to him, you know, he was only here for three weeks, but like this was going on six months that he'd been here and yea, it gave the message across that somebody cared and so happy that day, was telling everybody, that was his foster carer!</p>
Responsiveness and relationship	1	4	111	And we try to help and you know, we never talk about what they've been through unless they want to talk to you about it, but we're always there for them and I think that's the reason why the children keep in touch. They know that we just don't dump them
	1	4	130	we don't push them
	1	6	193	Well, I suppose it all depends on

				<p>the child really. With S it really didn't, you know, I mean S would sit there like, yea, I'm going to be. And actually the teachers did bend over backwards with him because he said oh there were certain teachers he didn't like, so what they did, they took him out of those classes and gave him, like an hour with, I can't remember what they called them, he would go up and sit with them, because he didn't get on with those teachers.</p>
	1	7	264	<p>I got no help from social services with that. I got nothing at all from them, oh well he's with you, just, you know.</p>
	1	8	270	<p>He changed schools, because he said he didn't get on at C, so they actually changed him. I have to say, the educational people were very good with him, because they put that into action, oh S didn't like it at that school, let's see if we can get him into somewhere else, which they did. So that was a good thing, whether it was they wanted to wash their hands of him, you know, and just get him out, I don't really know, 'cos he was only with us for six months.</p>
	1	9	339	<p>I mean she's left school, she's got no leaving certificate and this is what this headmaster with C is saying that, C has to leave with a school leaving certificate, even if you don't sit your GCSEs or anything like that, you need the certificate. So what they've done for her, which I think is absolutely brilliant, she's now working two days a week in a primary school helping children with learning difficulties. And then two and a half days at the school she's at, which she started yesterday and today she's at the school, so fingers crossed, it's</p>

				<p>going to work out. And then that will go towards her leaving certificate. So they've bent over backwards, the school, have bent over backwards for her. And this has all come from the school, not from any other department at all. So, yes, some schools are good, I suppose. I think it all depends on also whether the teachers like the child.</p>
	2	5	170	<p>it's (<i>the PEP</i>) got all the views and the views of the child important, you see where they're coming from that perhaps they might not talk about at home, but some of it's down on here and you can find out what they like, what they particularly like, what they perhaps don't like and what they're aiming to achieve. So that you can then be supportive in hoping to help them achieve those things, especially I think with what we've been going through in recent times, of finishing school, going on to college, working out what's the right type of college placement, what's right for this child, you know, what are they going to cope with or not cope with.</p>
	2	5	195	<p>I think that getting all together is always important, because with different things like meetings, if you haven't got all the people involved, it can get muddled because one person can have a better understanding of one side of it than another, and it means if you're all there together, you can then piece it all together as to the best way to help that child forward with its learning and what it's going to do in the future. And also, the child's there, can put across views as well if they decide to talk, can put across views as well, but they're also there listening to and</p>

	2	8	303	<p>understanding, what's been thought about and arranged for their future and they can agree or not agree and then it can be looked at, what's right for that child.</p> <p>Yea, being able to show them that you do care enough to take the time to go and see what they've been doing, is very important, yea. For the fun things, not just because you've got to go because it's a meeting, but for things like that.</p>
Belonging	1	4	130	<p>They're part of my family, they're part, my kids, well my one son, because I've got one son in Canada, but they're part of the family. My mother in law comes over, we have family meals and it's fun and laughter and I think that's what they enjoy about it. I think it's, you put that family focus into them, because most of them haven't had that, you know, they don't.</p>
	1	4	138	<p>And although C's out an awful lot, she loves coming back on a Sunday, because I've always got a house-full here on a Sunday for Sunday lunch, and you can guarantee she's, although she doesn't talk much, you can see by the smile on her face because it's just a happy time. And I think that's what we try to give to them, is that, you know, to see what family life, you know, and they love it, they absolutely love it.</p>
	1	4	151	<p>As I say, C has been the most difficult where she doesn't talk, but she's not difficult, you know, she's, but I think she loves that, where we never argue, we just, we're just normal, and that child belongs, if we have them as part of our family. Our kids know that,</p>

				they know that we have a foster child, they take them as well, which they do.
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Thematic Map of Educational Psychologists' Data 1E

Figure 2.4 illustrates the most common themes represented within the analysis of transcripts from Educational Psychologists' data.

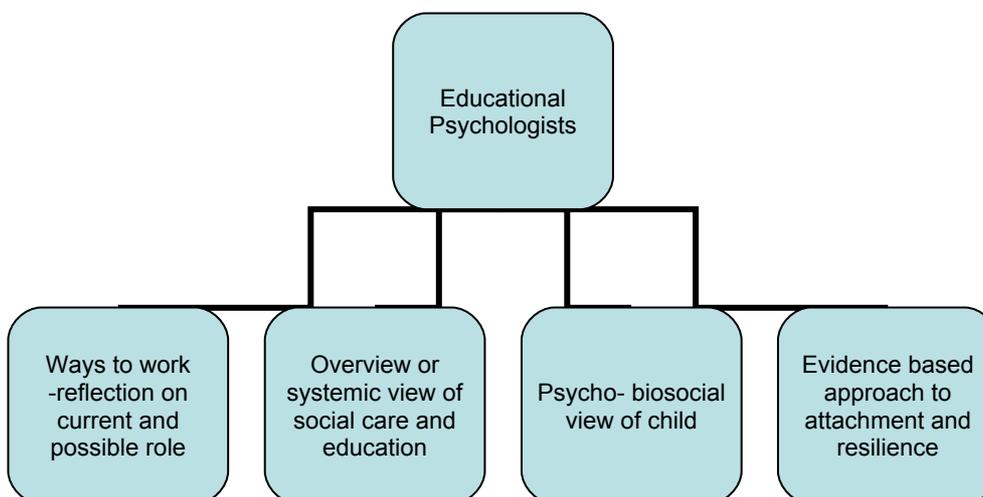


Table 2.4.1 identifies the dimensions of each 2nd tier theme (or 3rd Tier themes) for Educational Psychologists' data:

Theme	Third Tier themes/Dimensions of 2 nd Tier themes
Ways to work -reflection on current and possible role	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimal involvement in the PEP • Experience to date – reflections on whether the PEP is used as a professional product or is a useful process • Process working with CIC
Overview or systemic view of social care and education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EP role in supporting Education and Social Care – A community approach • EP views and experience of systemic Social Care issues • EP views and experience of systemic Education issues
Psycho- biosocial view of child	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tension between the needs of the child and the needs of professionals

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The practice of inter relating biological, psychological and social factors when viewing child development
Evidence based approach to attachment and resilience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of knowledge of resilience • Identification of protective factors which support resilience in applied psychology for CIC • Identification of risk factors relating to resilience in applied psychology for CIC

Group: Educational Psychologist

Theme: Ways to work-reflection on current and possible role

Note: for Source Section

- tr = transcript number
- pg = page number
- line = starting line number within the given transcript
- Brackets and italics used by researcher to clarify who is being discussed

Dimension	Source			Extract
	tr	pg	line	
minimal involvement in the PEP	1	5	195	Extremely limited, I don't think I've actually been to any or invited to any.
	1	9	366	Yes, well we don't know do we, unless somebody informs us
	1	9	367	I don't think I was aware before we had that push(<i>CIC Project</i>) to be aware
	2	1	18	I don't think I've got much experience of key stage 4 going into care to be honest, haven't been directly involved.
	2	1	21	As the team which is working with the looked after children, I have more, but I can't think of a case where I've been directly involved as part of the process.
	2	1	27	I have had some experience, but often

	2	1	31	<p>they're not going into care for the first time.</p> <p>perhaps how you work with a young person who already has experience of the care system, is different to what you might do for someone going into care for the first time. But my experience is it happens very quickly, so you know, an ideal where something is planned and they aware, maybe at least to what is going to happen that week, would be fantastic, but if they were also made aware what the plan is for the longer term. I think that would be really useful.</p>
	2	5	182	<p>I had two really conflicting experiences, because like Martin, I don't, I can't think of that many cases I've been that involved.</p>
	2	7	246	<p>We're not always invited actually, because I'm aware that there are local children I have worked with who have PEPs, but I wasn't involved in the PEP meeting.</p>
	2	7	249	<p>I thought it was very unusual when I was invited, but on the occasions I have been there, it's been useful, which makes me worry actually about the times when youngsters we are involved with, are having PEPs and we aren't involved.</p>
	2	7	283	<p>That's right and I was at a child in need meeting a couple of weeks ago and I couldn't really make much of a contribution at all to that meeting then and I was aware that there had been a PEP meeting that I hadn't been invited to. I sometimes think we get invited to the wrong meetings.</p>
	3	7	246	<p>We're not involved really!</p>
	3	7	247	<p>Never actually</p>
	3	7	267	<p>I've never been, because when I've asked, knowing that it's something that they have to have, social workers usually done it or school's said that</p>

				it's been done and it's not really been necessary to go, so I haven't personally ever been.
	3	8	275	On key stage 4 – I haven't
	3	8	278	I haven't in secondary at all
Experience to date – reflections on whether the PEP is used as a professional product or is a useful process	1	5	201	I think they're important, but they're kind of, for me, they often feel a bit like a bolt-on, like you need to go through this, rather than actually they are imperative for some decision making or understanding, sharing of information, they kind of sit for me, they sit outside.
	2	5	180	They could be something useful, they could identify with key people and what the plan is, but I don't think they're necessarily being used like that.
	2	5	176	I think that's (<i>communication</i>) one of the things the PEP tried to address, but in reality, where I've seen people using them, schools are initiating it and try to run them, sometimes without even a social worker attending.
	1	9	352	they're varied, I've been to some phenomenal ones, and been to others which are just paperwork, exercises.
	1	5	197	I think it's seen very much within the remit of the care side of things, because I don't, I remember quite classically, being in a school where they said, we've got the annual review for the child now, we've got the PEP afterwards, and then being waved

				goodbye
	1	5	193	Very varied, sorry that's not my understanding, my experience of them I should say is very varied
	2	6	193	And some schools and in some cases, it seems to be useful and valued, but in other cases it, as A was saying, it seems to be more of a paper exercise. And I've seen that in the same school, seen it work both ways.
	2	6	215	Yea, I mean the one child I can think of, so he's a year 8, the PEP is very much a paper exercise, which seems to be coming along too little too late
	2	6	218	Perhaps that's because he went into care very quickly, very uncertain plan, I think it was down to the social worker and the quality of the work that the social worker was doing, not driving that forward, so it was a paper exercise which came on too little too late really and so the youngster was already on the verge of being permanently excluded and they were still sort of chasing around to make sure that the PEP was in place, because you can't permanently exclude him if you can't demonstrate that you've done everything you should so. Therefore you should have a PEP. So it was really, it was too late, it was really just a box ticking exercise
	2	8	321	When we first were doing it, my sense when we first did them was, it was always to bring the focus back to education, because what often happened for some of these youngsters, was that all the other stuff had just rolled and rolled and they'd gone into care and everyone had sort of looked at their social needs, their care needs, and the education people had lost sight of that and this was about redressing that isn't it? So there's a contradiction

				<p>there in that in some cases the meetings have been cancelled because the social worker can't be there, whereas why can't education drive this, if it's an education plan?</p> <p>I don't know, generally I'm just not close enough to that, to the process often, because that's been triggered by something that's going on usually outside of school, so those timings don't immediately connect into where my cycle of work might be with the young person. Do you see what I mean? So, and that's probably why my involvement isn't consistent always at a certain point in that process. So we get involved in relation to co-practice type procedures and schools trigger in our involvement, which may or may not wrap in to that process happening. So I might be seeing the youngster for quite a while because things have been getting worse and worse for them in school, then they're taken into care, so I might go along to the PEP because I might have a lot to contribute, or that might happen, they might go into care, there might be a PEP, an EP hasn't been involved, but actually as a result from going into care, things deteriorate and then we get involved. So it's not, I'm not saying it very well, but the two things don't directly map onto each other, so.</p>
	2	9	350	
	3	8	286	<p>Well thereby hangs another issue doesn't it, which is not about the PEP per se, but about the coordination of professional services across hundreds of miles or lack of, or variability thereof, I suppose.</p>
	3	8	290	<p>I've been to PEPs where it's been used to attack the social worker, have you?</p>
	3	8	299	<p>It depends I think on who is doing it, doesn't it? Because you know, if it's someone sort of, I don't know, someone who's following the form very rigidly because they perhaps</p>

				haven't done them very often, then also sort of running it as something quite formal, then that's not particularly child friendly, but you know, actually the person that, my experience has been someone more than cuddly doing it, who's made it quite relaxed
	3	8	305	I think that applies to a number of procedures, doesn't it? It's about spirit and intent
	3	9	308	I think we've said about sometimes it's been very, not used to using them, so they use the form exact because often it's a designated teacher in the school and then it's not that, if it's the SENCO who is used to running annual reviews and other multi-agency meetings, it probably be more professional at it I suppose, or just more used to the whole setup. But if you've got a head of year that's been given that role and doesn't really understand it, that...
	3	9	314	My other experience is that the role of designated teacher often gets passed on quite quickly, I don't know if you find that?
	2	14	593	No it doesn't (<i>the PEP allowing professionals to take a resilience orientated perspective</i>). Our knowledge enables that to happen in those meetings I think
	2	15	596	There is a little bit about strengths and a little bit about the child's view, but no, I think on the whole, we bring that. Don't think it (<i>the present PEP process</i>) goes far enough.
	2	15	599	I think any process is only any good in so far, as it's done as well isn't it?
	2	15	600	It's the way it's carried out, but you know, I don't think any paper work form system can work, it's the practitioners and the people and how they do it, so just going back to what I talked about earlier, about the role of

				<p>the EP, I mean in some ways you could argue that there's always a role for some good healthy psychology, in a meeting of that type and significance in the young person's life, whether you know the child or not, actually.</p> <p>I was just thinking about the meeting that went well, the PEP I thought, it was done very well because the social worker was picking up on the hooks and the leads, saying, hold on a minute, what do we know about that, what could we do with that, where can we go with that? Have we covered everything? And so there, you would be bringing your knowledge of resilience to there, but equally you could use the same format and do it really badly. So I think it's about what you bring, about what you know.</p> <p>they (<i>professionals</i>) need to have an awareness that we understand why it's happening and how it's going to happen, so there needs to be a clear plan that everybody's a party to.</p> <p>I would almost go as far as saying, at times they (<i>PEP meetings for KS 4</i>) can feel a bit of red-herring for me, so it's a very safe conversation to have, it's a conversation we can all have and I'm not sure it's really about the real issues which underpin their educational achievement, which are much harder to have.</p> <p>I think they need to be more child-centred, they're supposed to be child centred, but a lot of them aren't, because they are just that kind of paper exercise that some of the time the children aren't even consulted about it. It should be, and especially like I say, at key stage 4, much more about where they're going, what's going to happen, what support they need.</p> <p>For me, it's back to front side up, well for me it's back to front, it's almost</p>
	2	15	605	
	1	1	18	
	1	6	238	
	1	6	247	

	1	7	262	<p>what we perceive to be the stage as the importance of education, how the child fits into that, not looking at what really are the needs of the child, and what do we need to do as the school, educationalist, psychologist, whatever, to address the needs in order to further them on, if that makes any sense. It's back to front.</p>
Process working with CIC	2	3	90	<p>I think it would be quite good to recognise that children who are looked after, do not necessarily have special needs and don't need the attention and focus that we seem to be generalising. I think what I'm saying here, this has been too much of a focus to try and lift the levels of ability, whatever, not all looked after children are necessarily, one, an emotional wreck or two, have learning difficulties. I think that's something which is sometimes put aside and saying we just need, because they are this, this is what we have to do.</p>
	2	3	97	<p>There was the assumption, because they'd been taken into care that we need to do something. Well yes, we need to do something, but not necessarily what we are doing across the board. And I'm sure the same principle should apply at key stages 2, 3 and 4 and beyond.</p>
	1	9	354	<p>I think one of the things that we often bring is that kind of solution focussed approach, when we're working individually with young people, actually helping them to identify their own kind of internal strengths and resources and try to identify networks and relationships and things that are important to them, so I think that's something we often do almost unconsciously</p>

	3	9	327	<p>my last secondary I felt I knew quite a few people, I probably knew, I never saw the principal particularly because he was doing his business bits in his office and that is a very different role, but the assistant principal I knew who that was and I knew the designated teacher I also knew who the SENCO was, and I knew quite a few staff in the management, year heads, things like that, because they would often come and speak to me.</p>
	3	10	353	<p>Do we ask questions like, do you think they're under-achieving? They may be happy, but you know, they can be happy achieving seven D's while actually we should be questioning up, shouldn't we? Is that right? Well actually I think he's very bright. Ok, so what are you doing about that? I suppose you should be doing, I don't, I'm not saying I do, but I think we should.</p>
	3	10	358	<p>I've never seen a successful child in care, I don't suppose in a way, because of the way they filter through, because it's only if it's difficult, we'd get it really.</p>
	3	10	368	<p>We could (<i>be promoting the wellbeing of CIC</i>) and we should but it's also what gets thrown at us as priority.</p>
	3	10	372	<p>Yea, and that's (<i>systematic inquiry about CIC during planning meetings</i>) resulted in a couple of cases in them taking action to get them extra maths tuition or something.</p>
	2	2	56	<p>But that makes that even more important and having absolutely no control over where they're going, but actually, having being able to say that they still want to be able to see that person from their previous setting, or they'd really like to maintain that contact or they don't want this to happen or they would really like, you know, to make sure that they still keep</p>

				<p>in contact with certain friends and so on, would be really, really important in terms of that control again, I suppose.</p> <p>often things are just expected to go on as normal, so I had an incident where, not when a child has gone into care, but they've moved foster carers and the school hasn't been informed about it and the kid has literally been picked up from school and taken home to a different place and then sent back into school the next day as though nothing happened where it would have been better if they could have had a couple of days off really, to get to know their, spend some time with their new foster carer, settle in.</p>
	2	2	69	
	2	3	77	<p>I think it would be quite good to recognise that children who are looked after, do not necessarily have special needs and don't need the attention and focus that we seem to be generalising. I think what I'm saying here, this has been too much of a focus to try and lift the levels of ability, whatever, not all looked after children are necessarily, one, an emotional wreck or two, have learning difficulties. I think that's something which is sometimes put aside and saying we just need, because they are this, this is what we have to do.</p>
	2	14	554	<p>There's some (<i>EP's</i>) who will have the responsibility to say, well are they actually coping with the sense of emotion? Well if they are, let them get on with it. If they're not, and it's all starting to fall to pieces, then we scaffold them a bit more.</p>
	2	15	628	<p>It also depends what sort of agenda different people are bringing to the meeting, doesn't it? Could be that school is so fed up with the behaviour for example, that their agenda is actually, can we find somewhere else for this youngster to go? That would completely skew supportive nature of any meeting to discuss the plans. I</p>

				<p>think it's down to having a very good facilitator leader of the meeting. There are lots of specific skills which are necessary to pick out those and let people air their frustrations, to play it through, then to take something positive from that, and say. It is a distinct skill to be able to chair something as potentially emotive as one of these meetings.</p>
	1	1	21	<p>I think that's really important, the child's understanding you know, and I've come across a number of youngsters where they haven't really understood at all, what's going on.</p>
	1	3	122	<p>one thing I've noticed is, it seems quite common for the professionals around a child to start to mirror the child's experience of adults to that point, so there often seems to be an element of disorganisation or bad communication or blame... and whether there's kind of a bit of transference going on of people picking up on all this experience, I don't know what it is, but it seems like the professionals need to be reflective enough to be aware of that and to kind of counter it.</p>
	1	4	169	<p>I think there's still other issues under there, for the child, which is around being held, that sense of belonging, their sense of identity, all those things I think, have been ripped from them. I'm not sure anyone's really picking up on that.</p>
	1	6	230	<p>It feels like a life plan would be more appropriate, wouldn't it? The career kind of outcome rather than recording reading age, spelling age, all those kind of things, it just seems a bit, and most kids that you know go to year 10, I wouldn't imagine they're incredibly bothered about having their reading age and spelling age and all that kind of stuff recorded. They're more thinking about, particularly if you're in care I would imagine, you know, what's going to happen at the</p>

				end? Where am I going to be? Who am I going to be with? Who are my support? You know, that kind of thing.
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Group: Educational Psychologist

Theme: Overview or systemic view of social care and education

Note: for Source Section

- tr = transcript number
- pg = page number
- line = starting line number within the given transcript
- Brackets and italics used by researcher to clarify who is being discussed

Dimension	Source			Extract
	tr	pg	line	
EP role in supporting Education and Social Care – A community approach	3	2	65	oh you know, we've (<i>social care communicating</i>) got this child again into care, these are our plans. And those are things that would make it easier because people would then, systems could prepare, schools could prepare, we would properly be involved perhaps. You could prepare the child (<i>for transition</i>)
	3	4	117	So maybe it's easier to maintain some stability, because people know they're moving on to other arrangements, like X Youth came to talk to us. They have successful sort of placements post 16, because they have the variety of options available, from caring families, or continuation of the care arrangement in a way, through to sort of sheltered accommodation with some support through, well then presumably the more able will go into their own accommodation.
	2	3	109	Two cases, children in key stage 4 who transitioned into care, and the barriers were the communication between the care home and the school and not having truthful communication in the cases I saw, it was communication from the school, saying things. The care home being sort of that, the parents in the case saying, are you sending them home or are you excluding them from school? And they were being told they're

