

The impact of Nurture Group principles and practice on the whole primary school

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(Signature).....

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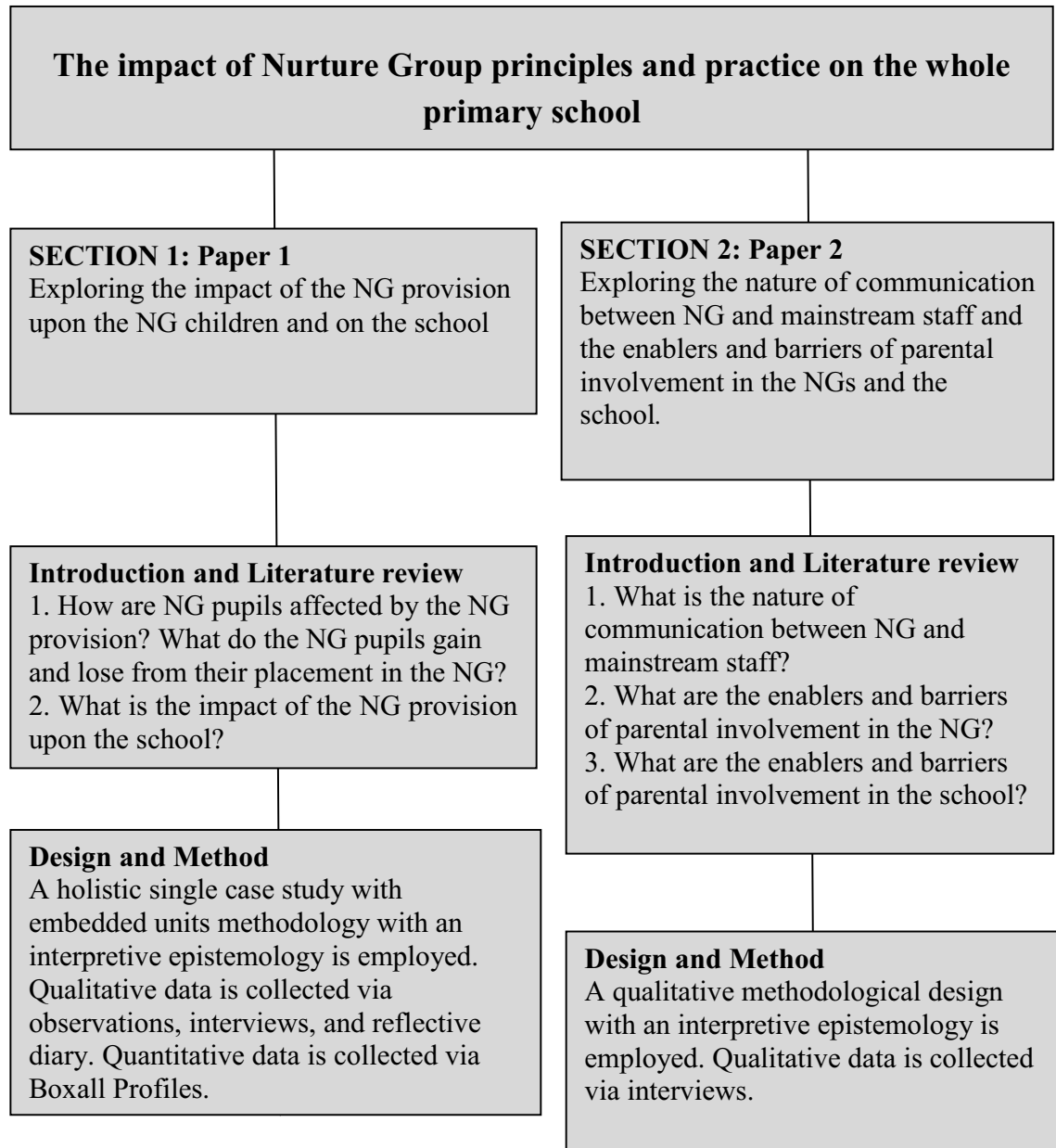
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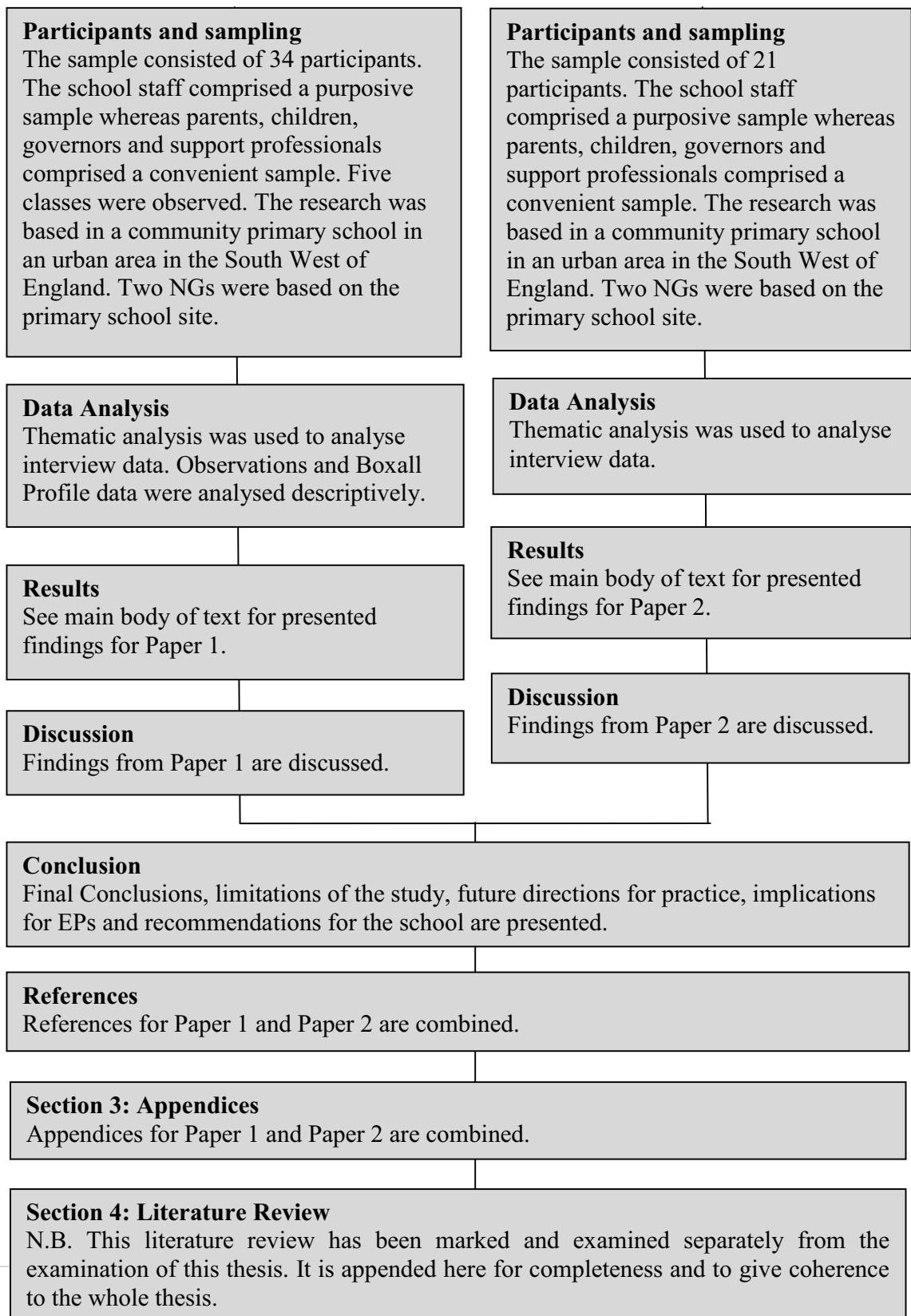
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Overview of thesis