				<p>being excluded, so they went to collect them and then it turns out they weren't excluded and the school record was being sent home, because wasn't feeling well, that kind of stuff. And that's quite unfair communication between school and the care home, which in turn caused quite a few issues for the kids around what was going on with them, were they being excluded, were they not excluded, what were they in trouble for?</p>
	2	4	128	<p>I was in a meeting a couple of weeks after the kids having put in care, and it was a meeting looking at the possible exclusion from school and what was happening, the care home wanted to have another view of what was going on in the care home and at school, because there was a lot of things being said that weren't matching up with everybody's accounts of events... So it was to support I think the care home, which was why the EP involvement happened and that was, the EP who was (?) working with the kids, where they were from, or where their parents' homes were.</p>
	2	10	377	<p>I think, with our course training as community psychologists as well, perhaps there would be something that you could do in your community based plan, because then it's looking at the community as a whole and not just individual children about education and whether that be a supervisory role, a consulting role.</p>
	1	14	594	<p>Thinking outside the systems actually, I think that would be brilliant, almost outside the educational systems.</p>
	1	14	602	<p>I think sometimes we, well I think we can bring that, it's looking at possibilities out there which perhaps, I don't think this is going to sound professionally a bit snobby, but I think sometimes teachers can be looking here, because they're looking</p>

				<p>very much in on results etc, these kind of things, I think it's about almost looking the opposite way. So I think we can bring that and answer our questions.</p>
	1	14	609	<p>I've got a bit of a metaphor of EPs as being like blame sponges in my mind, we're quite well placed to take all the kind of the stuff that gets thrown at you sometimes as blame and criticism and anger and confusion and sort of not pass it on to the next person, as being quite a useful role.</p>
	1	14	614	<p>I think we're quite good at dealing with inconvenience actually, this is going to sound a bit horrible, but I think often children in care, don't think of others, are inconvenient to various systems, I don't think that in a horrible way, but they don't naturally always fit. And I think our profession, that's kind of one of our fortes, I think, this dealing with that kind of thing and listening.</p>
	1	14	621	<p>one of the ways of looking at the role was to sort of see the whole big picture, like you were saying earlier, and to see where it's not working and then to sort of slot yourself into all those bits of the train almost and sort of whether it's getting people talking or whether it's a little bit of psychology needed there or a little bit of group work, or whatever it might be a bit of training. It's having that big picture and being able to slot in at the right place, with a professional judgement and I've found it a very helpful way of looking at the role.</p>
	1	15	628	<p>I think fundamentally we're kind of psychologists in a way, so therefore I think we are thinking outside of education but most of our work, certainly I think all my work with children in care, and yes it has been, like Andrew was saying there, it has been in schools. So I think actually we bring there, just to the table, in a way school is the time and the place to</p>

	1	15	635	<p>reflect, it's about the preparation through that.</p> <p>And time to understand the whole person, without those professional pressures of..., because we're understanding them professionally, that's the thing, we're not understanding them with our heart almost.</p>
EP views and experience of systemic Social Care issues	3	2	59	I also find that social workers, it's a very hard world to crack, because they have got issues around sharing information, I think much more so than us, I think they've got real genuine professional fears about opening up as a service because of the sensitivity of the information that they have. So I think the communication is an issue isn't it?
	3	3	85	I think they need, social services need to know that, that they've got that security in other professionals and I think sometimes they don't always feel that it won't sort of get out somehow. I think it's really difficult for them to...
	3	3	88	I've seen a big change since the Baby Peter case in openness and sharing, and I've found if a child gets on the child protection register, there is a lot of sharing of information and I've often been staggered by things I didn't know, but which I, if you're part of the core group, you know, that comes out. So hopefully things are getting better.
	3	5	161	She didn't like the foster care placement and then she was out of there very quickly and ended up in a care home in E. And she had issues with drink and you know, inappropriate relationships, you know, sexual behaviours, things like that. And at one point she got lost, it was

				quite frightening because I wanted to go in and see her, because I had to do a six week review and nobody knew where she was. She literally got lost in that system, it was only because I started phoning up and I found my particular experience, the back case, of trying to get a social worker to just answer emails or just communicate about anything, was quite difficult.
	3	5	172	there wasn't a good placement, she wasn't given a good placement, it happened very quickly, she then just, they end up putting them anywhere, and they have to react rather than, they're not pro-active sometimes and it just meant that the whole thing was very difficult and it was a bit disastrous for her really.
	3	6	212	Yea, I had several of those in C, and the social worker, the fourteen year old girl moving in with nineteen, twenty year old boyfriend in a flat and the social workers just weren't interested, they said, what do you expect us to do about it?
	3	6	222	Well yea, and the police were involved and they actually kept this girl, the recent one, over night, in a cell for her own protection. But again, the social workers didn't pick it up. So I think this age group is interesting for that reason as well, you know an assumption that perhaps there's only limited amount of intervention they can do, which to us seems extraordinary at this age, but yea, different perspective certainly.
	3	8	281	Sometimes get a social worker, if they're coming from up-country, you know, I've been waiting for a social worker to arrive and you know, they're late or they've suddenly not turned up and then the school are going, what do we do now? Do we still hold the meeting, do we not hold the meeting, so do you think we carry on?

	2	2	50	<p>In my experience. Certainly in terms of foster placement when I was with the social care team, the needs matched, but because of the lack of foster care, it was usually just down to availability.</p>
	2	11	445	<p>I think that there's a, in my experience, that a lot of children who are in care who are the most complex children, have continual breakdowns of foster placements and end up having huge numbers of foster carers and I think that is a really big issue, that the lack of really skilled foster carers who can cope with the most complex children</p>
	2	11	449	<p>I've seen children move a lot and then go to a foster carer where they're told, this is it now, this is permanent foster care - and it will break down within five weeks. I think that's a massive issue.</p>
	1	1	5	<p>often, schools don't kind of know, actually, that a child's gone into care, they could be sort of the last people to find out. And then obviously they then can't implement any systems that they developed, for children that are in care, because they're not aware of the child's changing home circumstances, particularly if it takes place in the school holiday actually as well.</p>
	1	2	74	<p>I think sometimes there's a feeling from social care colleagues who perhaps haven't got experience of upper end of school organisation, that all schools do all subjects. Even if they do all subjects, they're still not doing the same exam board, they're not doing the same projects. So, was there a case where actually they need to be supported with some additional help to actually get up to speed with particular courses, whatever?</p>
	1	3	110	<p>I'm not aware that the LAC, they call it LAC in this other county, the lac services were in touch with our</p>

				<p>services. I don't know if that was the first point of contact, I think that this child just showed up in the school and I don't think the looked after child services in the other county spoke to our social service, because I've got no contact social worker-wise in this county to do with this child. So there's no joining up of that service is there, apparently?</p>
EP views and experience of systemic Education issues	3	3	79	<p>Well I think on the situation, I know with my school, they now have quite a good relationship with the local department and you know, a key person in school who is kind of trusted to hold the information and so they do get told a lot more.</p>
	3	4	151	<p>The only person I've known that's been key stage 4, that's gone into care, she, really that happened because she, that was because she got into trouble with the police because she was out on the streets late at night. And I don't think the school really knew much about it, because she started to truant and some of the behaviours did come into school, but the attendance was really, really poor. So, and that was very difficult because in a way, if you think about making things better, things had already got so bad for that person, that it was really difficult.</p>
	3	5	158	<p>She then went to a foster carer which meant that she had to get a bus, two buses into school, so that didn't help the attendance issue, because actually physically getting to her, the same secondary school was difficult.</p>
	3	6	228	<p>Then talking about children or young people going into care, the times when it seems to have been a good experience in terms of adopted young people, is when the school has been</p>

				<p>sort of a hub for people to meet, so that there have been reviews held in school which would involve the foster carers and the adoptive parents and there's been common ground found and quite often the young person has either kept a link or in some cases gone back to the adoptive family when there's been that good communication and someone holding it all within the school.</p>
	3	9	319	<p>I did (<i>have contact with Designated teacher</i>) in my last setting, but I've got, oh I think I might know who it might be, but I haven't had an issue in this current secondary that's meant that I've known, but schools are different, it depends on how kind of open that member of staff is or how kind of close they are to the SENCO in a way, because it may not be the SENCO, it may be another person and it depends on how separate that aspect of the school is from the rest of the school and the management. Because often you go into schools and you do only see the SENCO.</p>
	3	9	333	<p>in my current school, I know two of the, I know the SENCO and I know who has the inclusion, but other than that, I don't know who the principal is to see or other members of staff. So it is dependent on school culture really, isn't it?</p>
	3	9	336	<p>In theory it partly depends on us as well, because one of the things that we're meant to ask is about children in care isn't it? And so at that point I guess we should be asking to see the designated teacher.</p>
	3	9	342	<p>I suppose in terms of your research, we probably, typical of our job, we can only talk about the ones where it hasn't really worked out, 'cos those are the ones that we get hauled into, whereas sometimes you go into a school and you'd say, have you got any children in care? Yea, blah blah,</p>

	2	2	47	<p>but they're absolutely fine, or else it's going so well they might not even know.</p> <p>So the fourteen fifteen year old has no informed decision or comment on the procedure as they see it, or how it meets their needs, it's just something that happens to them</p>
	2	6	197	<p>I think perhaps in all schools, they're supposed to have a named teacher who oversees that process or who has that responsibility, and I'm just thinking back about the whole communication issue. I think sometimes that person isn't necessarily the person that knows that pupil best or is able to feed back to, you know, care homes or foster parents, because they don't have a handle on how that child's getting on in their daily lessons or whatever, so.</p>
	2	6	204	<p>Secondary schools are really difficult places anyway, aren't they, to communicate with and to find the right person, and you often get that, you know, the year head will have a very different perspective on a pupil to the tutor, to the special needs coordinator and because they're dealing with things at different levels and because one person might only see that child when they get into trouble, they might have a different view on that child than another. So it's again, linked to that, the person who's got responsibility for overseeing the PEP, is someone isn't necessarily the key or most effective person to speak to, I guess, about the day to day progress.</p>
	1	3	97	<p>one of they key things is often the documentation isn't passed on, particularly with academic information, educational information</p>

Group: Educational Psychologist
 Theme: Psycho- biosocial view of child

Note: for Source Section

- tr = transcript number
- pg = page number
- line = starting line number within the given transcript
- Brackets and italics used by researcher to clarify who is being discussed

Dimension	Source			Extract
	tr	pg	line	
Tension between the needs of the child and the needs of professionals	3	2	62	But I don't think it's one that's easily tackled with social care, I think it can be very difficult to, I think there are all sorts of reasons why it's very difficult to be transparent ...but I think it's all quite, it often seems to be quite a closed world and quite hush-hush and quite, I don't think that's personal to social workers, I just think that that's one of the difficulties that they have in terms of their job and the confines they work in. So I think that would be a real culture change and I don't know how they'd feel about that, because you know, they're under siege so much, I think you know, one slip and that's it, they're in the papers. So I think it's very hard for them to approach or be approached about forewarning and passing information that would be helpful.
	3	4	138	In the same way as recently, the notion that contact with real parents is a good thing, has been the received wisdom, and there's some (?) lack of evidence isn't there, that actually cutting off all contact in some cases is the very best thing. There is radical improvement.
	3	4	142	I mean there's quite an interesting tension isn't there with the amount of legislation that's been put in and for me, it almost is legislated to

				<p>the point where it de-skills professionals, so it takes sometimes, the over amount of structure kind of takes out the meaningfulness and the flexibility in the processes.</p>
	3	8	295	<p>No, wouldn't describe them as (<i>child</i>)friendly</p>
	2	4	138	<p>I think what sometimes happens is, the different institutions have different pressures and then the poor youngster gets caught in the middle.</p>
	2	4	140	<p>the care home had its own issues around, there were lots of staff off sick, they couldn't provide consistency, different people were collecting the child, didn't know who it was from day to day. Running alongside that, because his little life was in turmoil, he was on the verge of permanent exclusion, and so school were happy to apply their procedures, and actually I mean he had, he had done some serious stuff, you know, I mean I think even if you were being quite sympathetic to the boy's needs, actually the school, there was a point at which the school had said, make sure staff and other youngsters were safe. So they each had to work with their own constraints, and there was a lack of understanding from the two institutions about each other. So the care home thought the school was being unreasonable, don't you know how awful it is for this boy? How can you possibly be thinking of excluding him? And the school was saying, gosh, don't you know how awful it is for this boy in school, why are you sending different people, why don't we know who's his key worker in the care home? It's not right! And you know, and if you look at both points of view, you can see it for both of them and that's not to defend it, and in the middle of that, the boy, doesn't know which way's up really. So I think that's a big factor and if that's not sorted, then actually that makes it</p>

	2	5	165	<p>harder.</p> <p>I think the schools don't always know either though do they, about the status and what's the status of the parent in this, because in that case, the mum was still in touch and the school had to keep trying to find out, well is she entitled to know? What's going on? Is he being taken voluntarily? Where are we at with this? So that's back to what you were saying about communication really, and the worse that is, I think the worse it is for the youngster.</p>
	2	8	298	<p>by the very nature for these youngsters, often those things aren't working well and I guess it's to catch those kids that maybe have fallen between services or who are being excluded, because it's a catch-all for all kids isn't it, that go into care.</p>
	2	11	453	<p>Is that about redefining the role of foster parents in the sense that I've seen meetings with a team around a child where the foster children had been taken out for a bit, investigation happened, then the kids were put back in, even though the child didn't want to go back and they had a really nice family they're living in the place where they want to go to school. But it seemed to be like it was more for the foster parents, they would feel better if they had the child back and the kid was moved, then moved back in the home and perhaps it needed to be, another look at defining what's the best place for the child and the child's view and not necessarily what's the best for everybody involved and what needs they have where the child's being moved or placed. It was really awkward.</p>
	2	17	690	<p>Well I think there is a role (<i>for EP's</i>) in the PEP. I would also have a big concern about us rushing in and doing anything with a child that's just gone into care, because I don't think that's necessarily the most appropriate time</p>

				to add another adult, he's going to kind of drop in and see a couple of times into what's a fairly chaotic traumatic change for a young person.
	1	1	23	In fact one quite recently who was in a kinship care placement, the other side of the country and then that failed, he was brought back into care down here... it's about the narrative for that child I suppose, their understanding of what's going on and what the future is for them too.
	1	3	85	Number of placements, you know, if they've been to lots and lots of different placements and how that's all ended up, then you can just sometimes feel the layers of kind of sadness really, the layers of disaffection if they have been through many different placements.
	1	3	104	And there can be a myth in the schools can't there, about the sort of fresh start culture, which can propagate and maintain that, so don't worry about the paper work, because they'll have a fresh start, it'll all be new slate and all that. And actually, the child, as we all know, wants to be known and held through that, rather than starting again and sort of survive by themselves unknown, through that process.
	1	3	118	too many professionals involved and the child having to tell their story too many times and then just thinking at the end, I've said it so many hundreds of times, I don't want to speak about it any more. I think that's something that is very real to a lot of them.
	1	4	134	a lot of them are very chaotic when they come into care and I think our systems, it's not unusual, you know, counties often don't know all of the looked after children they've got within their borders because there are social workers flying all over the

				<p>country, because they stay belonging to their home authority, but they could be placed hundreds of miles away.</p>
	1	4	143	<p>I think there's also the feeling of loss, because the children may have built up a relationship with a social worker wherever they are and then when they move here, they see them once a year.</p>
	1	4	165	<p>the professionals all seem to have a role, but I'm not sure if there's somebody underneath actually totally under the child and that we all kind of agree what's important or we agree what this child needs, so we can fulfil our role and the system's maybe flawed.</p>
	1	7	285	<p>Well I think it's rather like thinking about the CAF process and the lead professional, the whole idea of the lead professionals that it's actually chosen by the family, so it was someone who they felt they were comfortable with and had some sort of relationship with and so that they, at the centre of it and rather similarly with this, I kind of feel like it, you couldn't say, it should be the social worker, it should, it actually depends on the young person and who they feel they relate to best, should start with that.</p>
	1	9	340	<p>So I guess this is where the designated teacher role came from (<i>research on resilience</i>) as well, it's about having someone in school who actually is their job, to take an interest, and we know it doesn't work like that, because it's a bit too contrived, but actually that is part of their role, to go out of their way to take an interest in children who are in care in a sensitive way and I'm not always sure that's done particularly well. I think it's a bit kind of, oh this is my function, completing PEPs.</p>
	1	10	387	<p>at planning meetings often the children in care, it's, 'well that's not us', because that's the designated</p>

	1	10	392	<p>teacher. So there isn't any kind of joined up-ness. So we would be raising young people in care, but it's not seen as being their remit, because it belongs to someone else.</p> <p>the school decides that role (<i>designated teacher</i>), not the child, decides who that's going to be.</p>
	1	12	461	<p>it seems there is a pattern of children that move into care of them being recognised as having mental health problems very readily and there's a real kind of desire there at the moment to sort of label everything and I think there needs to be more recognition that young people who are in care, by and large they're in care for not positive reasons.</p>
	1	14	614	<p>I think often children in care, don't think of others, are inconvenient to various systems, I don't think that in a horrible way, but they don't naturally always fit.</p>
The practice of inter relating biological, psychological and social factors when viewing child development	3	2	41	<p>I think the other thing is good communication though isn't it, because the school needs a certain amount of information in order to respond and support the child and also the child or young person needs information about what's happening</p>
	3	2	41	<p>They need to know either that, you know, siblings left behind are safe or the pet or whoever, or the mum's ok or you know, that sort of information. So they need the social worker or whoever, to keep them up dated.</p>
	3	2	55	<p>Especially if they've got siblings at home, that can cost as well, if one of the children's gone into care and the rest of the family have stayed at home. And I can't imagine how you'd live with that, if your life script actually, why were you the one that</p>

				they didn't want, I think that's a terrible blow.
	3	4	123	So one of the obstacles at this stage I would've thought is a high proportion of highly acting out confrontational aggressive difficult boys and girls at this stage who are therefore very difficult to place, and it's clear they're difficult to place. And some of those end up not in fostering home at all, they end up in some horrible places.
	3	5	187	Interesting, in terms of the children that are going into care, there are so many variables, it does seem to me, it's worth almost enumerating the variety of reasons for the children going in, because when I cast back, I can think of circumstances as extreme as a fourteen year old who we tried to actually get out of home and people weren't taking seriously the issues around violence and then I saw him in a secure unit because he'd taken an axe to his mum. So there's that sort of really extreme. Another girl who happened to be with her brother when he held up a post office with shotgun, so she was there because she happened to be with him, as you do! To exposure of sexual abuse, age fourteen, fifteen girls. I mean it's just such a range
	3	5	197	some of those circumstances (<i>of going into care</i>) are nothing to do with the individual.
	3	6	204	Quite a few of the ones I've come across would be adoptive placements that you know, when the young person gets to fourteen, fifteen, that they break down... Yea, and breakdown in terms of their behaviour
	2	1	6	For the child, young person, knows what's going on and isn't just removed, all their clothes put in a bin-bag I think, and if they feel part of that, as well as knowing what's going on, I

				think the more they feel that they might have some little control, somewhere, or some part of it, then I think that might help.
	2	1	12	Clear information as to what's going to happen. I think sometimes children don't know where they're going or whether it means a change of school.
	2	2	53	I guess that's the other thing that would facilitate it, is actually having well trained foster carers available in the right community for the young person.
	2	12	498	Yes, so those(<i>social factors</i>) would influence the psychological factors of the individual in order to build their resilience.
	2	13	507	so those things (<i>sense of self in relation to the general school population</i>)and emotional reactivity, which is related to emotional literacy.
	2	13	536	I'm not suggesting it's (<i>resilience</i>) static, I'm saying it's something which is built on, I think you probably build better resilience through your own ability to deal with some of those challenges rather than the collective responsibility of support, that's what I'm saying. If you're faced with a problem, it'll be a social problem or a literacy problem, whatever it is, and you're able to find your way through it, then I think your confidence, your self esteem improves, you increase your repertoire of response to challenges, resilience improves as well.
	2	13	543	I'm not saying it's static, we all have off days and think, oh crikey, I can't be bothered or I can't do that, but generally speaking, I think there's as much resilience development comes from individual's attempts to deal with the challenges.
	2	13	547	There is an environmental link though isn't there, because you have to be in

				<p>a place that's safe and secure where you feel you can take the risk and I can get it wrong and it'll still be ok and if I get it right, then that's, you know, I've made those steps to improve, so it's that kind of nurturing</p>
	2	14	551	<p>it (<i>resilience</i>) can vary across situations in the same individual as well, I think</p>
	2	14	582	<p>I think if you can work on something that the child's naturally quite able to do, because I worry actually that sometimes we focus on picking up and pulling up all those areas that they're struggling with and actually I think if you can go with the area where there's potentially some talent or some real ability, then actually that's where you worth investigative actually, because that will carry through.</p>
	2	16	639	<p>We had an interesting discussion at the one (<i>PEP</i>) I did, it was quite good I thought, about the £500 that the young person could identify what they wanted to spend it on. So he was told he could use this money for some thing that was loosely educational, it had to be for some educational use and last year I think he had a laptop, which he's broken. But it's being fixed. And they were sowing the seeds that he could think about that, and he had a couple of months to think about that, what he'd like. And that was really interesting, because the school wanted, the school had all sorts of ideas on what he could spend it on, weren't his ideas at all.</p>
	2	18	737	<p>If these (<i>PEP</i>) meetings are happening, and the question I think was around to how an EP would, could get involved or benefit or involvement could have with that, if these meetings are happening, and if they're collecting, or they should be looking at changes within the individual and around the individual.</p>

	2	18	742	<p>looking at attainment records for school, curriculum levels, absentees from school, behaviour difficulties, social difficulties, perhaps emotional difficulties and if all these are recorded at the meeting and everybody brought their own perspective view on these things, from their different professions and the school did that, then you would have a profile of the individual over a month, three months and six months and the changes.</p>
	1	2	53	<p>I think it's also important for them to know as much as possible, what the time scale is and that if there is a change, that they will be involved in that change, because I think a lot of the time, they don't know what's going to happen next and they may be moved from one placement to another and then they get very upset about it, because they don't know what's going to happen next, and they're out of control. So by having the process structured and for them to have an idea of the time scale, would make them feel less vulnerable.</p>
	1	8	312	<p>resilience implies both sensitivity and strength. Sensitivity in the sense of having experiences that are very difficult, being aware of those experiences, being sensitive to those experiences and yet still being able to push on through and survive and robustness I guess in a sense can be that, but doesn't necessitate it in a way.</p>
	1	11	429	<p>I suppose that (<i>meeting needs</i>) starts from a really good understanding of the needs of the young person, doesn't it? Yea, you're absolutely right, there's no one size fits all, is there?</p>
	1	12	466	<p>people are a product of their environment. Quite often people will display irrational, complicated, bizarre behaviour, but to whisk them into CAMHS, for an assessment for eight weeks, perhaps isn't the right</p>

				<p>way to go, because quite a few times, it's actually, that's exactly what's happening, to mental problem. And actually I'm not sure that needed to be like that, I think there needs to be more of an acknowledgement that this young person's having had a lead up to a break up with their family, but a very complicated time, actually there needs to be some admission that they need some time and space and need some stability to actually see truly what is going on.</p> <p>there's a young lad that I'm working with at the moment who was going down the ASD channel, he's in foster care and they were deciding that he needed to have the multi-disciplinary assessment, because he was displaying all kinds of autistic behaviours. But nine months down the line, he no longer has those autistic traits, and he could so easily have been diagnosed as autistic, and it would have been the wrong label.</p>
	1	12	484	

Group: Educational Psychologist
 Theme: Evidence based approach to attachment and resilience

Note: for Source Section

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Dimension	Source			Extract
	tr	pg	line	
Use of knowledge of resilience	3	4	129	I think there's also an obstacle in the thinking about the efficacy of care and I think there seems to have been a view which has been maintained quite strongly, that care is bad, going into care is bad and you do whatever you can to maintain the child in the home and people evidence that by saying, well the outcomes for children in care are bad. And I think that sort of confusing causality here, because you know, children go into care because their life experiences have been horrendous and I think there's something about just thinking about the orthodoxy of you know, keeping with the family good, going into care bad. I think it's terribly simplistic.
	3	10	283	I always remind teachers that one of the protective factors for children is having a strong teacher stroke mentor in a school so you can, you know, in these sort of hopeless situations where schools are saying, you know, we can't do anything, and I mean I certainly always remind them of that.
	3	10	388	It (<i>reminding teachers that they can be a key figure to promoting resilience</i>)empowers them
	3	10	390	Yea, actually, even if they're just there for them, that is a really,

				really important factor and has shown to be. As has being able to read and you know, other things.
	3	10	394	Well they feel that they get very tested don't they? Because part of it is testing relationships if you're in a difficult circumstance as some of these students are, and I think sometimes teachers feel they can sling an awful lot in and they get a lot in and they're just getting kicked and kicked, you know, physically or emotionally and I think to hear that, that (<i>teachers can be a key figure to promoting resilience</i>) is a really good message to them, because they can feel very unimportant after a day of that.
	3	11	403	I would have thought that the research evidence base is going to be relevant, isn't it? And that if you have measure certain characteristics of resiliency, then you are going to hypothesise that they are going to do better.
	3	11	411	I guess where I'm coming from is that we have you know, a kind of specialist knowledge around attachment and resilience that maybe dedicated teachers, social workers and foster carers don't have, so therefore we might have a slightly different perspective in terms of reminding teachers that relationship with those who have that knowledge.
	3	11	416	Certainly foster carers should as well, because the training (<i>delivered by the EPS</i>) is around there.
	3	11	417	And there is training for designated teachers isn't there, as well?
	3	12	429	I sometimes I find that when I go into schools, especially link education where those children have been there have gone from all sorts of different backgrounds, and they're very keen about finding out about attachment and they talk a lot about sort of development of the brain and so that

				<p>area I think is really interesting, of our knowledge, and sometimes the teacher says, they can understand it suddenly, you know there's a reason for that child's behaviour... Suddenly they get it.</p>
	3	12	437	<p>If you just tell a story of a child to a teacher that's coming into their class, I'm going to play devil's advocate for fun really, if you tell the teacher about the circumstances under which that child came to be in their class at age 6, my guess would be that would have at least as good an effect as telling them about attachment difficulty.</p> <p>I'm not sure about that, thinking of the training that my schools have had on attachment and they've found it incredibly helpful and it's led to them using different approaches, it hasn't just been about getting it or having empathy. It goes beyond that, you know and they say to me, well we understand now, so we're trying this and we've found that and...</p>
	3	12	448	<p>understanding their story means you will have empathy and you will try for things perhaps, whereas some sense, knowing about attachment would mean hopefully you'd do the same things.</p>
	3	12	455	<p>I think teachers could interpret, we all can, can interpret sort of very sort of disagreeable external behaviours that you might have for whatever reason, they can take very personally, they're in that room on their own and you know, that's a shot at me. I think widening it out, bringing that theory in, I think what you said there is, it sort of suggests that they're, instead of thinking it's me and this child, it's our relationship, it's ok, this is the bigger picture, this is what this person's been through. I am one of several people with whom this person might display this behaviour because of, these reasons. So it kind of, it</p>

				would diffuse situations for you in a way wouldn't it, if you'd got that theory.
	3	12	465	I think it can work hand in hand can't it, when a circle of adults the other day that came from the education of a child with attachment difficulties, and it was an amazing process, have them going in, actually this child was about to be excluded, they'd just had about enough of this child. But in half circle of adults where they just painted this incredibly rich picture, and then you have somebody doing a child's view, you give somebody the role of the child, and it was absolutely deadly silence, this whole room. You could just see this shift.
	3	13	488	There was different theories hypotheses came out of it, but the biggest thing was about the sort of family relationship and you know, father being in and out of prison and you can see that though this child wasn't in care, you know, is about to be, other siblings are all in care and this is the last one that's going to go off anytime now. But you could see that, that would lead to such a greater understanding of the difficulties and impact of attachment and then they were then willing to look at all different strategy, you know, amazing.
	3	13	495	I think that you picked out attachment and resilience and I think they kind of work at different levels don't they, because I think with attachment it's sort of understanding how you can relate best to the child and what might work in terms of behaviour management or might not work. Whereas with resilience, it's almost, it's more important in the sense that knowing what can help, like keeping social networks and those sorts of things, would actually inform your decisions perhaps about where the child goes, whether you move them on to somewhere else, those sorts of

				<p>things. I mean, they both will to an extent, but I think you know, the resilience bit can have huge impact on what you do.</p>
	2	3	84	<p>But we do know historically that 95% of them failed in getting a successful education, or securing a job, or being in a secure relationship as an adult</p>
	2	11	430	<p>my role has been working the school in terms of, of knowing about the resilience factors and where can they contribute and I think one of those is literacy, so it's assessing first where his literacy is at, because we know that that's one of the factors that the 5% have, they're literate. So I talk to them about that, so I think we're in a really good position to promote resilience.</p>
	2	11	435	<p>It's not always the right time to do it (<i>EP intervention</i>), when they've just moved into care, but I think depending on the placement and where they've arrived in school and whether that has always been their school. I think if they're just there for a short term, I tended to focus on, let's look at literacy, let's look at social skills and just give them some normalisation in a class, really.</p>
	2	12	483	<p>I think, given the WHO 2004 report, it's the support of the family around and the carers around the person that has the biggest influence over the ability to rehabilitate</p>
	2	12	490	<p>I think I would see it as less of a sort of individualised thing and more of a dynamic. When you said about resilience here, I was thinking about sort of things that provoke sort of emotional wellbeing sort of factors that, I mean if there is an element of qualities of the individual, but also of things that can be put in place, that sort of social dynamic of supportive peer group, pleasant working living environment, opportunity to feel that you are contributing in a positive way,</p>

				<p>those sorts of things that would contribute I guess to that sense of resilience.</p> <p>I think there's two things really, I think there's generally resilience, so we could look at ourselves and say, where's our resilience? Or we could generally look at a school population and look at that and I think within that, we're looking, I would look at within child factors in terms of a sense of self</p>
	2	12	500	
	2	13	508	<p>But I think if you're then looking at resilience in children in care, I think that's different, because there has been research done about ten, twelve years ago, in Cardiff particularly where they published quite a number of papers on it and they looked at what enabled that 5% to be successful. So the resilience factors, for them, were both within and external but until they've got the skills within themselves to relate to people, it's not enough to be part of the social group, so they're kind of intertwined. But they included things like literacy, internal locus of control, connections, belonging to social group in whatever way that was. I can't remember the rest of them. Self esteem.</p> <p>It's (<i>promoting resilience</i>) like emotional nurturing on scaffolding isn't it, basically?</p>
	2	14	552	
	2	14	574	<p>I think, with some young people, because it's not just looking at all the stuff that's going wrong and how to make that, make them able to cope with that, looking at something totally different, but something that they're really good at.</p>
	2	16	675	<p>I mean what's quite interesting about that, it sounds as though you were quite keen in terms of reconceptualising and actually having knowledge of what should be being</p>

				<p>provided and that slightly different take on resilience, focussing on the positive</p>
	2	19	758	<p>we can provide information around resilience and that is a good role for us, I think. But I think we have to be careful about jumping in, just because they're in care.</p>
	2	19	783	<p>going back to resilience, that we'd be bringing our knowledge of resilience into those consultations, wouldn't we? We might be suggesting that the child needed certain things to increase their sense of belonging or there might be a significant adult in school or a specific literacy input or something.</p>
	1	7	268	<p>Well just stopping to think then for a minute, what it must feel like to go into care, to a key stage 4 particularly, actually I don't think I'd be terribly fussed thinking about the future and careers, I'd be wanting to know where I was going to be living and was I ever going to go back home, who was I going to be with and where my friendship groups were. So to try and help them over that, you know, as you've said, they need to be seriously held, don't they? And feel safe to get to that point</p>
	1	8	305	<p>I didn't realise that I had a within-child or within-person model of resilience, until I heard him speaking. And it made me realise that resilience is a function of the relationships and how strong they are and how networked they are and rather than what I've got inside me.</p>
	1	8	320	<p>resilience is that overwhelming research for instance says that one of the strongest indicators of young people in care have shown resilience their experience has been about them engaging with education and their ability to acquire skills such as reading, so when I worked on a previous job, we spent a lot of time putting extra support into intensive</p>

				reading programmes to enable children to develop those skills, because like it or lump it, our society is very literate, it's very literacy based society, actually if you're going function then part of being resilient is being able to function adequately, then actually being able to read is a huge, huge bonus. So we spent quite a lot of time doing that, actually trying to skill children up, also getting them to school, being at school.
Identification of protective factors which support resilience in applied psychology for CIC	3	1	8	It helps if the child is allowed to stay in their school, doesn't it, in their secondary school?
	3	1	10	Yea, I mean I was thinking actually good support in the secondary school if they already have a key person that they talk to at school.
	3	1	19	And there'd be a group same thing, people around school I mean inextricably linked, but not necessarily, but one would hope. This is transition into, isn't it? So peers can be important. Residual family members who are not cause of the particular issues leading them into care? I guess.
	3	1	23	Availability of family support, because it might be the siblings going into care with them, that's going to be very different if they're being suddenly isolated from their siblings.
	3	1	26	Yea, and it might be one particular family member who's the cause I suppose. Pets are important, I'm not being trivial about it, but pets are quite important
	3	2	37	Your attachment objects So as much consistency and

	3	2	51	continuity as possible, is desirable
				Availability of good care placements
	3	2	96	And stability, all that change from one to the other
	3	2	97	Another thing that would facilitate it (<i>transition</i>) is if they let the school know as well, the kid's gone into care.
	2	2	63	being part of a social group is a big factor in that, so protecting yourself from depression is part of being resilient.
	2	13	528	That was one of the other factors, a consistent adult
	2	14	567	I think being good at something as well, isn't it? Having some success or being able to achieve in something, even if it's not, if it's something almost aside to everything else that's going on, I'm just thinking of some youngsters who, brilliant at some particular sport or whatever, who that, they sort of bounce along better, that gives them a protective shell. Ok, that's rubbish and that's rubbish and I'm not very good at that, but wow, I can really shine at that.
	2	14	568	
	1	2	62	Continuity so if it's to do with being able to still go to the same school or same college, even if other things are changing, so there's still some people that they're very comfortable with. Their friends are still by.
	1	2	65	There's something there about GCSE courses as well, aren't there? Because obviously different schools will be different GCSE courses, so if they do have to move schools, what efforts are made to actually try to allow them to continue to access the courses that they've started.
	1	8	330	Actually attending (<i>school</i>) is a major protective factor.
				Well the research says that if you

	1	8	336	<p>have an adult in your life, not necessarily a parent or a carer, who takes an interest in your educational attainment, you're far more likely to succeed and then you're far more likely to read, so it's about the relationship. The relationship is key to it.</p> <p>The relationship is one of the key things to protect isn't it?</p>
	1	10	412	<p>I think in terms of protective factors, the young person feeling that they are at the centre of it and they have some element of control, autonomy, whatever. That they are totally included in the process and they are at the centre, that there's no sense of being done to, decisions being made.</p>
	1	11	417	<p>Just thinking about good old attachment theory again and the fact that some disorganised attachment, disordered children, not very comfortable phrase, can't have a choice and being at the centre of thing very scary and the idea of them having power is a very scary thing as well, because they maybe think, well it's my fault that I. So being held and structured is maybe more appropriate for them, and for other children it's being held and given choice and give power which has been taken away from them.</p>
	1	11	421	<p>I just think it's very key to prevent the breakdown of the placement really, importantly.</p>
	1	11	480	<p>To support and contain them in a sense, you know, going back to what you were saying about how, you know, kind of transference and projection, all of that kind of stuff, that actually to support them, help them feel contained and help them understand why the young person might be behaving as they are, rather than, you know, look at labels</p>
	1	12	479	<p>I think developing empathy and</p>

	1	14	573	<p>understanding of professionals, you know, significant in their life, if in terms of maybe a school or something. Probably most people have very little direct knowledge of it, or understanding, I'm not sure, I've never met a professional who's been through care, well I suppose the main question, who's gone through a divorce, loss of a house, lost a partner or whatever, so I just, I don't know, for me there's a big power around empathy, actually just understanding the needs.</p>
	1	15	586	<p>I'm not as well versed in literature as I would like to be, but what I have read, it strikes me that very often the best ways to work educationally with teenagers who have histories of if you like, attachment difficulties, quite often counter intuitive, and you can end up working in a way which intuitively may seem like the best way to work and actually it's achieving completely the reverse in terms of building a good working alliance with the young person and building a sense of trust.</p>
Identification of risk factors relating to resilience in applied psychology for CIC	3	1	15	<p>In a way it depends on how traumatic that process was made doesn't it?</p> <p>Because sometimes it's very sudden isn't it? So ideally, then there'll be some continuity, but I think in some cases that doesn't happen, it's very difficult then isn't it?</p>
	3	2	38	<p>And that process is sometimes so fast that I have visited places where I've just seen this kid, whatever, has just a couple of black bin bags</p>
	3	2	49	<p>Well they need the same social worker pre and post care, don't they? And that often changes and that's not</p>

				good at all.
	3	2	103	that he's had a good foster carer and her life circumstances changed, she got a new partner and he didn't want to keep this child and actually had difficult time, he found somewhere for two and a half years and then something happened and then he's gone back on this horrible sort of cycle of people passing him round and he's been in D, he's been down here, he's going back up to N, I mean it's how, it's instructions on how to completely devastate a child's entire existence before the age of six. And part of the problem is that with the foster care system
	3	4	128	And they have disruption to their courses of study at a vital time.
	2	13	530	you'd have Heider's theory of attribution motivation that would say if you take that control out of the individual, they no longer have that and they won't attribute any success to themselves.
	2	13	533	I would see that sense that resilience isn't something that's static, I would question as well. Your self esteem for example, I think can fluctuate depending on the situation that you're in, it isn't a static
	1	4	148	I think the peer group is a massive thing, particularly maybe for this age group as well. I mean the importance of belonging to a peer group in key stage 4 age, is absolutely paramount, isn't it? And young people often get their kind of strongest sense of themselves through that, and so to lose that completely, and I guess if you're new into care in key stage 4, you might well have grown up with that peer group and gone through school with that peer group, so that's a huge, huge loss.
				I think that's the link to the lack of foster carers, there's another barrier,

	1	4	156	<p>as we were saying earlier, children having to be placed a long way away from their current school and then having to change peer group, having to change schools, because there isn't the foster carer, foster carers out there to actually provide the placements for those children in the kind of, in that geographical area.</p>
	1	11	483	<p>The case I've been working with, the child was put into a foster placement and into a school, with no prior knowledge of the complexity of his difficulties. So now the foster placement has broken down, the school's going to have to change as well, and that's because there was no flow of information, no preparation for those settings, prior to the child arriving.</p>
	1	12	461	<p>I think one of the risk factors that I feel quite strongly about is that it seems there is a pattern of children that move into care of them being recognised as having mental health problems</p>

Thematic dimensions of Change across professional groups

Changes prior to entering care

'Well she (*young person*) lost her mother when she was, well D was, I think she was about thirteen when her mother died. ... Then her father died two years ago this August '

Foster Carer

'we have a young man who was in effect in a family home, though he was an adopted child, who was then taken into care due to breakdowns in relationships with his adoptive parents'

Designated Teacher

'that (*the transition to care*) happens in different ways and for very different reasons as well. It can be from as simple as a parent needing hospital treatment and there are no other family members around and we have to accommodate children under those bases to a very, very to you know, a very, very difficult situations in the house, of you know, allegations of sexual abuse etc. coming in care proceedings, parents ending up in prison, children very damaged coming into the care system and being placed with our carers.'

Social Care

'that family member then, because they're on an interim order or section 20, they have to be, because you can't place any child on an order without them being approved foster carers, and sometimes then that works, sometimes it doesn't, there are many issues around that, whether the family members can meet the requirements of becoming a foster carer. And or, whether there's kind of family management issues, and then they may choose to look at alternatives like special guardianship and the emphasis of

that is that you know, this cooperation between, generally it's kind of grandparents that you know, come into, that we deal with in terms of kinship carers and cooperation with the parents of the child and the grandparents, and we have children coming in on remand. So, very different situations really'

Social Care

Changes during entry to care

if they've moved schools, that PEP, although it can be semi-useful, because they don't know the child, they can't comment very much on their academic progress or relationship with adults.

PEP Co-ordinators

That's when they so get behind with their learning. 'Cos it's not the flowing everyday life of a school all the way through and get so many changes, as well as home changes.

Foster Carer

'I think that's the link to the lack of foster carers ... children having to be placed a long way away from their current school and then having to change peer group, having to change schools, because there isn't the foster carer, foster carers out there to actually provide the placements for those children in the kind of, in that geographical area.'

Educational Psychologist

'our vacancy availability is small. So you can have a situation where a child may need to be brought into the care system from the F assessment team say, and they cover up to N, which is up here somewhere, and we only have a vacancy with (?) down here. Well, you're taking somebody from their environment up here, schooling, friends, family

etc. It's very different to there and you know, going to school from that distance is nay on impossible and any contact issues and all sorts of stuff like that, so as A said, you know, choice is one factor that would greatly enhance the transition into care. But sadly, you know...'

Social Care

'We don't have enough vacancies, we try and match as best we possibly can'

Social Care

'They just have to come in don't they, which isn't good enough really. I mean in terms of, your obvious interest in the resilience factors, what we're doing is actually taking them away from a lot of the protective environment, family, friends, familiar world, and putting them in a world that actually is quite far away from that, which is quite a big shock to any child's system really. And we all talk about this, don't we? And wish we could do it differently.'

Social Care

Changes after entering Care

' They've moved foster placement and it's, oh well, they'll just change schools, when they're just about to take their GCSEs, whereas now, policy is in place that means they can't do that, isn't it? And I think that makes us then think, it makes the department think, take some responsibility and accountability for not putting those changes on those young people.'

Social Care

'We liked her (*Social Worker*) and she kept in touch all the time. Now she's been taken off the case, and I haven't got a clue who her social worker is now, nobody's come back to me, you know.'

Foster Carer

APPENDIX D

Ethical Considerations

Written informed consent from the participants which include professionals working in schools and the multiagency professionals participating in the Stage 1 of this research will be obtained.