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Abbreviations and Definitions

EBD	Pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties
EPS	Educational Psychology Service
Emergent Theme	Themes that emerged in the qualitative data analysis
EP	Educational Psychologist
Impact Scores	Difference between pre- and post-Boxall measures
KS1	Key Stage 1
KS2	Key Stage 2
Las	Local Authorities
MC1	Mainstream Child 1
MC2	Mainstream Child 2
MC3	Mainstream Child 3
MC4	Mainstream Child 4
MC5	Mainstream Child 5
MP1	Parent 1 whose child is in the mainstream classes
MP2	Parent 2 whose child is in the mainstream classes
MP3	Parent 3 whose child is in the mainstream classes
MP4	Parent 4 whose child is in the mainstream classes
MP5	Parent 5 whose child is in the mainstream classes
MT1	Mainstream Teacher 1
MT2	Mainstream Teacher 2
MT3	Mainstream Teacher 3

MTA1	Mainstream Teaching Assistant 1
MTA2	Mainstream Teaching Assistant 2
NG	Nurture Group
NGC1	Nurture Group Child 1
NGC2	Nurture Group Child 2
NGC3	Nurture Group Child 3
NGC4	Nurture Group Child 4
NGN	Nurture Group Network
NGP1	Parent 1 whose child is in the NG
NGP2	Parent 2 whose child is in the NG
NGP3	Parent 3 whose child is in the NG
NGT1	Nurture Group Teacher 1
NGT2	Nurture Group Teacher 2
NGTA1	Nurture Group Teaching Assistant 1
NGTA2	Nurture Group Teaching Assistant 2
NGTA3	Nurture Group Teaching Assistant 3
SCM1	School Community Member 1
SCM2	School Community Member 2
SCM3	School Community Member 3
SCP1	Support Professional 1
SCP2	Support Professional 2
SM1	Senior Management 1
SM2	Senior Management 2

SEB	Social, emotional and behavioural
SEBD	Social, emotional and behavioural difficulties
SSI	Semi-structured interview
SDQ	Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire
Subtheme	Term used to describe a cluster of related themes within a sub-ordinate theme
Sub-ordinate	Term used to describe a cluster of related secondary themes
Super-ordinate theme	Term used to describe a cluster of related emergent themes
TA	Teaching Assistant

Section 1: Paper 1

Abstract

The provision of Nurture Groups (NGs) has been recognised as an effective early intervention for children with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties (SEBD). ‘The high expectations of teachers in Nurture Groups can bring about amazing change’ in the lives of young emotionally disturbed children (Lucas, 1999, p.14). When the principles of NG are effectively applied by all staff in all areas of the school and when nurturing attitudes and practices develop throughout the school, teaching and learning become effective for all children (Lucas, 1999). This study aims to extend the understanding of the gains and costs that may be associated with the placement of children in NGs. The NG intervention’s contribution to the wider school system is also documented. However, this study aims to provide a deeper understanding on the impact of NG provision on the mainstream school it serves from the viewpoints of the different groups of participants involved and to look whether the ethos and approaches used in the nurture group are promoted in the wider school environment.

A case study methodology with interpretive approaches was employed in a community primary school in an urban area in the South West of England. Quantitative (Boxall Profiles) and qualitative (interviews and observations) measures revealed that overall there have been improvements in NG children’s social, emotional and behavioural (SEB) functioning and academic development. However, findings also revealed a number of opportunity costs attached to children’s placement in the NG. Qualitative measures also showed that, while NG provision contributed to positive developments within the school, the NGs did not help the school in fully integrating their work in the wider approach to meeting all children’s needs. A number of disadvantages were also reported with regards to the impact of the NG upon the school.

**The impact of Nurture Group principles and practice
on the whole primary school**

Section 2: Paper 2

Abstract

The provision of Nurture Groups has been recognised as an effective early intervention for children with SEBD. ‘The high expectations of teachers in Nurture Groups can bring about amazing change’ in the lives of young emotionally disturbed children (Lucas, 1999, p.14). When the principles of NG are effectively applied by all staff in all areas of the school and when nurturing attitudes and practices develop throughout the school, teaching and learning become effective for all children (Lucas, 1999). Communication between NG and mainstream staff is considered to be important for the effective running of the NGs and for developing a nurturing school ethos. Lack of collaborative partnership work can create tensions between NG and mainstream staff. Parental involvement is also recognised important in the NG. Research reveals that partnership relationships with parents contribute to positive social and emotional outcomes for children and to positive effects for parents in terms of their capacity to understand their children and apply NG practices outside of the NG. Despite the inherent power imbalance between NG staff and parents, there can be a positive outcome if the NG approaches are extended holistically to all school staff.

The aim of this paper is to explore the quality of communication between NG and mainstream staff and the enablers and barriers of parental involvement in the NGs and the school.

This qualitative study was conducted in a community primary school in an urban area in the South West of England and included 34 participants - 13 school staff, 8 parents, 9 children, and 4 professionals and governors. Semi-structured interview data revealed that while some communication existed between NG and mainstream staff there were subtle difficulties involved in creating a collaborative partnership work with regards to sharing information with each other. Despite developing a collaborative relationship and effective communication being seen as the most important enabler for parental involvement in the NGs and the rest of the school, there was a more structured communication and a more supportive support between the NGs and parents of the NG children than the rest of the school and parents.