- Consent and confidentiality – consent to use the data was obtained from those with the power of parental consent prior to undertaking the New into Care Project. As a member of the Children in Care Team within the X Local Authority, I therefore have consent to access the data which the New into Care (2008) project generates. Further consent would need to be obtained from the professional participants prior to undertaking the study through the use of a brief prior to commencement which explicitly states the aims of the study. Furthermore, participants would be asked to sign a consent form and informed of their right to withdraw prior to and on completion of their involvement .
- Data from specific professional groups would be coded but otherwise anonymised in order to maintain continuity of analysis. This is in keeping with the British Psychological Society Code of Ethics and Conduct (2006) that requires respect, integrity, competence and responsibility from psychologists at all times in their research and wider work.
- Data would be destroyed on completion of the research project.
- As stated previously, no attempt would be made to gain any data from the young people themselves due to the fact that they are already a potentially vulnerable group and the researcher does not wish to cause distress. Should the school in stage 2 require feedback, access would only be given to the findings within the report, which will be completely anonymised.

Paper 2 - Inclusive Education and the Personal Education Plan: An Exploration of the Support for Young People Entering Care in Key Stage 4

Abstract

The education system has undergone major reform in recent years, papers such as the Every Child Matters (DfES, 2003) and The Children's Plan (DCSF, 2007) have instigated a re-evaluation of the process and context of the education system. One of the major implications of this reform has been the need to identify any groups within the population who underachieve educationally with the intention of providing additional support. The role of designated teacher and use of the Personal Education Plan has been established within school settings, however, the process of supporting young people entering care within college settings has remained relatively unexplored.

This study reports a qualitative exploration of core subject teachers in the support of young people entering care in Key Stage 4. The study specifically explored professional engagement in the Personal Education Plan, classroom practice and support of young people entering care. Data was collected using focus groups to elicit the views of the professionals who teach young people entering care. Data was analysed using Thematic Analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

The findings of the study suggest that teaching staff identify individual need in response to conflict (in the form of response to presenting behaviour within school). The nature of additional need identified within the study was predominantly psychosocial. Additional support

is therefore reactive. The dichotomy between inclusive legislation and practice is explored. Teachers identified the need for a proactive response to supporting young people in care as an area for development at both the individual and systemic level. Future considerations for the application of psychology and research are identified.

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Introduction

Aim

The aim of the study was to explore the reality of supporting the educational attainment and wellbeing of young people entering care within their educational settings. Specifically, the aim of this study is to have a greater understanding of the educational experience of young people in care in relation to supportive practice by teachers with a longer term view to developing psychologically informed educational practice to promote equality of opportunity and address the attainment gap between those in care and those who are not.

The education system has undergone major reform in recent years, papers such as the Every Child Matters (DfES, 2003) and The Children's Plan (DCSF, 2007) have instigated a re-evaluation of the process and context of the education system. Underpinning these reforms is the assumption that educational achievement leads to economic wellbeing and contribution to society – a philosophy which has roots in capital gains theory. Although capital gains theory and the effects of the implementation of the Every Child Matters Agenda (DfES, 2003) have been called into question (Stern, 2007, or Raffo, Dyson, Gunter, Hall, Jones and Kalambouku, 2007 for an evaluation of education from differing sociological models), one cannot deny the profound effect that philosophy and political rhetoric have had on the education system in recent years.

When considering the political backdrop for current thinking on education, the five Every Child Matters (ECM) outcomes have given a framework which reflects and acknowledges the need for a holistic

approach to child development. The ECM outcomes include being healthy, staying safe, enjoy and achieve, making a positive contribution and achieving economic wellbeing. In practical terms, this has resulted in greater consideration of parents and carers, a focus on early intervention and prevention and an acknowledgement of the need for an effective approach to integrated working (both at the strategic and ground level). One of the major implications of this reform has been the need to identify any groups within the population who underachieve educationally with the intention of providing additional support. In addition, the Children's Act 1989 (as amended by section 52 of the Children Act 2004) identifies the responsibility of local authorities. Specifically, Local Authorities, in carrying out their duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children looked after by them, must give particular attention to the educational implications of any decision about the welfare of those children. In practice terms, this legislation places a responsibility on Social Care and Education professionals to understand the needs of children entering care in order to effectively promote their wellbeing.

The Working Group Report on Educational Psychology Service Practice with Looked After Children (2006) identifies that children in care are the most vulnerable group within education, demonstrating poor outcomes across all domains. Historically, the academic comparison has been stark, with 3% of children leaving care achieving 5 GCSE's at a C grade or above in comparison to 60% of the general population (Fletcher-Campbell,1997).

More recent developments within educational legislation and guidance has placed a duty upon schools to promote the educational attainment of young people in care and introduced the notion of

corporate parenting in order to redress this imbalance. The Every Child Matters Change for Children (2005) statutory guidance identifies that Local Authorities have a duty to act in a manner which is comparable to the actions that any good parent would take in order to promote their child's educational aspirations and to support their achievement. This duty includes the formulation of Personal Education Plans to specifically target support for CIC within their educational settings. In addition, the Children and Young Persons Bill (DCSF, 2007) extends the notion of corporate parenting and inclusion of the voice of the children concerned within the processes designed to support CIC.

When considering the educational experience of young people in care, practice changes within schools have included the move towards integrated working through the use of Personal Education Plans and a statutory obligation for each school or college to have a designated teacher for children in care. However, while the gap between outcomes for children in care and the wider school population have decreased, there still remains a tangible difference between the outcomes for those in care and their peers who have not experienced care.

The results of study 1 suggest that knowledge of the young person was perceived as a key element to promoting attainment and wellbeing. In addition the provision for the social and emotional wellbeing of young people in care was identified as a potential area for development. Given the legislative agenda put forward within Every Child Matters (2003), which prescribes a holistic view of

development for young people, schools and colleges are potentially a valuable source of support.

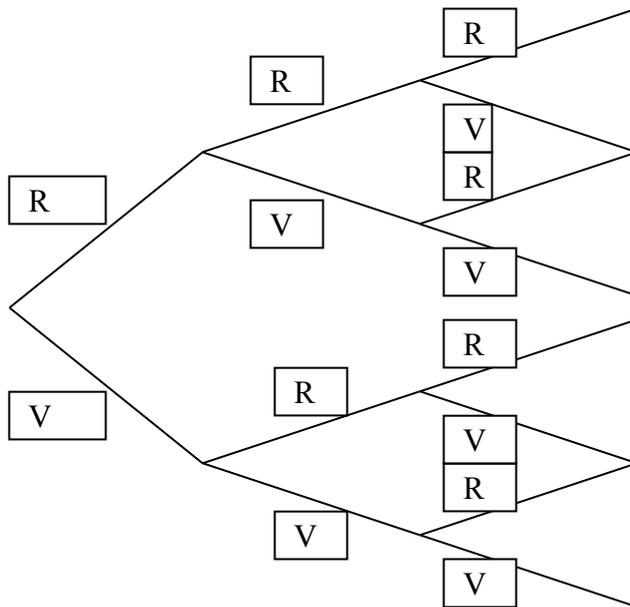
Within the previous study change was identified as a consistent theme for young people in care. In the light of these results, psychological research on resilience and attachment has been identified as pertinent. A growing evidence base within psychological literature suggests that schools can be a significant protective factor for young people experiencing change and challenge. Specifically, teacher expectations, peer influences and support have been found to promote resilience (Dent & Cameron, 2003). In addition, schools and colleges can have a valuable role in providing a 'secure base' for meeting young learners' relational and emotional needs (Gilligan, 1998).

The increase in the body of evidence within the field of resilience and attachment (Egeland et al 2003, Bomber, 2007, Geddes, 2007 and Golding, 2007), exemplify the reflective journey that has been undertaken by psychologists to understand and meet the needs of children in care. It is important to note, however, that research to date implicitly centres around a deficit notion of young people in care. Developments in the field of promoting positive development and wellbeing provide illuminating insights into the explicit development of wellbeing at a systemic school level (Tew, 2010, Murray-Harvey, 2010 and McLoughlin and Clarke, 2010). When considering the wellbeing of young people in care, further development of schools as a rich environment for developing young people can only be beneficial. Replicating the move to a wellbeing perspective for young people in

care may be the challenge for educationalists and psychologists at this time.

One approach which has been raised as potentially pertinent within psychological literature (Slater, 2007) is the Developmental Pathways Approach (Waddington, 1957). This evolutionary perspective defines development in terms of a system which develops over time. Specifically, Waddington's interest was in the interaction between genotype (genetic influences) and phenotypic development (in the form of adaptive behaviours). He was among the founding biologists to acknowledge the sensitive but profound relationship between social interaction and environment on the development of behaviour. Development is seen as the cumulative product along one of a potential array of discrete pathways (Slater, 2007). Within the array are two types of pathway, promoting either competent or vulnerable reactions to the environment and social world. The starting point of these pathways is affected by the quality of interaction between a child and his/her attachment figures and reflects social and cultural contexts. Figure illustrates a simplified version of the 'array' concept postulated by Waddington (1957)

Figure 1.1 shows a simple example of the 'Developmental Pathways' array postulated by Waddington (1957).



The diagram illustrates the development of a child in response to changing social situations and the acquisition of skills necessary to negotiate the changing social environment. Each node of the array represents significant social situations/interactions where learning takes place (which may range from early attachment experiences or successful transition to nursery/school to experiences of family break up or positive/negative peer interactions). Waddington postulated that these social interactions present opportunities for children or young people to experience resilient (signified by 'R' on the diagram) or vulnerable responses (signified by the letter 'V').

The implications of using a developmental pathway approach with regard to working with children in care are several fold. Firstly, individuals who have experienced good quality interactions with their attachment figures are more likely to develop a sense of mastery within their changing social context. Secondly, when considering a

developmental pathway approach to interaction, it follows that previous positive experiences enable individuals to develop behaviours which will facilitate subsequent positive interaction with peers, adults and the world. Alternatively, poor early experience (or chronic/ significant change) may produce patterns of interacting which reflect an insecurely attached style of early experience (or maladaptive responses) and therefore produce further vulnerability (such as lack or loss of trust, break down in communication, inability/refusal to engage). When considering the notion of developmental pathways, which acknowledges the impact of previous experience, it is evident that change (such as the transition into care) can be reconceptualised as an opportunity for enabling young people to learn how to move towards more competent or resilient responses. Severe trauma (such as the events leading to transition into care and multiple care placements) are considered as barriers to optimal pathway access.

Knowledge of the young person has been identified as a crucial element of providing effective provision. Reconceptualising and reconstructing a young person's experience in terms of a developmental dialogue may prove empowering to the young person and illuminating to professionals. In addition, an adaptively (as opposed to maladaptive) based model for understanding young people's experiences provides a potentially accessible framework for applying psychological knowledge of resilience and attachment whilst avoiding the stigma of deficit based explanations. This study is an initial step towards exploring the existing strengths and needs in terms of educational practice to support children and young people in care.

Methodology

Epistemological Stance

The underpinning aim of this study is to have a greater understanding of the educational experience of young people in care, with a longer term view to developing educational practice to promote equality of opportunity and address the attainment gap between those in care and those who are not. The use of Critical Realism (Robson, 2007) as an epistemology presented a lens for reflecting upon the interaction of context and practice.

Critical Realism also enables researchers to consider practice as a culturally and socially situated activity.

‘The real world is not only very complex but also stratified into different layers. Social reality incorporates individual, group, institutional and societal levels.’

Robson (2007), p 32

Furthermore, Critical Realism has provided a conceptual framework for considering the support of young people entering care within the wider educational context, reflecting the young person’s experience. Within Critical Realism, mechanisms function on the basis of their structure. Within this study structure was defined within two levels, College cultural context (focusing on teachers as members of the College organisation) and classroom (focusing on young person/ teacher interaction and perceptions). The mechanism in this case has been identified as practice issues perceived to relate to young people in care within the classroom.

Critical Realism provides an innovative approach to real world research. For example, when considering notions of replication and generalisability, positivist approaches to research require a consistent level of replication in order for the results of a given study to be deemed valid. In the context of social or real world research, this positivist tenet has been problematic due to the complex nature of social context (which affects the conditions of each study being undertaken). The resulting constraints advocated within positivist experimental design significantly inhibit the nature of and potential remit for social (or real world) research. Within Critical Realism, however, social structure and human action are both perceived as relatively enduring (Robson, 2002, p37) and therefore can both be considered within a remit for study.

The critical realist guiding metaphor (of mechanisms working within a given context), seeks to address this difficulty directly by acknowledging the social context of the site of study within the remit for research. In practical terms, within the current study, teacher dialogue regarding school process and culture (the context) has been analysed and discussed as an integral part of the exploration of provision for CIC (the mechanism). In addition, Critical Realism does not assume that the same mechanisms can be universally applied within a real world setting (Robson, 2002, p39).

This approach therefore has further implications regarding representativeness and generalisability. For example, with regards to the present study, three community colleges have been selected with a view to gaining a valid account of CIC practice within X Local Authority. The colleges were selected to take account of differences in demographic and regional professional practice (reflecting the division of professional teams within the region). Such a form of selection was

designed to attempt to capture the regional context within the larger context of the education system. Further consideration of methodological issues is given below.

Methodological Issues

When considering my choice of analysis, I sought to find an approach which would allow me to elicit the views and perceptions of the professionals involved.

Thematic Analysis is a widely used approach within qualitative psychology which has been critiqued for lack of clarity (Roulston, 2001). Braun and Clarke (2006) argue that thematic analysis provides a cogent framework for the rigorous analysis of data. In addition, they have addressed the criticisms of thematic analysis within their model through the identification of key decisions to be made prior to data collection and analysis. Braun and Clarke's (2006) paper offers clear definition of thematic analysis and illustrates the capacity for the epistemological flexibility of the approach with due regard to rigour. For the sake of clarity, I have defined my use of Thematic Analysis in terms of the key decisions which Braun and Clarke identified. These questions contextualise analysis of the data with due regard to the role of researcher as an active participant in the interpretation process. The questions include:

- What represents a theme?

A theme is defined both in terms of prevalence across data sets. Themes are not, however, solely defined by prevalence and are therefore not based on quantifiable measures (as in content analysis, Braun and Clarke, 2006)). They are also defined with regard to their

importance to the original research questions (see p 5 for the research questions for study 2). The researcher is therefore an active participant of constructing themes within the reflective process of analysing data.

- A rich description of the data or a detailed account of one particular aspect?

The aim of this study is to produce a rich description of themes rather than an in depth account of a particular theme. Whilst there is a growing body of research pertaining to psychological intervention and children in care, there are relatively few studies which relate to the support of children in care within their cultural and social context. Specifically, having identified children in care as a vulnerable group within the education system, it is important to acknowledge the potential for implicitly treating this group of young people as qualitatively different from the rest of the school population. The degree and nature of the difference in educational experience for children in care has yet to be determined. A broader thematic exploration was therefore undertaken as an initial step towards developing a research based understanding of any potential differences in experience. In addition, use of a thematic picture approach enables exploration of themes across educational settings, facilitating broader, more systemic observations to be drawn.

- Use of inductive versus theoretical analysis?

Inductive analysis was used to gain an insight into the views and practices of those contributing to the support of young people entering care. When considering direct practice with young people in care, it is important to view present practice and beliefs without

preconception. Evidence on practice was therefore analysed inductively.

- Use of semantic or latent themes?

Teaching within the classroom is essentially an individual practice. Whilst the epistemology selected allows reflection on wider systemic influences, at this stage within the research process, it is important to maintain a sense of equality between the researcher and participants. Given the method of data collection (a single focus group/ interview in each case), it would be ethically questionable to over analyse the data collected. Analysis at the semantic level has therefore been selected for use.

- Epistemology: essentialist/realist versus constructionist thematic analysis?

As discussed previously, the present study has been conceptualised within a realist approach (Robson, 2007, p 32). With regards to analysis of data, the realist perspective enables the theorisation of individual's data rather than through the lens of co-construction. In addition, this approach does not assume consistency or co-construction across classrooms or college settings, allowing only data driven commonalities to be identified.

This approach to data analysis is further discussed in terms of its strengths and limitations within the discussion. Having discussed the epistemological and methodological issues concerned with the study,

the following sections of the method will identify the way in which the method was employed.

Participants and Sampling

The present study was conducted using a purposive sampling method (Robson, 2007, p264). Given that X (the label given to the county where the study was conducted) is a large rural county, It was important to give consideration to demographic differences and consequent differences in practice within the region. Within the context of the Local Authority, the Educational Psychology Service is based within 3 Areas, north, mid and south. I therefore sought participation from a Community College in each of the areas.

Participation was sought from the core subject (English, Maths and Science) teachers and Head of Year of a young person within each college who had entered care in Key Stage 4 to aid consistency of identification and experience. The young person was identified by the Designated Teacher for the College for staff selection purposes but remained anonymous to myself as researcher (this sampling method is further discussed within the ethics section in Appendix D, Pg 243).

Data was collected using focus groups and interviews to elicit the views of the professionals who engage in supporting young people through transition and with their academic attainment within their college setting. The initial stage of data collection involved interviewing the designated teacher for each college.

A semi-structured focus group schedule was piloted for Core Subject teachers (see Appendix A, Pg 221). On the basis of feedback, the focus group schedule was rejected in favour of a less structured approach (see Appendix A, pg 221).

I then sought and gained permission to undertake a focus group with the following teaching staff within each of the colleges.

Figure 1.2 shows consent given and data collected by subject taught or College responsibility within each of the areas within the Local Authority.

College	Subject				Total Number Of Participants
	Maths	English	Science	Head of Year	
1	1	1	1	0	3
2	1	1	2	1	5
3	1	1	3	1	6

The areas in which the colleges are situated have been labelled numerically to preserve anonymity. Other details have been anonymized after data collection.

In addition, the designated teacher for each college was also interviewed, using a semi-structured interview schedule.

Materials

The following materials were used in the preparation for and collection of data (see Appendix A, p 221):

- Rationale explaining the study and explanation of involvement required.
- Consent Forms.
- Interview schedule for Designated Teachers

Data was recorded using a digital sound recorder.

Design 3K

As previously stated, the aim of this study was to explore the transition to care for young people within Key Stage 4 from multiple agency perspectives. Data was collected from designated teachers using a semi-structured focus group schedule, which extended the exploration of the areas identified in study 1 to include dissemination of the PEP within their college setting. Data was also collected using focus groups from core subject teachers involved in teaching young people in care within Key Stage 4. The focus group was selected as the design for data collection to facilitate professional discourse and provide the opportunity for reflection on professional practice, with the aim of producing a richer data set for analysis.

Data was recorded using a digital sound recorder and transcribed for analysis (see Appendix B, p 228).

The data for each professional group identified within the participants section was thematically analysed (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Analysis comprised of the following stages:

1. Familiarisation with data - recorded data was transcribed (see Appendix A p 221), initial reading and initial thoughts noted.

2. Generation of initial codes – this included systematic semantic coding of each data set (including all of the interviews/focus groups from a given college). Data was then collated to form initial codes. Items were then re-assessed for suitability within each code.

3. Identifying themes – Codes were reviewed in order to identify initial themes. The codes were then collated under theme headings.

4. Reviewing themes – themes were then reviewed on two levels, for internal and external consistency.
Internal consistency refers to reviewing codes within a theme with regard to consistency of content. The dimensions or descriptors of a theme were identified and recorded.

External consistency refers to the reviewing themes in relation to the entire data set. This involved recoding the transcripts thematically and reviewing any data which did not fit into the pre-existing themes and dimensions for possible further themes. An initial thematic map was then drawn up for each college involved in the study.

5. Defining and naming themes - themes were then analysed and reviewed to define their parameters .

Themes were then labelled and defined.

An overview of the analysis for each research question was then produced using a thematic map (see Appendix C, p 240 for overview of themes).

In addition, a further literature review was conducted to explore the links between existing research literature and the themes identified within analysis. A summary of the limitations, key thematic findings of the study and discussion of the results follows.

Results and Discussion

Limitations of the study

The small scale of the study affects the degree to which it can be generalised, however, the initial aim of the study was to explore a relatively under researched area, namely, of supporting the educational attainment and wellbeing of young people entering care within their educational settings. Given this brief, the study does provide a rich account of practice dynamics for those supporting young people entering care, with a view to the potential for further research.

The method of sampling also needs to be considered. The study sought to provide a real life snap shot within the X Local Authority. Given the large geographical area that X covers and the range in demographic (in terms of areas relative wealth and chronic deprivation), data was sought from all 3 areas within X.

When considering the method of analysis, it is important to acknowledge that some of the depth and richness of the original data has been lost within the process of thematic analysis. Whilst the method of analysis for reduced objectivity, it is important to acknowledge that a more quantitative approach may have impaired the validity of the data due to the constraints of structure. The process of re-visiting the transcripts and maintaining a critically reflective stance as a researcher has been central to maintaining the validity of the data collected. As stated within the section on epistemology, understanding rather than prediction is one of the underlying precepts or aims of Critical Realism. Given this aim, the cyclical approach of

revisiting the data and reviewing of identified themes has facilitated critical questioning of the way the data has been constructed during analysis and a basis for self reflection regarding the rigour of the process.

Validity was further considered within the analysis across colleges. Themes elicited within the study were triangulated across college settings. Where differences occurred, further reflection and analysis was undertaken to understand the data within the larger context. In summary, the method selected for analysis has illuminated the complexity of support for young people in care within their educational settings. Evidence within the data also suggests that the participants in the study found the opportunity to discuss their practice helpful, providing valuable insights for their working remit and for further research.

Aim

As stated previously, the aim of the study was to explore the reality of supporting the educational attainment and wellbeing of young people entering care within their educational settings. Specifically, the aim of this study is to have a greater understanding of the educational experience of young people in care in relation to supportive practice by teachers. Specifically, data was sought from Core Subject teachers on their practice with and views of young people in care within Key stage 4. The study was conducted as a preliminary step exploring and reflecting upon the real life educational practice with children in care with a view to developing psychologically informed educational practice to promote equality of opportunity and address the attainment gap between those in care and those who are not.

Findings

Research Question 1: How is the Personal Education Plan disseminated and engaged in within a Key Stage 4 setting?

For ease of reading, the following findings have been structured using the following headings:

- ***The Personal Education Plan***
- ***Summary***
- ***Support of Young People in Care***
- ***Summary***

Theme: The Personal Education Plan – Part of the Process of Promoting Educational Attainment

Findings from study 1 suggest that there is variation in the perceived usefulness of the Personal Education Plan. The degree of usefulness appeared to be linked to the amount of engagement in terms of dissemination, information giving and practical outcomes.

‘I think it’s a tool, isn’t it? And you can do as much or as little from it, I mean you could do it and tick all the boxes and feel you’ve done your bit, or you can use it as a tool to find out more about that student and actually address what you feel perhaps issues might be or are. So I think it has to be seen as a tool.’

Designated Teacher

The above extract illustrates two key points within the evidence regarding the use of the PEP. Firstly, the PEP was considered to be a potentially useful hub for exchange of information, target setting

and monitoring of a more complex developmental process. The extract also demonstrates the need to consider multiple issues in order to inform practice in the longer term. Effective support for young people entering care therefore needs to be considered on both an individual and systemic level.

When considering the reality for the young people entering care and the professionals supporting them. The context in which they interact needs to be taken into account. Young people in Key stage 4 are taught by a range of different subject teachers. This necessitates a co-ordinated approach to support for young people in care. Evidence from the study suggests that the implementation of PEP's does not address this issue within the practice context of education:

‘When I say meaningful, I’m saying meaningful for the child, it’s definitely not meaningful for us, but actually it doesn’t matter, it’s about making it meaningful for the child and actually... To me again, it feels like it’s something that’s done to them. They’re already different, they’re already, they’re different. And then they have to have this done as well and it should be something positive for them, they should see at the end of it something changes, something improves. You know, their views have been listened to and there are amendments, but I don’t, I don’t see that, because it’s not a joined up thinking process. It’s a, there’s the PEP, fill in your section, can you come to this meeting? And most of the staff can’t go to meetings.’

Designated Teacher

The above excerpt also illustrates concerns expressed by teaching professionals regarding the tension between wanting to support young people entering care and the potentially stigmatising effects of having to attend additional educational meetings. In addition, the extract echoes the concerns expressed within study 1 regarding the degree to which Personal Education Plans are child centred. Given

that the young person spends the majority of their time in school with subject teachers, the value of interaction within lesson time which takes place (in terms of the young person expressing their needs) needs to be acknowledged. Specifically within the wider context of promoting educational attainment, interaction in the classroom has been identified as a valuable resource in the cyclical process of information gathering, target setting and implementation of support for young people entering care.

Johnson (2008) identifies everyday interaction as an important factor in promoting young people's resilience. In addition, research pertaining to the general population of students has shown that teacher pupil relationships play a fundamental role in success at school and wellbeing (Wentzel, 1998, Weare & Gray, 2003) Subject teachers are therefore key adults in the process of eliciting the views and promoting the educational attainment of young people in care (Mc Loughlin and Clarke, 2010).

Summary

When reviewing the findings it is evident that the interrelation between the PEP and ongoing support for the young person needs to be considered both systemically and cyclically to take into account the pupil teacher relationship.

When considering the interface between classroom practice and the Personal Education Plan, evidence suggests that there is little

awareness and use of the PEP at a subject specific level. An example of the discourse which supports this finding is identified below:

‘I think I’ve read a couple, I don’t remember specifically reading about this pupil, but I know they’re available to us aren’t they, on the computer systems. Having the time to read them and analyse them is another matter! It would be useful to read them obviously and yea, we might get an insight into where they’re coming from and where they’re going to, I suppose.’

Core Subject Teacher

There was consistent evidence to suggest that feedback is sought from core subject teachers which may be used for Personal Education Plan purposes. However, findings suggest that the onus for action was held to be within PEP meetings rather than in the classroom:

‘Occasionally they have here those sort of round robin, what are they called? 48 hour reports and things where one pupil, they ask you like tick box questions about them and you can write comments at the end. I can’t remember if I’ve been asked questions about this particular pupil, but that gives you an opportunity and I wonder if that information sometimes is used to contribute, that might be.’

Core Subject Teacher

Systemically, the value of the PEP could therefore be called into question in terms of direct, young person centred support within college settings.

Theme – Support of Young People in Care

At a practice level, meaningful support for the young person was construed as personal knowledge of the young person, based on interaction and the development of relationship within school:

‘I suppose for me, teaching is based on relationships and that’s the most important thing isn’t it, as soon as a student walks into your room, you need to build trust and you need to know where they’re coming from and which buttons to push and which not and that’s, you know, you do it by being with them and getting to know them as best you can, given the time and pressure of all the rest of it.’

Core Subject Teacher

And within the wider family and foster family setting:

‘His personal education plan is almost a case of paying lip service to a PEP because we drew it up as part of the meeting and basically it says that he’s going to do the key stage 4 course and he’s going to aim to go to university and that’s it really. I mean there’s obviously all sorts of other things, the emphasis with W wasn’t so much on education. I know it’s a personal education plan, but it was more to do with how things work at home than actually in school.’

Designated Teacher

Within the context of Key Stage 4 educational settings, the evidence suggests that the Personal Education Plan has utility in terms of target setting and joint working. When reviewing the evidence from core subject teachers, it is evident that meeting the social and emotional needs (of young people who have entered care) appears to be a pre-requisite for engaging in learning.

In addition, the relationship orientated approach identified by teachers is reminiscent of behaviours posited to address attachment needs (Geddes, 2007). The findings of this study tentatively support conclusions drawn within Coullings (2000) study which posited parallels between attachment needs and the support of CIC. Social, emotional and psychological (or psychosocial) development was identified as the primary area of need which impacts on the achievement of young people entering care. There is a growing body of evidence which supports the links between social, emotional and academic development (Roeser, Eccles & Stroebe, 2000, Wentzel, 1998, p202, Hattie 2009) which may inform future intervention and research.

Summary

When considering the role of Educational Psychology, the evidence presented within this section identified teacher pupil interaction as a relatively under researched factor which could further promote the academic attainment of young people entering care in Key stage 4. Given the size and organisational complexity of Community Colleges the development and evaluation of systemic approaches to promoting psychosocial and academic attainment has been identified as an area for development. Alternatively, further exploration of college cultures may prove valuable in determining how psychological knowledge of development could be applied to promote good practice. At a Service delivery level, greater awareness and reflection upon current understanding of the psychosocial components of learning may be a salient point for beginning or developing joint work with schools. Further consideration of the implications for EP involvement in developing pastoral systems is given in the conclusion section.

Research Question 2: What awareness is there of the potential additional needs for young people entering care in terms of classroom practice and interaction?

Identified Needs of young people entering care

Needs of young people entering care were identified as part of a reactive response to difficulties in the classroom. The needs identified within the corpus of data have been conceptualised within the following 2nd tier themes:

- Control
- Perceived Risk
- Change

An illustration of the dimensions of each of the 2nd themes is given below (see Appendix C, p 241 for a diagram of 2nd and 3rd tier themes). The section then discusses the findings for research Question 1 in the Section 'Psychological Reflections and Discussion', including consideration of the implications of teachers discourse (entitled 'Explanation of need as 'within Child' factors') and concludes with a brief summary.

Control

Difficulty with transition and change:

'They had a student teacher, no a supply teacher took him within a month, we had to take him out, tried various

things, and then he came into my class. Plan was that he would go back into C's when she returned, he went back for twenty minutes and got sent back to me, and he was happy to go back.'

Core Subject Teacher

Perceived Risk

Social identity and interaction

'She sort of takes herself away and will sit alone most of the time, she did have somebody she sat with and got on with quite well, she buddied up with somebody, but now that girl's left.'

Core Subject Teacher

Response to challenge (learning),

'There have been problems recently, whether it's the pressure of exams, I think he's pushing himself quite hard, because he wants to go to university ultimately and he did want to be a vet at one point, I don't know if he still does. But yes, there has been a down turn of late. Up until then I would have said he was a smashing lad.'

Core Subject Teacher

Independent learning skills,

'I mean the girl in year 11 at the moment, it's fine, because I'm teaching her in a small class and she asks for help a lot just reassurance, although she knows the answer, she wants that attention on her and she gets a bit kind of agitated if she doesn't get it straight away.'

Change

Management of emotions,

‘I spent five minutes today just trying to ask him to come and sit at the front of the classroom so we could show the class practical. I don’t think he’s necessarily, it’s kind of he’s year eleven and his level response to sort of my request is always massively out of sort of kilter with sort of what was necessary, if that makes sense.’

Core Subject Teacher

Response to challenge (classroom management),

‘I think there’s sort of the challenge in the sense that if you ask him to do something that he doesn’t want to do, and then he turns around you know the way he just sort of refuses, digs himself deeper and deeper and then just loses the plot and runs away from it, I think that’s got something to do with the situation as opposed to just him. But to what extent, I don’t know.’

Core Subject Teacher

Psychological Reflections and Discussion

The evidence within this study suggests that identification of additional needs of the young person were made on an individual basis by teachers. The needs identified by teachers, however, followed consistent themes across the focus group of core teachers.

Specifically change, perceived risk and the need for control were recurring themes for all 3 young people across settings:

‘He needs to have control over some things but it isn’t, he’s probably had a fairly, he’s been chucked from here there and everywhere and one thing he’s got control of is how he behaves and what he does in school.’

Core Subject Teacher

The successive changes experienced by young people entering care were identified in study 1. Increased or prolonged exposure to multiple risk factors has been shown to reduce children’s capacity to demonstrate resilience (Fergusson & Linskey, 1996, Garmezy & Masten, 1994). It is evident that the young people taught by the professionals interviewed found situations with a higher degree of risk more difficult to deal with. Perceived risk or challenge resulted in classroom conflict or isolation. Additional conflict within the life of a young person also reduces their capacity to be resilient due to the impact on key relationships (Werner, 1982, Beardslea, Hoke, Wheelock, Rothberg, Van & Swatling, 1987).

The young person’s response to challenge is important point for two reasons. Firstly, the notion of responding highlights the skills to respond, communicate and negotiate as a hitherto unidentified area for development for the young person. The notion of language informing the development of thinking is not a new one.

‘Every function in the child’s cultural development appears twice: first, on the social level, and later, on the individual level; first, between people (interpsychological) and then inside the child (intrapsychological).’

Enabling young people to develop the skills necessary to mediate risk or change within interaction may not only reduce conflict but also provide valuable opportunities to self manage risk during learning through the explicit acquisition of new strategies.

Challenge should also be considered within the wider educational context. The notion of extending students' learning experiences and providing challenge is integral to policy dictates regarding good teaching practice. The Ofsted criteria for outstanding practice identify challenge as a consistent component of classroom practice. However, the evidence from study 1 suggests that the changes experienced by young people entering care may affect their capacity to be resilient. The resulting interaction of these two factors may be implicitly disadvantaging young people entering care (and those who have not had the benefit of a stable environment and family life). Given, the wealth of legislation and rhetoric within education regarding inclusive practice, this places a duty on educationalists to have a greater understanding of the skills necessary to promote resilient response for young people in care. Further work is needed to develop practice which takes account of young people's experience (psychosocial and academic) and builds on their capacity to manage change and challenge. Failure to recognise the additional needs of young people in care may result in the continuance of integration rather than inclusive education.

Explanation of need as 'within Child' factors

Current understanding of young people in care contrasts to the notion of skill acquisition and developmental adaptation. Across all 3 settings, the evidence suggests that these needs were conceptualised by teachers as within child factors or part of their personality:

‘It would be interesting actually, because obviously we’re looking at the transition again of young people in key stage 4, to see how other students who are in care, how they’re coping with this transition in care, because I think M is a fairly unique individual, I’m not sure how much of that is him, or his situation, if you see what I mean, how much of that has been triggered by his situation or what he would be like if he wasn’t in care.’

Core Subject Teacher

‘In maths he’s in the top set but he won’t achieve anything like, because since I’ve come back, he’s been somewhat sort of dislocated from learning, but as you say, it’s difficult to discern that compared to other year 11 boys who lost the will to live in year 10. But, so he won’t get the grade that he’s capable of.’

Core Subject Teacher

‘Her sort of attitude to learning, she gives up very easily and if she can’t do it, pen’s down, stroppy, and that’s it. Now you can kind of coerce her into getting back into it sometimes, but sometimes that’s it. And actually that’s the same with the other one student who is in foster care in the same group.’

Core Subject Teacher

‘She just isolates herself really from the rest of them and in a way I think looks down on them. That’s the impression I get from the pupils in the class, she kind of, is a bit kind of, well I’m a bit too good for you, sort of thing, or a bit cleverer than you guys, you know, I shouldn’t really be here.’

‘Do you think it’s that or do you think maybe it’s like she’s had to grow up a bit faster than the rest of them, maybe?’

‘Might well be, yea, yea, she thinks of herself as being more mature certainly.’

Core Subject Teachers

The above exchange between teachers was included as an illustration for two reasons. Firstly, the extract demonstrates the potential for social isolation for young people in care, due perhaps to their differing social experience. The second reason pertains to capturing the reflective dynamic which took place within the focus groups as a result of teachers sharing their experiences. The opportunity to collate and collaboratively reflect upon individual staff experiences with a view to better identification of psychosocial needs was proposed as an area for development:

‘I don’t even know any details, other than she’s in care and she must have had a rough ride. It’s funny isn’t it? And actually what’s really funny is the opportunity to sit down and talk about it, for half an hour and in real depth, in-depth like, analysing how you deal with her and what you do differently.’

Core Subject Teacher

‘Help us get there a lot quicker, rather than all of us trying to work it out.’

Core Subject Teacher

Summary

Given the opportunity to reflect, it is evident that subject teachers are able to move away from a within child understanding of the behaviour

of young people in care. The challenge for educational psychologists at this time will be to develop models for practice which take account of the student teacher interaction, the developmental experience of the young person and the context and culture of the educational setting.

The proposed 'Developmental Pathways' may have potential utility in terms of identification of individuals' 11 needs and promoting a greater developmentally informed understanding of the young person, creating a shared basis for understanding (Golding et al, 2008, Coulling 2000) to inform the process of supporting educational attainment. The utility of developing and piloting the Developmental Pathways approach at a more systemic multiagency level is briefly discussed.

The Developmental Pathway approach postulated by Waddington (1957) offers a framework for reflecting upon the unique experiences that have preceded a child entering care. The benefits of using a Developmental Pathways approach include a deeper understanding of the factors which have contributed to the young person's strengths and needs and viewing the young person's behaviour as an adaptive result of their experience (therefore moving away from a deficit model of understanding any additional needs). In addition, if used to inform integrated working within Personal Education Plan meetings, the Developmental Pathways approach could provide a shared basis for understanding children entering care which moves beyond the individual remit and knowledge of the separate professionals involved – resulting in a greater depth of knowledge and providing a framework for dissemination of psychologically based information and implementation of support within college settings.

Supporting practice at the current time for young people in care is discussed next.

Research Question 3: How are additional needs addressed?

The following findings have been structured under the following headings to aid clarity:

- Resilience based strategies
- Discussion and Reflection on Psychological Literature
- Tensions
- Conclusions

When considering the additional needs of young people entering care in Key stage 4, it is important to note that all 3 young people were perceived as motivated but underachieving:

‘Getting moved about a lot must be very disruptive. I’ve had a girl who’s come into year 11 and she’s predicted an A or something, and you know, she’ll be lucky, hopefully she’s going to get a C, and she’s quite well motivated, but she’s missed a lot of school and some of the stuff I’m teaching, she’s already done. It’s very sort of convoluted.’

Core Subject Teacher

The motivation and active participation of young people in care is important to note. In order to move away from a deficit driven model of intervention, it is essential to consider young people in care as active agents within their educational process. Evidence regarding the support provided by teachers taking part in the study are now considered.

Resilience Based Strategies

The strategies employed by Core Subject teachers were diverse in nature and arose from response to individual students. However, upon analysis, the themes which arose within the analysis confirmed previous psychological literature (Yates, Egeland and Sroufe, 2003, p252). Strategies employed by teaching staff include:

Establishing and maintaining connectedness

‘From the lessons themselves, eye contact right from the start with him, really works well’

Core Subject Teacher

‘I think when you know a student is in care, you definitely do, I personally do, take a little bit more time and effort with them. Because you can’t, like the other students can bounce back from rejection can’t they? If you like, you know, just to wait your turn, but you know that that will, might be harsh enough to actually hurt them enough to not trust you again and not want to come to you for help again, do you know what I mean? You’re aware of all those dynamics.’

Core Subject Teacher

Mediating learning risk

‘I think you can’t help but give them that little bit extra, which will have an impact I suppose. But I often give a choice of tasks as well, you know, I don’t think it’s necessarily only children in care but, with that particular pupil, giving her choice of tasks I think that she feels more comfortable with, sort of diffuses her a little bit.’

Core Subject Teacher

'She was doing a speaking and listening in the corridor and she kept nervously laughing and obviously one of the things you get graded on is staying in role, and we were doing it out of the classroom, to take the pressure off, but she got to the point where she would start, she would do really, really well and then she would lose it a little bit, and then just let it all collapse. Because it was that thing of failing and you know. And so I just looked her in the eyes and I said, S, you know what your biggest problem is right now? You make a tiny mistake and you just let that fail you, you know, you need to keep going, you need to believe in yourself. And I feel like every opportunity I can, I try and give her a life lesson.'

Core Subject Teacher

Validating identity

'Probably not, but what I mean is, you know that kind of thing where you're not talking to him like a kid, but you're talking to him, if he's got a fuss over something, you say, ok, I must get that sorted out, and move on from that. But that's not a very good example. Listening to his opinion and valuing it, I suppose really, that's it, isn't it? Something like that? And it's not like being his pal, or anything like, but it's like you would do with anyone else, you know, it's not a problem.'

Core Subject Teacher

Developing reasoned choice/ co-operation

'If I need them to come forward to observe something, I will say, will you all come forward to observe something, and if somebody sat back, and didn't sort of like come forward, I would get onto them about it, with her, I will speak to her in a very different way, and say, are you going to be able to see from there?'

Core Subject Teacher

Discussion and Reflection on Psychological Literature

When reviewed thematically, these strategies support previous psychological literature on resilience within education (Yates, Egeland and Sroufe, 2003, p252). The findings of this study suggest that the positive practice of teachers working with young people in care includes scaffolding the establishment of belonging and relationship, mediating perceived learning risk, mediating perceived risk to identity or autonomy and scaffolding negotiation/problem solving skills (Yates, Egeland and Sroufe, 2003, p252). Specifically, the interventions identified, which arose out of presenting need, appear to support a psychosocial development rather than attainment hypothesis. Moreover, the frequent occurrence of resilience based strategies supports the validity of using or building upon a resilience based approach to supporting young people in care.

The responsiveness of teaching staff to individual students is evident; however, the degree of individual response given to young people in care was also a source of tension. A discussion of the evidence of the dilemma between responding to student need and perceived good practice follows.

Tensions

Teachers reflected upon their practice with young people in care in comparison to their practice with other members of the young person's class. The level of differentiation needed to ensure ongoing inclusion in classroom activities was seen to be highly individual:

'I don't want to be singling someone out, so sometimes the knowledge helps you, so that you don't put your foot in it as it were, and it's always like that with pupils with particular behavioural problems, that you can't use, whatever people say, you can't use one rule for all, can you?'

Core Subject Teacher

However, there was a consistent theme of uncertainty regarding the level and type of differentiation perceived to be needed for young people in care and College cultures and protocols regarding good behavioural management:

'It makes me feel better that you actually treat her differently as well, because I've always been like worried, oh god, maybe I'm a bit too slack with her.'

Core Subject Teacher

It is important to acknowledge that differences between the individual needs of young people in care and school practices resulted in dilemmas for teaching staff. The reactive approach to the identification of the needs of young people in care was felt to reflect a wider systemic issue:

'Sort of looking back at it, I'm a bit worried about the fact that because of limited resources within schools, there's been a lot of crisis management, in the sense that the kids get sent out, get into trouble, this is dealt with, he's excluded for this and the other, but you don't get any real sense there's been the time or the resources to actually build a positive structure.'

Core Subject Teacher

A more positive, proactive, systemic approach to promoting psychosocial development was identified as a possible solution to

tensions experienced by both young people in care and the teachers supporting them.

'I think it would be nice if there was more communication from sort of agencies working with him and sort of give us that picture of where he is, actually if it was just there on a piece of paper that I could spend just two minutes just glance through, I think that would be really, sort of things like that, which I don't think there is, is there?'

Core Subject Teacher

Conclusions

Evidence from this study suggests that the underachievement of young people in care arises due to the need for greater understanding of ways to promote psychosocial development and resilience. There is a growing body of evidence that links psychosocial adaptation to attainment (Murray-Harvey, 2010). Specifically, when considering the healthy development and attainment of those in care, models of practice which proactively promote young people's sense of autonomy, control, support and perception of competence may be of benefit (Roeser et al, 1998). Account also needs to be taken of school cultures and protocols.

Research suggests that underachievement of psychosocially vulnerable groups can be indicative of deficiencies at the community and school level (Zullig, Koepman & Huber, 2009). There is a growing body of evidence evaluating whole school approaches to psychosocial development which may be of benefit to all young people, especially those in care (Murray-Harvey, 2010, Tew 2010, Bird & Sultman, 2010 to name a few).

Developmental Pathways Approach Considered

When considering the support of young people entering care within the context of school pastoral systems it appears that further consideration is needed regarding the additional that CIC may present. It is evident that a framework for practice which acknowledges the agency of the young person, identifies key experiences which have shaped their psychosocial development and provides a framework for building on their strengths is needed. In addition, accessibility and relevance in terms of identifying skills and strategies which can be used by the young person and his or her teachers will aid joint working with this group of young people who

have experienced such profound change. Using a developmental pathway approach may have increasing merit in terms of conceptualising the experience of young people identified as vulnerable. Developmental Process models of resilience may have much to offer this process in terms collation of evidence base, operationalisation of key concepts such as protective and risk factors and competence (Yates et al, 2003).

Where young people remain in their communities and schools, there is already a wealth of knowledge and relationship which can contribute to effective identification of need within Personal Education Plan Meetings. When young people experience successive changes, however, priority must be given to collating and reflecting upon any available information, particularly the voice of the young person (Harker, Dobel-Ober, Berridge & Sinclair, 2003). Focusing on and working with the young person's perceptions and views is essential to promoting their sense of competence and resilience (Harker, 2003). In addition it is also important to remember that the young person is the only true 'constant' within the process of transition and their potential and skills should therefore be regarded as fundamental to the decision making process (Thomas and O' Kane, 2000) and effecting positive change.

Additional research and understanding is needed to acknowledge the unique experiences of young people entering care. Specifically, the notions of change and the successful management of, rather than avoidance of risk (Rutter, 1994) need to be explored in order to promote young people's skill set in managing change, relating to others and maintaining a healthy sense of self.

When considering educational contexts however, it is important to conceptualise the application of psychological intervention within the legislative and pedagogical frame of reference. Directions for future study could include a school based action plan or Developmental

Pathway Dialogue document to identify the skills that young people have in managing their environment. Developing an approach such as this may have several benefits. These include; the potential to provide a baseline for effective co-working between young people and their teachers, raising teachers awareness of the needs of young people in care and of the strategies which the young person considers effective.

Reframing Behaviour of CIC

Behaviours which were previously construed as bad or part of the young person's personality could be reframed in terms of their adaptive value, for example:

‘Yet his only escape mechanism is to carry on refusing and then just explode or do a runner, whatever he does’

Core Subject Teacher

Recognising the self management strategy of a young person removing themselves from a situation which is challenging provides the basis for shared action planning with him or her. The focus then moves from behaviour to the skills that the young person possesses. As a development, further skills needed could be identified with the young person with a view to increasing their sense of agency, self awareness and competence. A picture of the young person's strategies with psychologically based guidance regarding mediation strategies could then be disseminated to teachers, aiding clarity of working across professionals. The production of a document based on a developmental dialogue for teachers also provides an opportunity for practice based feedback, increasing the reflective and systemic value of the support.

A great deal of further work would be needed to build upon the collated work of Slater (2007), Waddington (1957), Yates et al(2003),

Bomber (2007), Geddes (2007) and Golding (2007), however, this presents both a challenge and an opportunity.

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Appendices

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APPENDIX A

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING

An Exploration of the Transition into Care for Young People in Key Stage 4.

The present study has been designed to provide an illuminative account of the transition into care for Key Stage 4 learners.

Due to changes in the structure of the Doctorate in Educational Psychology, The thesis component has been replaced by the opportunity to conduct research. Specifically, the research should provide an original contribution to both the discipline of psychology and also in terms of service delivery.

Stage 1 of the study examines the transition into care from both care and educational perspectives. Whilst there has been a wealth of legislation informing the need to improve standards for CIC, there is relatively little research to provide an evidence base for practice. Having reviewed the current literature from social work, education, foster care and psychological journals, I have decided to use an exploratory approach to research for the initial part of Stage 1 of the study. I wish to 'capture' some of the real issues for the adults working to facilitate transition into care. For ethical reasons I have chosen not to attempt to interview the young people involved. Furthermore, I hope to gain an insight into the dynamics of home - school liaison which has historically been considered as a potential point of 'break down' for facilitating the wellbeing of children and young people in care.

My hopes for Stage 1 of this study are several fold:

- As stated previously, to begin to evidence the reality of transition into care within the current legislative context.

- To gain insight from a variety of perspectives (including foster-carers, designated teachers, social workers and educational psychologists).
- To analyse data from the above sources to identify facilitating factors and barriers to successful home and school placement, therefore acknowledging the importance of both social care and education's contributions to promoting the potential of CIC.
- To explore the use of resilience with a view to the potential contribution of Educational Psychologists

Stage 2 of the study focuses on the dissemination of Personal Education Plans within educational settings. In terms of your College's involvement, this would involve:

- An interview with the designated teacher.
- The use of a short questionnaire for staff teaching young learners in care.
- A 30 minute focus group for core subject teachers.

The study, when complete (in 2010) could provide a valuable basis for the development of practice regarding the transition into care in terms of multiagency working. Your contribution would therefore be valued.



SCHOOL OF
EDUCATION AND

LIFELONG LEARNING

CONSENT FORM

An Exploration of the Transition into Care for Young People in Key Stage 4

I have been fully informed about the aims and purposes of the project.
I understand that:

There is no compulsion for me to participate in this research project and, if I do choose to participate, I may at any stage withdraw my participation

I have the right to refuse permission for the publication of any information about me

Any information which I give will be used solely for the purposes of this research project, which may include publications

All information I give will be treated as confidential

The researcher will make every effort to preserve my anonymity

.....

.....

(Signature of participant)

(Date)

.....
(Printed name of participant)

One copy of this form will be kept by the participant; a second copy will be kept by the researcher(s)

If you have any concerns about the project that you would like to discuss, please contact:

Maryanne Woodland
Trainee Educational Psychologist
St Johns Lane,
Barnstaple,
EX32 9DD
Tel: 01271 388711
Fax: 01271 388709

Interview Schedule Designated Teachers

1. What is your understanding of the PEP?
2. How is the PEP disseminated in your setting?
3. How are the needs of young people in care addressed?
4. Is there anything else that you would like to mention?

Pilot Focus Group Schedule for Core Subject Teachers

1. How is the PEP disseminated in your setting?
2. This study is exploring the provision for young people who enter care in Key Stage 4. Recent educational reforms (Every Child Matters) have provided a framework for considering a holistic view of children and young people with education. To shape our discussion, I have used the ECM aims as a basis for considering classroom practice. In the next section, I would like to explore the ways in which you meet the Every Child Matters within your classroom and school practice (this may include examples of interactions/discussion with students and staff).
3. Be healthy
4. Stay safe
5. Enjoy and achieve
6. Make a positive contribution
7. Achieve economic well-being

The next section focuses on your practice with young people entering care.

8. Are you aware of any additional needs that young people entering care may have?
9. If so, please give a brief description of what they might be.
10. Are you able to or how do you meet those needs within your practice?
11. Do you know what a Personal Education Plan (PEP) is?
12. If so, please give a brief description of the purpose of a PEP.
13. Have you been involved in contributing to or implementing the actions from a PEP?
14. If so, please give a brief description of your involvement.
15. Is there anything that you feel could be improved with the support of young people entering care?

3I Core subject teacher Focus Group Schedule

1. What is your experience of working with young people in Key Stage 4 who are in care?

Prompts

- Use of summarising/ reflecting back.
- Asking teachers to expand on what they have said.

2. What experience have you had of the Personal Education Plan?

Prompts

- Use of summarising/ reflecting back.
- Asking teachers to expand on what they have said.
- Have you used the Personal Education Plan?
- Have you contributed to the Personal Education Plan?

3. Is there anything else that you would like to tell me or discuss?

APPENDIX B

Speaker The children that I have in care tend to under achieve partly because they get moved around quite a lot from foster care, don't they, they get moved around quite a lot and also because quite often their home-lives then are a little bit, even when they've got good foster carers, can be a little bit erratic because they have other people coming in and out of that home quite a lot and they don't necessarily get on with the people that come in and you know, one girl that I've had in care, she just hated her foster sister and in the end I think one of them was removed because of that. They just didn't get on and obviously some of the kids that go into foster care even if the child that you're teaching is actually reasonably stable, if they then have a foster sister or foster brother who go in, which you know, have got real big issues, then that's going to have an impact on them just like it does with all brothers and sisters I suppose. But getting moved about a lot must be very disruptive. I've had a girl who's come into year 11 and she's predicted an A or something, and you know, she'll be lucky, hopefully she's going to get a C, and she's quite well motivated, but she's missed a lot of school and some of the stuff I'm teaching, she's already done. It's very sort of convoluted.

Speaker I would say the biggest problem with the student I teach is she's really motivated, she really tries so hard but there's just a huge gap in her education that she's trying to fill in the space of a few months. Just really basic stuff like spelling, her spelling is clearly way behind the rest of the group.

Int So is that due to a change in school or is that because of other historical factors, do you know?

Speaker I don't know her history, I don't know where she's been and unfortunately we just don't have time to have one to one chats, but I just know she's missed a lot of school and that's very evident when you look at her work.

Int Ok

Speaker Some of them tend to be, the experiences of ones I've had in the past, very needy, they want a lot of attention. They usually, I mean the girl in year 11 at the moment, it's fine, because I'm teaching her in a small class and she asks for help a lot just reassurance, although she knows the answer, she wants that attention on her and she gets a bit kind of agitated if she doesn't get it straight away. And then the younger ones again, you see that, and they'll just ask you a million questions or they want to be your best friend or sometimes they'll want inappropriate sort of like physical contact with you, because they're just very, very needy and just want that attention and love, I suppose, isn't it? Reassurance that everything is ok

Speaker Yea, I notice that a lot, yea, she often just sits there with her hand up for ages, I mean just waiting, even though I've given her more one to one and individual attention in the classroom than any other student, she still really, and it's based on insecurity, she really just wants me to say yes, you're doing the right thing, all the time. And also, she tries so hard, bless her, she really does want to do well, but when she gives me a piece of work, within a few days she's, miss have you looked at my work? Miss, have you marked my work? And I try and explain to her, you know, I've obviously got loads of students, loads of work to mark, loads of classes and you know, and that she can trust me and I'm not going to let her down, but I'm not going to be able to at the same time, mark it instantly, because she needs to know.

Speaker They do have an impact on the other pupils in the room, don't they? Because you do quite often spend a lot more time with, well the couple of pupils I've had recently, than the rest of the class, 'cos they're just demanding that attention. In some ways you feel you ought to give them that extra attention. And then actually I've had a child in care who you wouldn't know, you wouldn't know she was in care. She doesn't make a big deal of it. She does above and beyond what she should do and you know, it's not every single child in care that you have these issues with, but the majority.

Speaker Is there anything we need to touch on or?

Int No, that's really interesting. I mean in terms of, so thinking about your kind of classroom practice, you touched on the fact that this particular person might be quite needy and want you close, how have you dealt with that over time? Has it changed over time, has it not changed?

Speaker It seems to have relaxed, to begin with she seemed very, she was constantly up at my desk asking me to look at her work. I've personally given her loads of input, loads of encouragement, loads of you know, I've said to her several times, you know, what you really need to overcome is believing in yourself. And she's beginning I feel she's beginning to do that. I feel she's beginning to become more independent, but.

Speaker I had the same experience, I'm just very mindful now, that I need to be aware that she wants my attention and as soon as she wants my attention, I try and get there, which is probably the wrong thing to do, but with the small class I've got, it's the easiest thing to do because then it avoids her getting agitated, so I've probably, through responding to her more quickly, enabled things to rumble smoothly and perhaps I don't need to give her as much time because I respond more quickly. I don't know

- Speaker Perhaps yea, it's so difficult because you get sort of dragged into it, you want to sort of like take them home in a way and look after them yourself, don't you?
- Speaker I was just thinking, I was just looking at you, thinking we've both recently had babies haven't we? So it is very, there are a lot of similarities where you get that motherhood tug, but at the same time you feel you need to, for their own sake
- Speaker Detach yourself
- Speaker Yea
- Speaker For your sake
- Speaker Yea
- Speaker Because if you think about it too much, it's just horrible, I think
- Speaker Yea
- Speaker I had a little girl who doesn't come to this school anymore, but in year 7 in my tutor group and just, she was so far behind socially than the rest of them. She just was like a primary school child, a young primary school child in terms of how she'd speak to you and she wanted you to be her mum, you know what I mean, that's the way in which she treated you. She wanted your approval all the time, and the amount of time you had to spend, you know, just in tutor time, so not even teaching, you know, just sort of like, she'd come up to you and chat to you and harass you all the time. Very sweet girl but it took up a lot of your time. I'd hate to have taught her.
- Speaker I think for me, talking personally, that was one of the hardest things in learning to be a good teacher, was when I first started teaching, I felt like I was personally letting each individual down if I wasn't reading all their work and listening to all their questions and you know
- Speaker Catering to all of their needs all of the time
- Speaker Yea
- Speaker You have to accept your own limitations don't you?
- Speaker Definitely, yea, but I think when you know a student is in care, you definitely do, I personally do, take a little bit more time and effort with them. Because you can't, like the other students can bounce back from rejection can't they? If you like, you know, just to wait your turn, but you know that that will, might be harsh enough to actually hurt them enough to not trust you again and not want to come to you for help again, do you know what I mean? You're aware of all those dynamics.

Speaker Yea, I think you can't help but give them that little bit extra, which will have an impact I suppose. But I often give a choice of tasks as well, you know, I don't think it's necessarily children in care but, with that particular pupil, giving her choice of tasks I think that she feels more comfortable with, sort of diffuses her a little bit

Int Maybe gives her a sense of control

Speaker Yea, perhaps, she quite likes that

Speaker I've noticed as well that she also, she did very well in her first piece of course-work because I gave her loads of extra support because she was new to my class and all the rest of it, like we were just saying, and I think I've subconsciously gradually withdrawn that over the last couple of terms. And inevitably she's, I mean the four pieces of work she's done, she's actually done very well, she's averaged a C, but when you look at the individual pieces, it goes sort of B minus to a C minus to, you know, so there's a bit of variation there. But because she started with a B minus, she seemed to be quite, she beat herself up quite a lot when she didn't get the B the second time and I think she's got a real sense of like, I don't know how to put it really, but like success and failure and

Int Black and white

Speaker Yea, but also, if she doesn't, she sets herself a high goal which is high considering you know, she is behind anyway, and if she doesn't meet it, then she clearly appears very disappointed with herself and like she's failed when she hasn't failed at all.

Speaker Hard on herself

Speaker Exactly, I'm going the long way around saying something that you've just said in three words, but yea.

Speaker That's why I'm a science teacher

Speaker I'm an English teacher!

Int So what, I mean is there anything that you feel would help somebody like her?

Speaker Knowing the background would help

Speaker Definitely

Speaker If it can be avoided then moving schools around it just isn't good

Speaker No

Speaker But that's circumstances isn't it, as well, but if change of schools can be avoided, you know, I think that's important. That little year 7 girl I was talking about, she was travelling miles and miles to get to school every day 'cos she'd be moving from one foster carer to another, but actually I think that was better, because at least she had consistency at school, you know, even if home was manic, I think it's quite nice for them to have that stability of school, even if everything else is going a bit pear-shaped.

Speaker 'Cos otherwise it's constantly rebuilding relationships in every aspect of your life, isn't it? I think as well, thinking specifically about this student that I teach, she could have really benefitted with some extra support, extra catch-up

Speaker One on one sort of stuff, yea definitely

Speaker Real basic stuff, she would have got it just like that, because she had the motivation, she had the ability, she just hadn't had the input. But by this stage obviously, it's not in my remit

Speaker She would appreciate that one on one, you know, having time with somebody as well, wouldn't she? You know, just the human contact one to one, I think she would really appreciate having that time to talk to somebody even if you didn't do a huge amount of work I think she'd really like that.

Speaker Yea, definitely

Speaker Having somebody to chat to that she got on with, you know, it'd have to be the right person, but it would be good

Int Can I ask, how does she get on with her peers, within class?

Speaker She sort of takes herself away and will sit alone most of the time, she did have somebody she sat with and got on with quite well, she buddied up with somebody, but now that girl's left, she just isolates herself really from the rest of them and in a way I think looks down on them. That's the impression I get from the pupils in the class, she kind of, is a bit kind of, well I'm a bit too good for you, sort of thing, or a bit cleverer than you guys, you know, I shouldn't really be here.

Speaker Do you think it's that or do you think maybe it's like she's had to grow up a bit faster than the rest of them, maybe?

Speaker Might well be, yea, yea, she thinks of herself as being more mature certainly

Speaker Yea, I would say that, yea

Speaker Perhaps I'm being a bit harsh

Speaker I saw her walking that way out of school one day and I basically said, you know, you shouldn't really be coming this way and she was like, oh Mrs So and so said I could, because. And I was like, why? And I asked her about it and she was quite scared about another girl who'd been, yea there was some conflict with other girls. I was definitely aware of an in-group and out-group and all the rest of it at one point. But she's always been, maintained a consistent friendship with Amy in my class.

Speaker She tends to want to have just one person to be pally with

Speaker Yea

Int Would you hazard a guess as to why?

Speaker I suppose security really, a one to one buddy

Speaker I don't think she'd enjoy being part of a larger group, you know a group of five people I think would just be just, there'd be too many issues going on, especially with girls for her to want to have to cope with

Speaker Yea, and probably as well, going back to that maturity thing, there's probably only a certain type of person that she could relate to, I think. I know there've been times when I've, I think it's with her, I've suggested she works on a table with your typical more immature year 11 boy and she's like looked at me with those big eyes like, no miss, no miss, as if to say that

Speaker Please no

Speaker Yea, so, I think, yes, she probably can't stand, I mean if I put myself in her position, I would feel the same. When you've had so much life experience already and then you have to go and sit with some immature naïve little

Speaker It would be quite interesting to put her in my top set year 11, just to see who she buddied up with and how she'd cope. I know you couldn't do that because she's so far behind, but it would be interesting because I think she relates to those kids much better on that sort of level and it'd be interesting to see who she particularly got friendly with, whether it was the more worldly wise ones or whether it was the silly ones, I don't know, interesting, the cool ones.

Speaker Yea I think it's difficult for her

Int Ok, so that's been really interesting. If we think about the personal education plan, have you had any experience or involvement with the personal education plan?

Speaker No, I think I've read a couple, I don't remember specifically reading about this pupil, but I know they're available to us aren't they, on the computer systems. Having the time to read

them and analyse them is another matter! It would be useful to read them obviously and yea, we might get an insight into where they're coming from and where they're going to, I suppose.

Int And are you asked to contribute to them?

Speaker I haven't ever been asked no

Int No, ok

Speaker Occasionally they have here those sort of round robin, what are they called? 48 hour reports and things where one pupil, they ask you like tick box questions about them and you can write comments at the end. I can't remember if I've been asked questions about this particular pupil, but that gives you an opportunity and I wonder if that information sometimes is used to contribute, that might be.

Int Because it sounds as though you've both got really good knowledge of this girl

Speaker Well, I don't know about that

Speaker I suppose for me, teaching is based on relationships and that's the most important thing isn't it, as soon as a student walks into your room, you need to build trust and you need to know where they're coming from and which buttons to push and which not and that's, you know, you do it by being (?) with them and getting to know them as best you can, given the time and pressure of all the rest of it. But, I mean personally, that's why I'm a teacher and that's why I love it, so

Speaker You're part of a community aren't you?

Speaker Yea, but at the very beginning of the year when I first taught this pupil, what's she called? I went over to her, what did I ask her to do? I asked her to do something, I can't remember what it was, it wasn't anything unreasonable, it was just asked her to do something, and she called me a fucking bitch. Completely really it was completely unprovoked and I was talking to her in a normal manner and she obviously had a bad day, something had happened, whatever, and ever since then I've been quite mindful, and I think I took on board then that actually this girl has got a few issues, and I think that then made me think about how I treated her and how I responded to her a little bit more carefully. But I've never had a hint of that since.

Int I mean thinking about, 'cos you talked about close proximity, you said that you'd been mindful about how you treat her, what are the little things, little adaptations you make that you think work well for her?

Speaker Responding quickly when she wants some help

Int Ok

Speaker She will say, this I need some help! Quite curtly like that, and I'll go straight over to her, when normally probably I'd say, wait a second, you know, I might ignore it, because they've been quite curt with me, and then go over a few minutes

Speaker Yea

Speaker I will always respond, I usually go straight over, but if I can't, then I will usually respond, I'm just going to speak to Jo and then I'm going to come over to you. I always will say that now, when normally I wouldn't necessarily do that all the time. I do that because I know she wants my attention and if I don't give it to her then she's going to start getting agitated and that can't be good for her learning.

Speaker I'd agree with that as well, even if, my ideal situation obviously is to read every word and give really good constructive feedback, that's not always possible, sometimes you have to just glance at it and give a quick target on how to improve, so they can keep working, you know. But with S, I would take a step further where I wouldn't with any other student, and I would just give her reassurance and encouragement sometimes, just to keep her going while I'm trying to get to her, do you know what I mean? Like even to the point where I might pretend to look over her shoulder and just run my finger down the page going, yep, yep, yep, brilliant, keep going, you're doing really well. Just so she feels that I'm there and I'm

Speaker She needs it

Speaker Yea, and I would never usually do that with another student, do you know what I mean? I'd either be honest with them and say, look, I haven't got time to read your work, well done, blah, blah, or, I would do it properly.

Speaker But you can feel she needs it

Speaker Yea, exactly

Speaker Just the way she looks at you

Speaker Yea, just to feel her in the classroom don't you? That kind of, miss, where are you? I need you

Speaker Help!

Speaker Yea, and you know, often it is emotional support rather than you know, giving her a target to improve her writing or whatever, it is just that reassurance that she's doing the right thing and that she's making sense

- Speaker I would never now say to her, right S, can you go and sit over there please. You know, if I need her to, because I've got such a small class, if I need them to come forward to observe something, I will say, will you all come forward to observe something, and if somebody sat back, and didn't sort of like come forward, I would get onto them about it, with her, I will speak to her in a very different way, and say, are you going to be able to see from there? And she might well say, yes, in which case I then just do it, whereas normally I would get them to come in. Because it's just, it's just not worth it for her, you know, you just think, oh yea. It's bad though, because you should treat the students the same. I feel guilty sometimes
- Speaker I think that's a sign of a good teacher, 'cos you're adapting to fit the student
- Speaker I suppose, but I do feel guilty that you know, maybe I'm a bit unfair on the others by letting her get away with that.
- Speaker But there's a very good reason for it, isn't there? It's not like you do with that any other student.
- Speaker I want her to feel in control, I think it's about her control, feeling in control and if I say it to her in that way, she feels in control and if she can have that little bit of extra freedom, I suppose, that the others don't have
- Speaker And that matches up with her whole sort of being more grown up, sort of, standoffishness.
- Int 'Cos it must be really difficult you know, that kind of loss of identity from constant change, because you build up rapport and that's a great thing about having friends, 'cos you can bounce off them and they appreciate you for who you are, don't they?*
- Speaker Yea, I have to say, I think every available opportunity, I try and, sounds really cheesy and I don't really know how to put it into words, but I try and give S something to keep her going, do you know what I mean? Like, she was doing a speaking and listening in the corridor and she kept nervously laughing and obviously one of the things you get graded on is staying in role, and we were doing it out of the classroom, to take the pressure off, but she got to the point where she would start, she would do really, really well and then she would lose it a little bit, and then just let it all collapse. Because it was that thing of failing and you know. And so I just looked her in the eyes and I said, S, you know what your biggest problem is right now? You make a tiny mistake and you just let that fail you, you know, you need to keep going, you need to believe in yourself. And I feel like every opportunity I can, I try and give her a life lesson, rather than an English lesson or, you know, whether it's an encouragement or a support or a kind of come on S, I believe in you, you should believe in you, that kind of. But, yea, I kind of

feel like that's what my role is, on top of being a teacher, because of all the change she's had in her life and all the stuff that may have happened to her. You know that cheesy cliché of you know, you'll always remember that one teacher that kind of made a difference, I suppose that's what I'm thinking and if she goes away from here and just remembers one person saying, I believe in you and you can do it, then that's, I try and grab every moment I can to do that. I'm going to get emotional now!

Speaker It's a positive input isn't it so that you know, not everything is shit!

Speaker Exactly yea, yea and you can do it, regardless of what's happened to you, yea. And the ironic thing is, is I don't even know what's happened to her, do you know what I mean? I don't even know any details, other than she's in care and she must have had a rough ride. It's funny isn't it? And actually what's really funny is the opportunity to sit down and talk about it, for half an hour and in real depth, in-depth like, analysing how you deal with her and what you do differently

Speaker It makes me feel better that you actually treat her differently as well, because I've always been like worried, oh god, maybe I'm a bit too slack with her.

Speaker No I think you have to

Speaker The other kids actually don't resent it, I haven't had any resent from the others. To be honest with you, they're so laid back they just won't notice anyway, but you know, it's quite, yes, it's nice to hear. It's not just me!

Int Can I ask why you feel bad?

Speaker Well I just feel I should treat them the same and I should have the same rule for everybody, I'm very much, right, ok, if I'm not going to let you listen to your headphones, then you're not going to listen to your headphones, sort of thing, I can't have one rule for one person and one rule for another. And with her, I'm really breaking that, you know. But since the other kids don't seem to mind too much, it's not so bad. I think maybe they're used to it, I mean maybe other teachers do it as well then, probably, because they. I think it's quite apparent that she's got issues, isn't it? Probably from when you first meet her, just the way she responds to things.

Int And students pick up on these things don't they? They just seem to know stuff.

Speaker Yes, it's amazing actually what they know

Int Is there anything else you want to raise before I turn that off?

Speaker Well is there anything else we haven't touched on?

Speaker We've just kind of had a cosy chat!

Speaker It's been absolutely fantastic

END OF INTERVIEW

APPENDIX C

Figure 2.1 illustrates the most common themes represented within the analysis of transcripts from Core Subject Teacher's data.

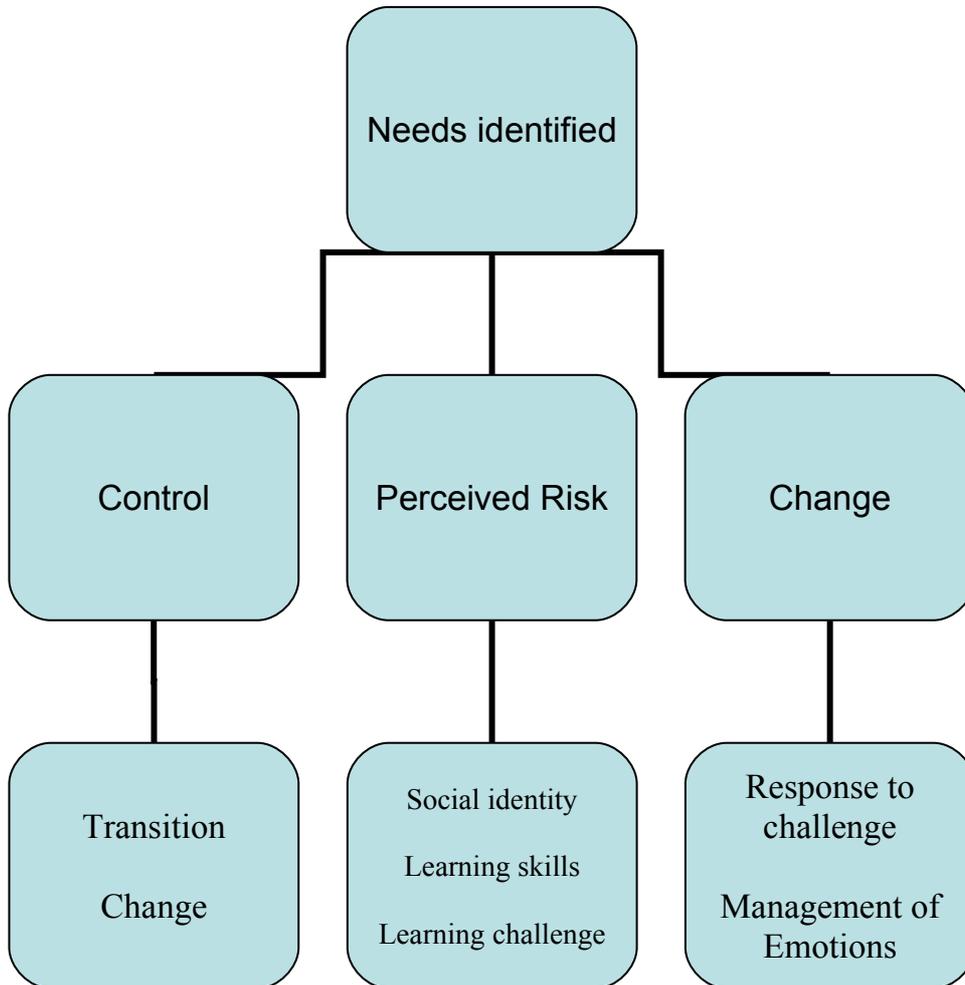


Table 2.3.1 identifies the dimensions of each 2nd tier theme (or 3rd Tier themes) for Designated Teachers' data: 6E

Theme	Third Tier themes/Dimensions of 2 nd Tier themes
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tension between confidentiality guidelines and their effects on teacher practice As pivotal to successful provision for CIC • Negative effects of changes in home/school placement – loss of information
PEP as product or process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The PEP as a 'tick box' exercise • Improving data collection and liaison
Systemic issues within college	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dissemination of actions • School culture (positive factors) • School culture (negative factors) • Developing school practice to incorporate provision for CIC

APPENDIX D

Written informed consent from the participants which include professionals working in schools and the multiagency professionals participating in the Stage 1 of this research will be obtained.

- Consent and confidentiality – consent to use the data was obtained from those with the power of parental consent prior to undertaking the New into Care Project. As a member of the Children in Care Team within the X Local Authority, I therefore have consent to access the data which the New into Care (2008) project generates. Further consent would need to be obtained from the professional participants prior to undertaking the study through the use of a brief prior to commencement which explicitly states the aims of the study. Furthermore, participants would be asked to sign a consent form and informed of their right to withdraw prior to and on completion of their involvement .
- Data from specific professional groups would be coded but otherwise anonymised in order to maintain continuity of analysis. This is in keeping with the British Psychological Society Code of Ethics and Conduct (2006) that requires respect, integrity, competence and responsibility from psychologists at all times in their research and wider work.
- Data would be destroyed on completion of the research project.
- As stated previously, no attempt would be made to gain any data from the young people themselves due to the fact that they are already a potentially vulnerable group and the researcher does not wish to cause distress. Should the school in stage 2 require feedback, access would only be given to the findings within the report, which will be completely anonymised.

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only**

DEdPsych 2007-2010

University of Exeter

Student Number: 570026365

R4 - LITERATURE REVIEW

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R4 Literature Review

Topic: Promoting the educational attainment and wellbeing of children during the transition into care: an evaluation of the meaningfulness of the Personal Education Plan with a view to the input of Educational Psychologists.

Introduction

Historically, there is a wealth of literature documenting the underachievement of Children in Care. These include: The care matters change for children DfES (2005), Care matters. Transforming the lives of CIC DfES (2006). Statistics for Children Looked After (including adopted and care leavers). DCSF. (2009), Jackson & Mc Parlin, (2006) to name a few. When a child or young person enters care, the change that occurs for that young person is profound and complex, affecting the physical, emotional and psychological aspects of their lives. Entering care also includes the involvement of a range of professionals and agencies and therefore necessitates multiagency working. Whilst there is a growing body of evidence within educational, social care and child psychology literature, the impact that educational psychologists can have on this process is relatively under explored. Given the professional knowledge and positioning of Educational Psychology Teams within Child Services, I would therefore suggest that considering the way in which educational psychologists can promote the educational achievement of Children in Care merits attention. Initially, this literature review will clarify the purpose of the intended area of study by :

- I. Considering the social and political legislation which currently shapes provision for children and young people entering care.

4H 1. This review uses the term 'children in care' (or CIC) on the same basis as the Care Matters: Time for Change (DFES, 2007) white paper, which includes:

- Those subject to care orders under Section 31 of the Children's Act 1989
- Those looked after on a voluntary basis in agreement with their parents under section 20 of the Children's Act 1989

- II. Considering of statistical evidence pertaining to Children in Care (this is the terminology currently used within X and will now be referred to as CIC¹).
- III. Define the area to be researched.
- IV.

The review will then provide a **rationale** for the proposed study, which will include:

- I. The identification of key pieces of legislation which relate to the proposed research.
- II. A discussion of the implications of the legislation for professional practice.
- III. Identify and give a rationale for the epistemological stance adopted for the research.
- IV. Give a brief identification of the key areas of psychological theory which informs the approach taken within the study.

The last section of the literature review, entitled 'Contribution to knowledge', will consider the wider context of research which pertains to the intended study. It will draw upon research from psychology and other disciplines pertaining to the transition into care. The review has been structured to reflect the illuminative nature of the proposed research. The literature search was conducted using EBSCO, ERiC, government websites (DCSF, 2003 to date), Psychinfo and Research in Practice search engines. The search terms used included looked after children, children in care, corporate parenting, children in care and multiagency, children in care and education, transitions and finally interventions and children in care. Due to the nature of the topic, the literature was sourced from a wide variety of disciplines. These included adoption and fostering, clinical psychology, educational psychology, health and social care and social care which reflects the complex and multidimensional nature of the topic under review.

Purpose

I. CIC - the social and political context and legislation

The education system has undergone major reform in recent years, papers such as the Every Child Matters (DfES, 2003) and The Children's Plan (DCSF, 2007) have instigated a re-evaluation of the process and context of the education. Underpinning these reforms is the assumption that educational achievement leads to economic wellbeing and contribution to society – a philosophy which has roots in capital gains theory. Although capital gains theory and the effects of the implementation of the Every Child Matters Agenda (DfES, 2003) have been called into question (Stern, 2007, or Raffo, Dyson, Gunter, Hall, Jones and Kalambouku, 2007 for an evaluation of education from differing sociological models), one cannot deny the profound effect that philosophy and political rhetoric have had on the education system in recent years.

When considering the political backdrop for current thinking on education, the five Every Child Matters (ECM) outcomes have given a framework which reflects and acknowledges the need for a holistic approach to child development. The ECM outcomes include being healthy, staying safe, enjoy and achieve, making a positive contribution and achieving economic wellbeing. In practical terms, this has resulted in greater consideration of parents and carers, a focus on early intervention and prevention and an acknowledgement of the need for an effective approach to integrated working (both at the strategic and ground level). One of the major implications of this reform has been the need to identify any groups within the population

who underachieve educationally with the intention of providing additional support. The next section considers the evidence for Children in Care as a vulnerable group within the education system.

II. A review of statistical evidence pertaining to Children in Care

The educational outcomes for CIC have been well documented by the Department for Children, Schools and Families and the Joseph Rowntree Foundation. The 'Statistics for Children Looked After (including adopted and care leavers)' (DCSF, 2009) compares the number of children coming into care since 2005. The number of children entering care has remained relatively stable over the last 4 years (at approximately 25,000 with the figures for 2009 at 25,400). When viewing the age of entry to care, the 10 to 15 year old group had the highest frequency, at 9,100 children or 36% of the population entering care (DCSF, 2009). Within the report, the most common categories of need which facilitated entry to care included: abuse and neglect (49%), absent parents (14%) and family in acute stress (14%).

As stated previously, The Joseph Rowntree Foundation has also tracked the outcomes for CIC. In a recent report, entitled 'Monitoring Poverty and Social Exclusion' (MacInnes, Kenway and Parekh, 2009), figures on educational attainment for 'vulnerable groups within education' are considered. The report highlights the improvement for CIC over the last 10 years but acknowledges the inequity of results which is still apparent when compared to the rest of the population. The following excerpt is taken from the report:

'Around one-third of looked-after children obtain no GCSE's and more than half obtain fewer than five. Both these proportions are markedly lower than at the start of the decade, the result of consistent year-on-year falls, but are still far higher than for children on average. On leaving care, a higher proportion of looked-after children were in full time education in 2008 (around one third) compared to 2004 (around

one quarter). Still though, around 30 per cent are not in education, employment or training.

On the basis of these figures, it would be wrong to conclude that the care system itself is the cause of poor outcomes for looked after children. These poor outcomes are far more likely to be the result of the disadvantage they faced that led to their being placed in care.'

MacInnes et al, 2009 pg 57

It is interesting to note that whilst educational gains have been made for CIC, the report identifies the impact of negative experience prior to the commencement of care in relation to educational outcomes and ultimately, poverty.

To summarise this section, I wish to draw the reader's attention to the following key points in relation to the educational attainment of children in care:

- There is an ongoing need to address the needs of children coming into care based on consistent numbers entering care.
- Specifically, the largest proportion of children entering care is the 10-15 year old group.
- There is strong evidence to suggest that entry into care correlates with inequity in educational outcome.
- Evidence also suggests that events prior to entry into care may be adversely affecting children in care's educational attainment.

I would therefore suggest that research into the ways that professionals enable children and young people to overcome negative experience prior to entering care, negotiate the process of coming into care and develop resilience merits attention.

III. Definition of the area to be researched.

I feel that it is pertinent at this point to reflect on my choice of research area within the context of my professional qualification, as it has informed the way in which I have structured the review of literature.

I am aware that doctoral research should build on the pre-existing body of knowledge whilst making a distinct contribution to new knowledge. When one considers the development of a professional doctorate for the training of educational psychologists, the remit or developing range of research must also be considered. Traditionally, educational psychology has been informed by research within academic spheres of psychology. However, given the remit of a 'professional doctorate', I also consider the notion of applied psychology to be implicit within the scope for research for a professional doctorate in educational, child and community psychology. I have therefore identified promotion of the educational achievement of children in care as a key area for development within national policy and as an area for research. Specifically, with reference to the statistics cited and the relatively high occurrence of young people within Key Stage 4 entering care within the Local Authority in which I practice, I have selected transition into care for young people within Key Stage 4 as the area for research.

I feel that it is also important to acknowledge the relative dearth of literature within this area to date. In the next section, I will develop the rationale for study in relation to the political and legislative context for CIC and the implication for professional practice. Furthermore, I will identify the epistemological stance which has informed the literature review and research design. I will conclude with a brief discussion of the psychological theory which provides a rationale for the role of educational psychology within the transition into care.

Rationale

I. The legislation which relates to the proposed research.

As mentioned previously, the Every Child Matters Agenda has provided the political backdrop for current thinking on education. This governmental response (Laming, 2003) to the Public Enquiry into the death of Victoria Climbié has had profound implications for the development of Children's Services. In essence, Lord Laming's (2003) report brought to public attention the notion of a holistic

approach to the improvement of provision for children. Consequently, proposals were put forward for universal children's services, with the intention of creating a more versatile provision which could address the needs of vulnerable children within society. This move reflects a major move within policy (Every Child Matters (DfES, 2003), Children's Act (DfES, 2004), Care matters change for children, (DfES 2005), Care matters. Transforming the lives of CIC, (DfES 2006), Children and Young Persons Bill (DCSF, 2007) and The Children's Plan (DCSF, 2007)) to address child protection issues effectively combined with a longer term goal of enabling every child to fulfil his or her potential.

When considering provision for children in the care system, the Social Exclusion Unit (2003) provided further information on the barriers and facilitating factors of educational success. The central issues within the information gathered focussed on placement stability and greater involvement in education (both in terms of duration and physical attendance). Furthermore, it drew together the notion of co-working with all of the adults around the child to address wellbeing and educational needs, raising the awareness of the need for education and social care to work collaboratively together.

However, when considering collaborative working, the historical tensions between Education and Social Services Departments must be acknowledged. In particular, the Every Child Matters (2003) and the Children's Act (2004) drew attention to historical tensions and the negative implications of the separation of responsibility for CIC.

The Children's Act (2004) has contributed to the current political and social context in other ways. Essentially, it sets the programme of reform (Every Child Matters, Change for Children, DFES 2004) within a legal framework to address the issues mentioned above. In particular, the Act addresses the supports and structures that are needed for protecting children and improving their outcomes such as

integration of services, increased support and accountability and earlier intervention.

However, it should be noted at this point that tensions between the creation of Children's Services and the provision for Children in Care still exist. The practical implications of recent reforms are considered in the next section, however, I would suggest that developments and potential tensions at a strategic level also merit consideration. One such example is the dichotomy between inclusive practice for children in care and the move within education for 'Improving Standards'. The move towards greater autonomy within schools in order to improve educational standards and the non-statutory nature of the guidance for governing bodies regarding the provision of education for children in care could potentially lead to a lack of clarity which could undermine the reform at the implementation level:

'Both the Children's Services Network policy briefing (CSN 2006) and the Confederation of Children's Service Managers joint statement (ConfED 2006) draw attention to the fact that there is no parallel duty on schools to promote the education of looked after children and that guidance for school governing bodies will be non-statutory. 'Given moves to increasing school autonomy, this is a potential weakness in the framework for securing better outcomes for this group' (CSN Policy Briefing 2006). The joint statement urges the government to 'clarify and strengthen' the role of schools in promoting the education of looked after children.'

Portsmouth Learning Net, 2008 (accessed 27th November, 2008)

Specifically, I feel that it is important to acknowledge the point made within the above quote concerning the relationship between statutory duty and guidance. When considering accountability for the

educational achievement of vulnerable groups, there is an area of potential conflict with regard to the proposal for increased autonomy of schools as an initiative for raising attainment and the level of statutory duty placed on them with reference to CIC. As stated in the above quote, to date, much of the guidance for schools is non-statutory. By increasing the autonomy of schools without strengthening the guidance for schools in legislative terms, Children's Services may find themselves with duties to fulfil but with no power or remit to enforce or ensure that duties to CIC are met within schools.

This tension contrasts with the notion of 'Corporate Parenting' which alludes to a greater sense of accountability and joint ownership of the role of parent for CIC across the breadth of Local Authority Services. The Every Child Matters Change for Children (2005) statutory guidance identifies that Local Authorities have a duty to act in a manner which is comparable to the actions that any good parent would take in order to promote their child's educational aspirations and to support their achievement. This duty includes the formulation of Personal Education Plans to specifically target support for CIC within their educational settings. In addition, the Children and Young Persons Bill (DCSF, 2007) extends the notion of corporate parenting and inclusion of the voice of the children concerned within the processes designed to support CIC.

The Care Matters: Time for Change (2007) white paper develops these themes as central within the development of effective support for CIC:

'Children and young people in care tell us that they want to lead normal lives. They want to succeed in education, enjoy a wide range of positive activities and make a successful transition to adult life. First and foremost, those in care are children and young people. We must have high expectations for them. We must help them to reach their potential by providing excellent parenting, a high quality education, opportunities to

develop their talents and skills, and effective support for their transition to adulthood.

Unfortunately, circumstances outside of their control mean that children and young people in care face a number of barriers to achieving this aim. As a result of their experiences they have often had a disrupted education, they may have difficulties with their social and emotional wellbeing, and they often lack stable relationships in their lives, resulting in attachment problems and a lack of resilience. It is vital that carers and other professionals give children and young people in care the encouragement and support necessary for them to overcome these barriers and succeed.'

Care Matters: Time for Change (2007), pg 5-6

I wish to conclude this section by identifying the main themes which I have drawn upon from the legislation and guidance for children and young people entering care. These include:

- Enabling CIC to fulfil their potential.
- The need to develop effective collaborative working to support CIC.
- Developing the effective use of Personal Education Plans to promote educational attainment.
- Acknowledging additional needs that CIC may have (including the need for support with attachment or resilience issues) and meeting them within support given.

Having considered the legislation and guidance for CIC, I would conclude that use of the Personal Education Plan within the transition into care is a pertinent and timely area for research. Furthermore, given the use of terms such as attachment and resilience, I propose that the knowledge, training and professional positioning of educational psychologists within Children's Services can add a

distinctive, evidence based contribution to the effective support for those entering care. The next section will briefly consider the practical implications of these themes for those working with CIC.

II. The implications of the legislation for professional practice.

Having identified key areas for action from the legislation and guidance, I wish to clarify the key issues for practice when considering transition into care and promoting children and young people's potential. Research relating to these issues will be further discussed within the section entitled 'contribution to knowledge'.

- Effective use of the Personal Education Plan to address the holistic needs of children and young people entering care.
- Promoting the effectiveness of multiagency working within the PEP process.
- The contribution of Educational Psychologists to address individual and wellbeing needs of children and young people entering care and promote greater understanding between the professionals involved (with regards to concepts such as resilience and attachment).

When considering these issues, it is apparent that there is a diverse range of influences which include statutory advice and guidance to the differing perceptions and professional discourses of the individuals involved in the construction of Personal Education Plans. I would therefore suggest that clarity is required with reference to the epistemological lens or framework through which this process may be seen. The next section gives a brief description of Critical Realism (Robson, 2007) as a framework for research and a defining framework for the remaining part of the literature review.

III. Epistemological stance adopted for the research.

Critical Realism (Robson, 2007) offers an approach for real world (applied research) which potentially supersedes the limitations of positivism and relativism. Furthermore, Realism explicitly

acknowledges 'the value laden and political nature of research' and identifies the following precepts with regards to research:

- 'Explanation is concerned with how mechanisms produce events. The guiding metaphors are of structures and mechanisms in reality rather than phenomena and events.
- The real world is not only very complex but also stratified into different layers. Social reality incorporates individual, group, institutional and societal levels.
- The concept of causation is one in which entities act as a function of their basic structure.
- Explanation is showing how some event has occurred in a particular case. Events are to be explained even when they cannot be predicted.'

Robson (2007), p 32

Furthermore, Robson (2007) illustrates the realist explanation with the use of an analogy. If one posed the question:

'Does gunpowder blow up if a flame is applied?
Yes, if the conditions are right. It doesn't ignite if it is damp, or if the mixture is wrong or if no oxygen is present or if heat is only applied for a short amount of time. In realist terms, the **outcome** (the explosion) of an **action** (applying the flame) follows from **mechanisms** (the chemical composition of the gunpowder) acting in particular **contexts** (the particular context which allows the reaction to take place).'

Robson, 2007, pg 30

I have found this analogy useful when considering the factors which influence the transition into care. Specifically, this analogy has enabled me to conceptualise the process of the transition to care, the factors which influence the transition and use of the Personal Education Plan in the following way:

- Action – entry to care.
- Mechanism – use of the Personal Education Plan (which may include the input of the child or young person entering

care, foster carers, designated teachers, social workers, educational psychologists and, within X, PEP co-ordinators).

- Context – legislation and guidance focusing on increasing educational attainment for CIC.
- Outcome – raised educational attainment for CIC.

In summary, when considering research, realism allows an integration of objectivist and subjectivist approaches. More specifically, this stance acknowledges the influence of social context, meaningful action and agency within a remit for study. Critical Realism has been proposed as a pertinent framework in which to research the reality for children in care (Golding, Dent, Nissim and Stott, 2006). Moreover, I would propose that this framework is particularly pertinent to research, given the interaction between the political drivers, the multiagency approach that has arisen as a result of policy and the need for effective practice and co-operation between those involved when considering the entry into care of young people in Key Stage 4 and the promotion of their educational attainment.

IV. Areas of psychological theory which inform the approach taken within the study.

Developmental Pathways Defined

This perspective defines development in terms of a system which develops over time. The development of personality is seen as the cumulative product along one of a potential array of discrete pathways (Slater, 2007). Within the array are two types of pathway, either promoting resilient or vulnerable reactions to the environment and social world. The starting point of these pathways is affected by the quality of interaction between a child and his/her attachment figures and reflects social and cultural contexts.

The implication of this concept is that individuals who have experienced good quality interactions with their attachment figures are

more likely to develop a sense of mastery within their social context and have subsequent positive relationships with peers. Alternatively, poor early experience may produce patterns of interacting which reflect the disorganised or insecurely attached style of early experience and produce further vulnerability. However, when considering the nature of the array like framework, which acknowledges the impact of previous experience, it also offers the potential for moving towards more autonomous or resilient experience (of which, the successful transition into care may be one). Severe trauma (such as the events leading to transition into care and multiple care placements) are considered as barriers to optimal pathway access. This model also provides a relatively cogent framework and rationale for active participation in the support of children entering care for all of the parties involved. Furthermore, I would argue that it provides a cogent structure for use within educational psychology, in which, existing knowledge of attachment issues, other psychological approaches and interventions can be made accessible to those who work to support children in either the care or educational fields. A recent enquiry on EPNET regarding attachment theory provoked a lively debate within the professional forum about the usefulness and validity of this approach to child development within an educational context. However, I would suggest that the change in ethos of the education system (ECM agenda), the amalgamation of educational psychology with other services under the umbrella of Children's Services and the movement towards effective multiagency work within the field of CIC requires some element of shared practice and thinking in order to succeed. Furthermore, I would suggest that the use of a developmental pathway framework would add heuristic value to attachment theory. A benefit of using both attachment and Developmental Pathways for multi-agency working would be the possibility to build on shared knowledge of theory from other agencies (such as social work), where utilisation of attachment theory is part of common practice.

When considering for whom this approach could be pertinent, recent research suggests that 'Looked after children' are more likely

to: require mental health services, have special needs which require additional support, have lower educational attainment, become homeless and experience prison (Jackson & Simon, 2005). I would assert that outcomes such as these, could reflect the difficulties in social interaction and cognition described as a result of attachment issues and the subsequent effect on internal working models as a basis for interaction with others. The Developmental Pathways approach (Waddington, 1957) could potentially provide an appropriate platform for shared understanding and as a basis for intervention. I would also assert that the model allows conscious examination of children's development of autonomy (or lack of), which from my experience of teaching, becomes more assumed during the course of progression through the education system.

During this section, I have advocated the use of the Developmental Pathways approach as a suitable framework to considering and supporting wellbeing and resilience for children and young people entering care. Specifically, I would suggest that this approach potentially provides a salient framework for reflecting upon the needs of children and young people during the transition to care and beyond. I have also highlighted the approach's potential usefulness as a framework for shared understanding and effective co-working.

Given the range of professional involvement within the transition into care and construction of the PEP, the next section will include a review of literature and research from areas such education, foster care and multiagency working psychology. Having previously identified concepts such as resilience and attachment as worthy of consideration within the support of CIC, a brief review of some of the issues within these fields of is also considered.

Contribution to Knowledge

Social Care Studies

When reviewing social care literature with regards to education, there was a noticeable dearth of studies which approached the education of CIC from a social care perspective. However, in a recent review (Holland, Faulkner and Perez-del-Aguila, 2005), several factors were identified when considering the promotion of stability and continuity for CIC. In particular, effective interagency work was deemed to be of the highest priority, closely followed by instability of educational placement. Other factors included recruitment and retention of foster carers and social workers, involving children and involving their families in planning. Whilst the study acknowledges the limited nature of their findings due to the parameters of the selection criteria for study (ie using random control studies), the final conclusion draws attention to the need for further research when taking a holistic approach to promoting wellbeing for CIC.

Historically, research indicates that education has been seen as a low priority from a social care perspective (Knapp et al, 1985, Jackson, 1987, 1994). More recently, attention has been turned to the difficulties in the reality of social care and education co-working to promote the wellbeing in CIC.

‘The deep split between education and care which runs right through all our institutions and services for children is undoubtedly one of the main causes of the problems encountered by children looked after by local authorities, as well as by large numbers of others 'in need'. As several contributors to this issue show the good intentions of the Children Act in urging, and even requiring, collaboration between education and social services, have been largely negated by the erosion of the role of local education authorities and the introduction of market principles which make avoidance of expenditure a top priority. ‘

This excerpt is particularly pertinent as it also alludes to the complex nature of co-working at an institutional, local and national level when considering the current climate in policy terms. Furthermore, it brings into focus the notion of differing cultures and pressures between social care and education.

Foster carers

There is a wealth of research regarding the involvement of foster/adoptive carers with children in care. The majority of the literature concerns evaluations of training or interventions when working with children who have been diagnosed as having conduct disorder for example. Psychological approaches which have been evaluated include cognitive behavioural therapy, differing methods of behaviour management, interventions addressing self esteem and social learning theory. Results regarding the efficacy of these approaches has been mixed, due perhaps to the complex interaction of past history, major change and new expectations (in the form of one or more moves to new families). Alternatively, one could perhaps argue that theory driven interventions do not address the perceived needs in a way which acknowledges the expertise of the fosterer and child. Interestingly, to date, I have also found little research which considered education and the impact of educational environment within fostering and adoption literature.

More recent research results have drawn attention to the possible benefits of applying attachment theory. As previously stated, attachment theory has a relatively under represented base within fostering literature. However, there is growing evidence of literature which addresses some of the potential issues identified above. Taylor, Swann and Warren (2008) conducted an innovative small scale qualitative study of foster carers' view of the causes of foster children's emotional and behavioural difficulties. A detailed picture of

data emerged in terms of the identification of precipitating, perpetuating or predisposing factors which have parallels in attachment research. Caution is needed when considering the results of this study due to the facts that the sample was relatively small and self selecting, however, the use of qualitative analysis has resulted in an interesting theoretical framework which would facilitate further study.

Multiagency studies of CIC

Most of the studies reviewed focused on participants from within their respective disciplines. One exception addressed the educational support of children in care from a variety of perspectives. Coulling (2000) conducted a qualitative study exploring the shared understanding of support for the educational attainment of children in foster care which included teachers, social workers children, foster carers and home finding officers. Whilst the sample was relatively small (25 participants), the main findings provide some interesting data in terms of differences and commonalities of constructs regarding educational success. Coulling identified differences in definition of success and failure and the nature of effective practice between the respective groups who took part in the study. In addition, she advocated the creation of shared understanding of success between all of the parties involved to promote effective practice. Interestingly, Coulling's study also drew attention to the relationship between the foster carer – child and the foster carer – school relationships in promoting positive outcomes.

In a recent study commissioned by the Association of Educational Psychologists, two larger scale studies were conducted to examine the practice of educational psychologists within multiagency approaches to the support of children in care. Notably, the Norwich, Richards and Nash (2008) use of a mixed method design provides some illuminative observations and recommendations for future practice and research of educational psychologists. Norwich et al (2008) findings also advocate establishing of shared meaning within

multi-disciplinary to facilitate effective working. Interestingly, the study goes beyond observations of shared meaning to attempt to evaluate multiagency participation in terms of theoretical frameworks. Furthermore, the study highlights the frequency of use of attachment theory within educational psychologist practice. It is curious to note however, that despite the growing body of evidence on attachment and education, to date, there is relatively little research concerning attachment and the educational achievement of children in care (Golding, 2008) or the shared understanding of attachment in cross professional discourse.

Rees (2006) addresses the needs of children in care from a paediatric perspective, providing much food for thought on a socially critical evaluation of the ways in which improvement of outcomes for CIC are addressed. Rees concludes with a call for further applied research in order to develop well considered and effective practice for this group. One of the main proponents of creating such an evidence base in relation to foster carer training is Kim Golding. In a recent article, Golding (2008) reviews parenting programmes with consideration to developing a similar evidence base for CIC. She concludes that whilst evidence suggests that interventions based on social learning theory are beneficial, the unique needs of CIC provide a rationale for developing training interventions which are also informed by developmental and attachment theory and suggests this as a potential starting point for an evidence based approach to working with CIC.

Education, Psychology and Children in Care

At this time, there is a lack of an evidence base for models of good practice in relation to children in care, the systems around the child (Norwich et al 2008, Golding 2008) and the fulfilment of their educational potential (Care Matters, 2007). One could suggest therefore, that there is a need to evaluate the practice of educational psychologists within the context of frameworks for practice in order to

develop an evidence base for effective support of CIC. Furthermore, evidence such as this could potentially inform further development of services to the benefit of professionals within education, social care and foster caring.

The next section gives a brief description of some of the main developments in attachment related research. The purpose of this section is to identify key ideas which have engendered further theoretical development and criticism, providing a critically evaluated basis to consider more contemporary research and issues. I have chosen to evaluate attachment at a macro level, as a critical evaluation of attachment on the micro-level would not only be lengthy but also may detract from the purpose of this piece in providing useful, action promoting insights for CIC.

Attachment Theory

John Bowlby's interest in caregiving relationships stemmed from working with 'maladjusted boys' in the 1930's. He was greatly influenced by the psychodynamic school of thought and sought to explain development in terms of both internal and external factors. The psychodynamic influences include:

'the complexity of social, cognitive and emotional life of the infant...underlying similarities in the nature of close relationships in infancy and adulthood and the importance of early experience.'

(Waters, Merrick, Treboux, Crowell and Albersheim, 2000)

Bowlby's approach differed in relation to Freud in terms of the impact of real events on the individual when considering both development and psychopathology. Bowlby cited experience of the caregiver relationship as pivotal to healthy development of perceptions about self relationships and the world (Bowlby, 1973,1988). Indeed, 'secure' attachment to a primary caregiver is now perceived as a foundational construct in attachment theory (Waters &

Cummings, 2000). Bowlby introduced the idea of attachment being linked to responsiveness on the part of the care giver and suggested that early care giver relationship patterns provided an internal working model which individuals would use for later relationships (Hartup, 1989). Conversely, Bowlby postulated that lack of secure attachment in infancy would promote internal working models (or templates for relating to self and others) that could potentially impede healthy psychological being on the basis of distorted beliefs and expectations. Thus providing a theory which incorporated both explanations of 'normal' and atypical development. However, it must be noted at this point that Bowlby's (1973,1988) approach also stressed potential flexibility within the working models which allowed change through response to experiences in adolescence or on the basis of therapeutic intervention (Waters & Cummings, 2000). In summary, Bowlby drew on a variety of approaches – ethological, psychodynamic, developmental and cognitive psychology to postulate a theory which incorporated evolutionary cognitive and emotional influences within a theory of development.

The nature of Bowlby's theory has prompted lively debate within psychological and educational circles. One particular area of contention is the perceived fatalistic implication of negative care giving in early years. Originally, Bowlby posited that lack of attentive responding or trauma in early years could result in psychopathy in later life – a prediction which purveys a very pessimistic view for disadvantaged children. However, on further reading Bowlby (1988) rejected this idea in favour of a less 'deterministic' model which placed more emphasis on concepts of risk and resilience.

Similarly, when considering the operational definition of the attachment figure, the notion of the primacy of the mother - child bond has also been reviewed in favour of the notion of a primary attachment figure who may or may not be the mother. Whilst I have mentioned these more controversial interpretations of Bowlby's work,

I feel that they are necessary for inclusion as they illustrate the potentially destructive power that such a theory can have within a societal context. Furthermore, the findings of such a large scale study brings into question the very validity and appropriateness of attachment theory as an effective conceptual framework for child development. However, this example does illustrate the reciprocal nature of theory and practice informing each other.

In theoretical terms, whilst these debates add a greater complexity to an operational definition of attachment figures, I would argue that the friction between practice and theory has enhanced the validity of attachment theory. Namely to draw attention to more ecosystemic influences for CIC and highlighting the importance of effective, holistic schooling providing the potential for an informed approach to the intentions reflected in the Every Child Matters Agenda (2003).

When considering the dynamic nature of the formation and subsequent maintenance of attachment – particularly with reference to CIC, attention must be given to the issue and mechanisms of stability and change (Waters et al 2000 a and b). Primary (or vertical) interaction patterns have been shown to consistently affect subsequent interaction orientations later in life - termed as horizontal interaction patterns (Bowlby1969, Hartup, 1989, Edwards & Sweeney, 2007). Vertical interaction patterns are formed on the basis of attachment style with primary attachment figures. Whilst horizontal (subsequent) attachments are formed as children become mature with peers of comparable emotional, interpersonal, cognitive, behavioural and social skills (Hartup, 1989). These relationships often reflect similarities in age and type of interaction. I would suggest that Waddington's (1957) concept of Developmental Pathways may offer the framework to incorporate the dynamic nature of attachment and interaction patterns alongside the current research and practice potentially providing an effective framework for cross-professional discourse and action.

Resilience

Having presented the concept of Developmental Pathways and identified some of the possible benefits, I will reflect upon the contribution of neurological/ biological research when considering this approach and some of the potential problems related to the difficulties of operationalising this concept sufficiently to facilitate usage from a theoretical and research perspective.

Waddington's(1957) concept utilises the construct of resilience as a central tenet of the developmental process. In an intuitive sense, one could accept the notion of resilience within the overall context of the model. However, for the purpose of clarity and testability, further examination of the current understanding of resilience is necessary. Whilst attachment theory could be considered as generally comprehensive, it did not specifically account for the cases of individuals who exhibited much more ability to overcome adverse life and attachment events than Bowlby postulated. The study of resilience was rooted in research into schizophrenia, the effects of enduring extreme poverty and stress and the effects of early trauma and reflects the initial concern of attachment theory – the risk of psychopathology.

When discussing a construct such as resilience, I would usually begin by operationally defining the construct, for the purposes of clarity. However, due to nature of some of the theoretical issues within this branch of psychology, I find myself unable to do this without acknowledging contending views around the defining qualities of resilience. The study of resilience, but it's very nature, seeks to define and understand responses to adverse life conditions in the hope of providing preventative or supportive intervention. The nature of adverse events implies a break from the norm, in terms of conditions which are perceived as usual for developmental growth and adaptation. When attempting to study a topic such as this, consideration must also be given to the constraints of systematic, scientific study. The opposing forces of the diverse nature of life

events and individual differences and the constraint of systematic epistemological stances are inherently a source of conflict which may never be resolved. On a more positive note however, the intention, on the behalf of researchers to understand protective factors in response to adverse life events and more recently, the underlying processes for resilient response (Luthar, Cicchetti & Becker, 2000), has produced a wealth of empirical evidence. The implications for CIC can only be positive, by seeking to understand something, we become more aware of it. Use of empirically based research, along with ethically considered interventions is surely better than failing to act.

Conclusion

This review of literature sets the context for research into Children in Care. Given the developing nature of the evidence base across professions, the multitude of reforms in the political context and the call for evidence based practice I would suggest that engaging in this area of research is a timely pursuit. As stated previously, the critical realist perspective has been selected due to the breadth of its remit, providing a framework which can potentially address the complex interaction between the afore mentioned political pressures and professional groups. The potential contribution of educational psychologists has also been documented. The author would suggest that educational psychologists can contribute in three major ways: the application of psychology to promote successful transition into and placement in care, providing support to bridge the historical gap between education and social care and the development of a research base, as suggested by Holland et al (2005).

In consultation with professionals, when reviewing the priorities for the Local Authority with regards to CIC, it became evident that promoting the educational attainment of young people entering care in Key Stage 4 had been identified as an area for development. When considering the needs of the local authority within the context of the literature review, the following areas were identified for exploration:

- 1.1 What is the purpose of the Personal Education Plan?

1.1 What are the perceived needs of the professionals working with young people coming into care when considering promoting educational attainment in terms of commonalities and differences?

1.2 How is the promotion of resilience cited within the Every Child Matters: Time for Change 'factored into' the construction of the Personal Education Plan?

1.3 How do or can Educational Psychologists contribute to the construction of Personal Education Plans for young people coming into care in Key Stage 4, in the light of the Developmental Pathways Approach (Waddington, 1957)?

Furthermore, when considering CIC within a secondary school setting, the following areas concerning the implementation of planned support have also been identified for consideration:

2.1 What are the facilitating factors and barriers to dissemination of Personal Education Plans for young people coming into care?

2.2 How can Educational Psychology input contribute to the formulation and implementation of Personal Educational Plans?

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